

from our viewpoint...

# Plants opportunity to inspire progress

Getting into the energy business in a big way should be a great advantage for Goodland and all of northwest Kansas.

The plants a Sherman County investment group plans to build near Caruso may be the answer the city and the area have been seeking.

The city has been in the electric generation business for many years, but with an aging plant which depends on high-cost diesel fuel and natural gas, it is not the advantage it used to be.

More than 60 years ago, municipal-owned power plants were the way for small cities to provide low-cost power to their residents, and the income from the plants helped pay for other city programs. In those years, the cities did not need to worry much about the price of the power or transmissions lines or connections to other power systems.

As demand for power grew, though, small cities found themselves unable to expand their plants to keep up. Power companies built large regional power plants and transmission lines were built to connect the small cities to the big plants. The big plants were able to purchase trainloads of coal and produce power cheap enough to sell it to the small towns at a price under what it cost the cities to produce their own power.

Buying power from Sunflower Electric's coal fired power plant in Holcomb helped the cities keep the cost of electricity to the consumer down. For years, the system worked well, and the cities and the power plants made money and the cities were able to save money by not replacing their aging plants.

The demand for power has continued to grow, though, and the number of large power plants has not kept up. That demand has power companies to raise their rates, and they can sell power elsewhere at higher rates than they sell it to the small towns. The city of Goodland has had a firm power contract with Sunflower for four megawatts of power, but that contract is coming to an end. There is every indication the price of a new contract with Sunflower could be nearly twice the \$32 per megawatt hour the city has been paying.

The city can generate power, but when the diesel engines are running the cost of the power is closer to \$70-80 per megawatt hour. Replacing the city's generation plant has been a goal, but it seemed to be out of reach as the cost continued to rise. Replacing one of the diesel engines would cost as much as \$3 million. There are five diesel engines that provide the 15 megawatts the plant can produce with all of them running.

Repairing the older engines is expensive and it is hard to find the necessary parts for all of them.

Buying power from a planned wind farm could help cut the amount of power the city buys from Sunflower now. The wind farm will not provide enough to replace the city power plant, but would be cheaper and help hold the cost down.

With a 22-megawatt power plant within five miles, though, the city will be able to overcome the problem of being on the western edge of the eastern power grid, and the problem of the transmission lines could be turned around.

Yes, the investors are hoping to make money. That is the ultimate goal of any business. In this case, though, the people are doing a good thing for the area where they live — providing jobs, investment activity, low-cost power and a real chance for future development.

We hope they make lots of money and that the city can take advantage of the development to turn the corner and begin to show economic and population growth.

That is the benefit from this investment which will give the city alternatives and opportunities for years to come. — Tom Betz

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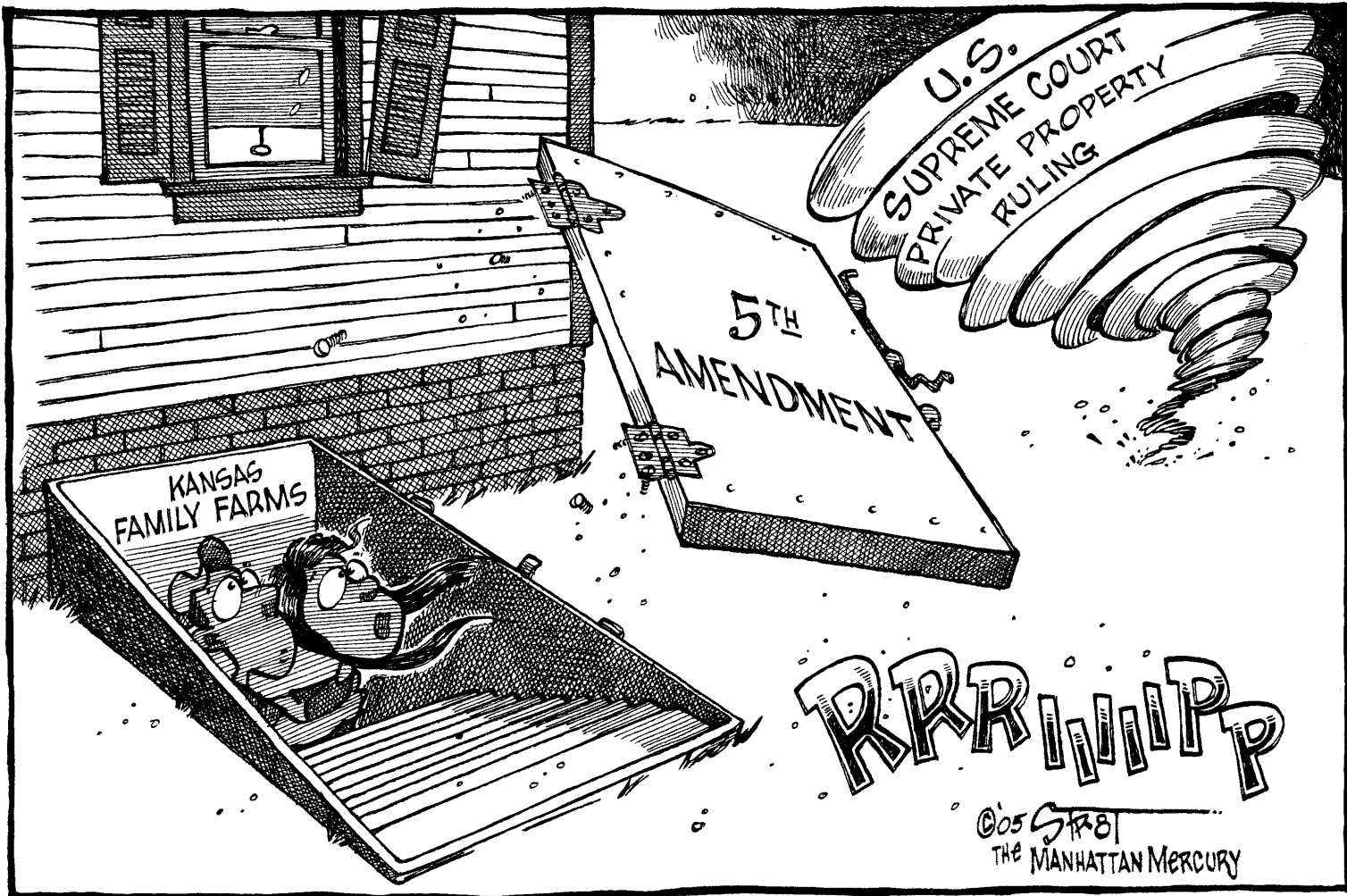
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## Mr. President every day is election day

By Dick Morris

One of the fortunate ways in which this Bush is better than his father is his commitment to winning the presidency and then to getting re-elected.

While the father seemed to regard politics as an unpleasant duty and saw campaigning as something one had to do every four years, like it or not, the son appeared to revel in meeting the voters and making his case to the people.

His determination in holding fast to his policies while aggressively persuading the nation they were the right ones was a welcome surprise after his father's ambivalence about taking to the stump.

But now that he is re-elected, he seems to have abandoned politics and retreated into government. Where is he? Where is the vaunted machine he assembled that humbled the best the Democrats had to offer? Where is Rove? Where is Hughes? Where are yesterday's gods?

The latest Zogby poll highlights the disrepair into which the Bush image has fallen. With his job approval down to 44 percent (and in the 40s in all other polls) and his ratings on Iraq, Social Security, the economy et al. down as well, Bush is in big trouble.

It would be OK if he had just failed to make his case, but one senses he isn't really trying. After two months of vigorous stumping to sell his Social Security ideas, which proved to be a nonstarter, he looks as though he has withdrawn into the comfortable quarters of the Oval Office to man his desk rather than win the public.



### from other pens

• commentary

In modern American democracy, every day is election day. Every week, every day, a new poll comes out judging the president's performance and popularity.

Our polling obsession makes our presidential system much more akin to a parliamentary one. When an incumbent president's job-approval ratings sink below 50 percent, he becomes like a British prime minister who has just lost a vote of confidence in parliament. Unlike his Anglo equivalent, he needn't resign, but if his ratings don't improve, he might as well leave for all the good he can do.

An incumbent who is bleeding with ratings under 50 attracts the sharks, who impose their own agenda on his administration, and invites defections from his own party, compromising even his control of Congress. As his low ratings breed even lower ones, he comes to embody two metaphors that come from the Nixon administration: He twists slowly in the wind — a helpless, pitiful giant.

It was thus with Bill Clinton in the aftermath of his 1994 defeat, when he had to tell the media that he was still relevant, so obvious was his powerlessness. And it threatens to become this way with George Bush unless the president wakes up and realizes the American presidency is a job you have to win each and every

day to govern with power.

Now, with Chief Justice William Rehnquist's health at such risk, Bush may have to make two Supreme Court appointments when he does not have the political clout to make them stick. He can't get his Social Security program unstuck except by surrendering the initiative to Republicans bent on compromise and Democrats scenting vulnerability.

He has a rubber-stamp majority in the House, but for how long? And in the Senate, the McCain-Snowe-Collins-Chafee axis, occasionally joined by GOP Sens. Lindsey Graham (S.C.), George Voinovich (Ohio), Arlen Specter (Pa.), John Warner (Va.) or Mike DeWine (Ohio), may make Bush's hold on that body precarious at best.

All this harm and hurt could be avoided if Bush began to show up for work again. He needs to resume his one-a-day policy announcements he used in the spring of 2004 to bolster his ratings as Iraq burned. He has to take strong public positions and use them to make his ratings rise again.

Bush has all the tools of incumbency, control of Congress and an excellent staff well versed in such things. What seems to be lacking is a sense he still holds elective, not appointive, office and that he will lose power, although keep the position, if he doesn't pay more attention to polls and popularity.

Dick Morris was an adviser to Bill Clinton for 20 years. Look for Dick's new book "Because He Could" about Bill Clinton. © 2005 Dick Morris, All Rights Reserved. Distributed by Cagle Cartoons Inc.

## Thanks for clarifying position on war

To the Editor:

Thank you for clarifying your position on the use of war and deadly force. While you state that it is your only intent to state what the Bible says and let the readers decide, I'm afraid you have again exceeded your stated intent.

If am to understand your position correctly, you support and condone the use of deadly force by police but not the military. I then ask, "How can we expect peace within our borders if our borders are not protected by the military? Shall we wait until our foreign enemies have invaded us and then send the police to drive them back with threat of arrest?"

In the modern age, we cannot wait to be attacked before we mount our defense. Sept. 11 would be only a mere shadow of the death and destruction that we could expect.

Yes, we are fighting a war "half way around the world" as you stated. The war is a half a world away because we have taken it to our enemies' homes and away from ours.

I am no warmonger. War is ugly. Innocent people get hurt and killed. This I know as my family has suffered the loss of loved one to gunfire and bombs in foreign lands where they lived. The only thing worse than war is slavery, and those who are unwilling to make the former are doomed to the latter.

Even more troubling is your misinterpretation of Christ's actions in the Garden of Gethsemane and how you then use that to make



### from our readers

• to the editor

your justifications. While you quote a myriad of scriptures to attempt to bolster your case, you missed the big picture.

Christ's mission here on Earth was to do his father's will. His father wishes for all of us to return to live with him in peace and happiness. However, no unclean thing can enter into the presence of God. As we are all sinners and therefore unclean, there is a problem. No matter how hard we try, we will all surely sin.

For this cause, Christ was selected and sent to Earth as the only begotten Son of God to live a perfect life and pay the price, or atone, for our sins. It was his father's will for Christ to atone for our sins by suffering in Gethsemane and dying on the cross.

It is for this reason that Christ prevented a bloody battle in the Garden of Gethsemane between his then-confused apostles and his soon-to-be captors. He came to Jerusalem knowing full well that his killers were there.

Christ took a different course earlier in his mission. He took steps to evade his captors and preserve himself. When he was challenged by the authorities, he gave great lessons, which

allowed us to peek into the mind of God, and which we are still reading about in the Bible today. He even foretold, in accordance with the Old Testament prophecies, about his death once he entered into Jerusalem.

Christ was no fool. He had a purpose. His message was not to develop a suicidal pacifistic national defense policy!

It appears to me that in your desire to forward your own political viewpoints, you are stretching the scriptures so far as to almost break them. I respect and understand that you do not support the war in Iraq but please, do not confuse Christ's wonderful atoning sacrifice with your opposition to our nation's actions of self-defense.

Kenneth Klemm  
Goodland

### Letter Policy

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### garfield

