

from our viewpoint...

Red Cross answer to get things going

A telling comment the other day: In a report on how Hurricane Katrina evacuees were faring, the speaker noted that "FEMA has turned care of the refugees over to the Red Cross, and things are starting to happen."

Imagine that. Government falters. Private charity has to step in and make sense out of the situation.

Time after time, people are saying, "The government has let us down. The government has failed."

Troops take days to move because governors and colonels need to sign paperwork. A Red Cross convoy is turned around because city officials are not ready to supervise them.

Michael Brown, the deposed disaster chief, trying to explain why he failed to help people at the New Orleans Convention Center: "No one told me they were there."

The list goes on. Of course, the response will be, "We need better leaders. We need to spend more money."

As if doing more of the same is the answer.

Instead, maybe we need to take a look at how we handle disasters. FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, has proven it can't manage anything, certainly not a major disaster. The agency is run by political hacks and petty bureaucrats. It's not capable.

That's not saying all government agencies are incompetent. Our military has aquatinted itself well on this mission: The Coast Guard, National Guard and the regular Army, all topnotch, despite the old saw about "military efficiency." These units are competent and capable. They are pretty much in charge now. The Army may be bureaucratic in peace, but under fire, it's a different story.

The Corps of Engineers warned the levies needed work.

Listen to Mayor Ray Nagin blaming the feds for his city's problems. Contrast his bleeping performance with Rudy Giuliani in New York just four years ago. Contrast his city's feeble, unstructured response with New York's.

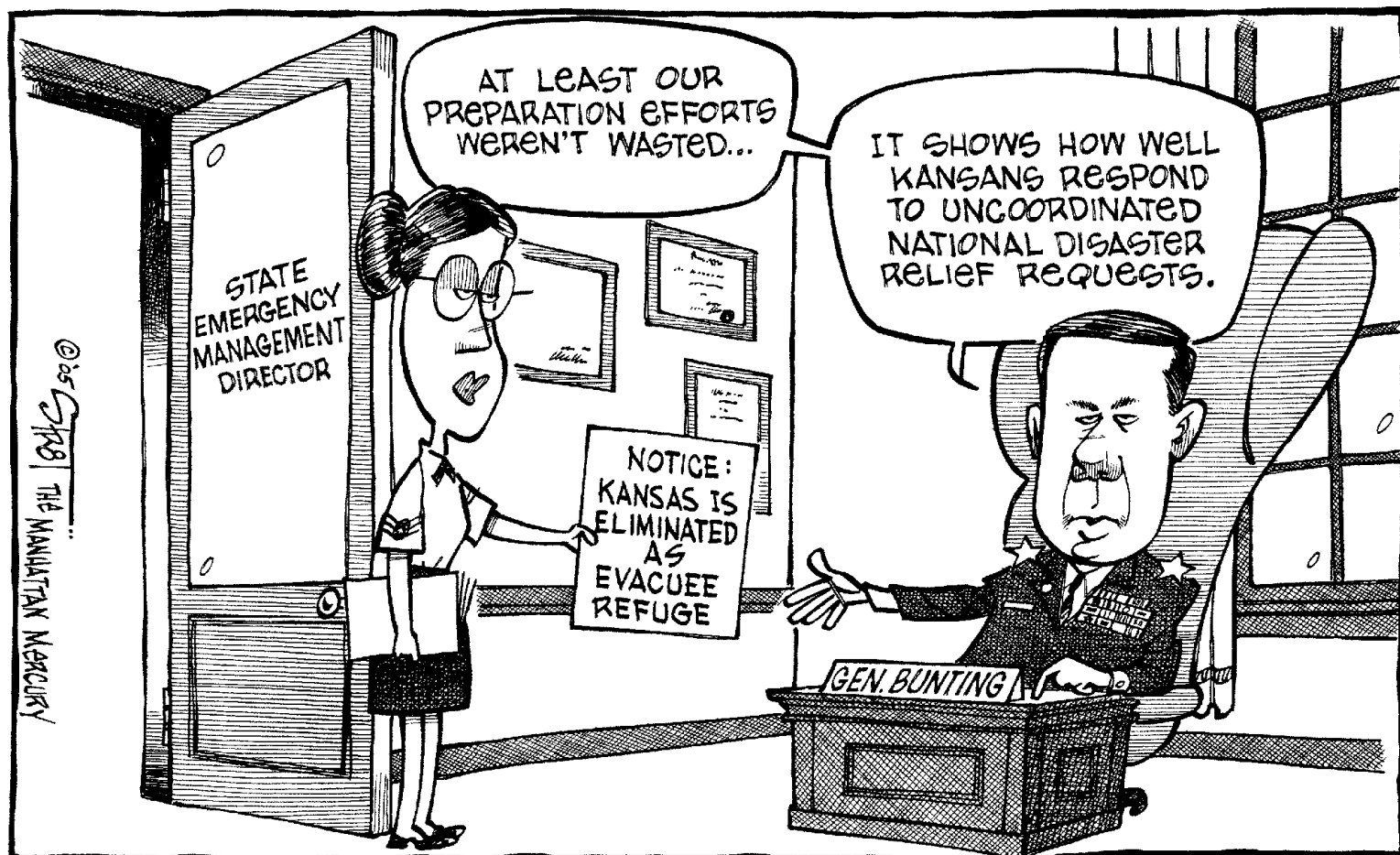
New Orleans, and Louisiana, may be facing their own crisis of leadership. Since when is it the federal government's job to get them ready for a local disaster?

When this is said and done, we need to rebuild our posture for handling the next disaster, at the hands of Mother Nature or some terrorist sect.

Maybe we ought to give the Red Cross a lot more say, and the political hacks and bureaucrats a lot less. Maybe we should scrap the FEMA bureaucracy and build lean, mobile leadership teams with good communications and decision-making ability, ready to move at a moment's notice.

That's not all the answer. This is not just a federal problem. Every state and every city should be ready for the next disaster — fire, mudslide, tornado, bombing, hurricane or earthquake. Every state, every city should have trained people ready to take over. Then it won't matter so much if the feds are incompetent.

The real question, is "Why are we surprised?" It's the government. They're here to help. — *Steve Haynes*



Who does Cindy really hate?

Making Sense, By Michael Reagan

Sigmund Freud had a concept he called "projection," which has been defined as a defense where the ego deals with unacceptable impulses and/or terrifying anxieties by attributing them to someone in the external world.

In many ways I think that explains the behavior of the media's current patron saint, Cindy Sheehan, whose hate rhetoric aimed at President Bush is really meant for someone else who she can't admit even to herself is her real target. To do so would represent one of those "unacceptable impulses" Dr. Freud was talking about.

In this case it could well be that Cindy Sheehan is projecting her rage at George Bush when the one she really despises is her late son Casey, who died as a hero in Iraq, precisely because he did die a hero in Iraq.

The more I listen to Cindy Sheehan and consider her past actions and her past words, it occurs to me she has always been a liberal, she's always been anti-military, and she's always been anti-Republican. It appears that she raised Casey in such an environment, yet despite that what does he do? He not only joins the military engaged in a war she bitterly opposes, but to add insult to injury when his enlistment runs out, he re-enlists although he knew that by so doing it meant he would be sent to Iraq where a war his mother despises is being fought.

Think about that. What Casey did was to reject not by words but by deeds his mother's most closely-held beliefs.



from other pens

• commentary

Then, to make matter worse in her eyes, this son volunteers to go on a dangerous mission even his superiors warned him against, and dies as a result. Casey Sheehan's sergeant asked for volunteers. Sheehan had just returned from Mass. After Sheehan volunteered once, the sergeant asked Sheehan again if he wanted to go on the mission. According to many reports (and according to his own mother) Casey responded, "Where my chief goes, I go."

He went, and it cost him his life. You can almost hear her saying to his spirit, "How dare you spurn me and turn your back on me? How dare you go join the military, and then how dare you volunteer to fight against the innocent Iraqi freedom fighters and get yourself killed?"

Casey Sheehan's heroic action has embittered Cindy Sheehan. And her actions have embittered her family who bitterly resent her exploitation of her son's heroic death in behalf of her political extremism. Here's what they wrote to Matt Drudge:

"The Sheehan Family lost our beloved Casey in the Iraq War and we have not silently, respectfully grieving. We do not agree

with the political motivations and publicity tactics of Cindy Sheehan. She now appears to be promoting her own personal agenda and notoriety at the expense of her son's good name and reputation. The rest of the Sheehan Family supports the troops, our country, and our president, silently, with prayer and respect."

Cindy Sheehan says she wants to ask the president, "Why did you kill my son?" She knows that George Bush did not kill her son. The butchers she supports with her far-out liberal activism killed Casey Sheehan and that activism is now resulting in the deaths of other young Americans because she is giving aid and comfort to our enemies and encouraging them to persist in their terrorism, giving them hope that if her views prevail the U.S. will lose its will and pull out. And so the fight goes on, and more Casey Sheehans die as a result.

And she says of her son, "He died for oil. He died to make your friends," Bush's friends, "richer. He died to expand American imperialism in the Middle East."

How dare he?

Cindy Sheehan doesn't need to talk to the president. A talk with a therapist would be more appropriate.

Mike Reagan, the eldest son of the late President Ronald Reagan, is heard on more than 200 talk radio stations nationally as part of the Radio America Network. Look for Mike's new book "Twice Adopted." E-mail Comments to mereagan@hotmail.com.

Arthur Laffer: The happy supply-sider

By Bill Steigerwald

Last time I talked to economist Arthur Laffer was in 1979 when I interviewed him at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles.

In those miserable economic times, before he was dubbed "The Father of Supply-Side Economics," Laffer was considered a kook by the liberal econ-establishment for pushing his idea that cutting taxes in certain circumstances can simultaneously stimulate economic growth and put more tax revenue into government coffers.

Today his famous "Laffer Curve" is no longer ridiculed, and the former member of President Reagan's Economic Policy Advisory Board is famed for sparking a worldwide tax-cutting revolution. I talked to him by telephone from his home in San Diego:

Q: How do you define your politics?

A: I'm pro-growth. I'm Democrat when Democrats are into pro-growth, and I'm Republican when they are. I vote the issues really hard-core, and they're all economic issues. That doesn't mean that I don't have strong views on social issues. That's just not where government is involved in my life.

Q: What do you give Bush on economics?

A: I'm really shocked by it. As you probably know, I was not a fan of his father. I voted for Clinton twice. I really thought Bush (the elder) and Bob Dole were tax collectors for the welfare state. The reason I voted for Bush W. was more Al Gore than it was Bush. And now I am just totally a fan. This guy is just incredibly good at economics.

Q: You are not concerned about the big deficits or the former steel tariffs?

A: Oh, the steel tariffs (were) terrible.



from other pens

• commentary

They're embarrassing. By putting on steel tariffs, what you do is cause U.S. companies that buy steel to pay higher prices for lower-quality steel. Now you tell me what happens to the American automobile industry and the other products that use steel as an import? I was born and raised in Youngstown, and I know steel pretty well. It does not help America, it doesn't help steel, and it doesn't help Youngstown. It hurts everyone.

Q: The biggest economic issue of the day?

A: I like low, flat-rate taxes. I like sound money. I like free trade. And I like minimal regulation for serving social purposes. That's it.

Q: Is that a definition of supply-side economics?

A: (It's) the supply-side definition in each of the major areas of macroeconomics. There are four areas: fiscal policy, monetary policy, trade policy and a sort of catchall, incomes policy. Those are all the indirect ways government affects business — regulations, restrictions, minimum wage, wage and prices, etc.

Q: What's something true about economics right now every layperson should know about?

A: If you tax people who work and you pay people who don't work, do not be surprised if you find a lot of people choosing not to work.

Q: What's the most prevalent and most dangerous economic myth the public believes that needs to be debunked?

A: Bottom line, I think the public's got it.

Q: Really?

A: I'm really impressed with the public. The electorate really sees through all this crap. They understand free trade. They understand low, flat-rate taxes. They understand sound money. The electorate is really cool. I'm superbly impressed by democracy — and I'm not natively that way inclined, just so you know.

Q: I was going to ask you whether the public and its leaders were getting smarter in economics. I guess you answered it.

A: They've been great. Look at what's happening. Since that '79 interview we had, OK, let's take a look at what happened to marginal tax rates. The highest rate has gone from what — 70 percent — down to what, 35 percent? What's happened to inflation? What's happened to regulation restrictions? What's happened to America and the world? What's happened to the stock market? What's happened to everything you and I believe in? Do you remember what unemployment rates looked like back in 1979? Do you remember what the prime was when Ronald Reagan came into office on Jan. 20, 1981? It was 21 percent.

Q: This is a happy economist. It's not dismal at all, is it?

A: I cannot believe how wonderful it is. When (Nobel Prize-winning economist) Bob Mundell and I sat there at the University of Chicago in 1967, '68 and '69, we dreamt of a world. That world is now. Can you imagine a world with no inflation? Everything that's happened. It's absolutely spectacular. I'm just so happy about what's happened to this world.

Steigerwald is a columnist at the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review. bsteigerwald@tribweb.com.

garfield



The Goodland Star-News

(USPS No. 222-460. ISSN 0893-0562)

Member: Kansas Press Association

Inland Press Association Colorado Press Association

National Newspaper Association

e-mail: star-news@nwkansas.com

Steve Haynes, President

Tom Betz, Editor

Erica Harlan, Copy Editor

Sharon Corcoran, Society Editor

Kathryn Burke, Reporter

Greg Stover, Sports Editor

Advertising Coordinator

Mona Carver, Advertising Sales

Sheila Smith, Office Manager

Nor'west Press

Jim Bowker, General Manager

Richard Westfahl, Ron VanLoenen, Judy McKnight, Betty Morris,

Joshua Ford, Jerry Kirkpatrick, Lana Westfahl

nwkansas.com

N.T. Betz, Director of Internet Services

(ntbetz@nwkansas.com)

Evan Barnum, Systems Admin. (support@nwkansas.com)

Published every Tuesday and Friday except the days observed for New Year's Day and Christmas Day, at 1205 Main Ave., Goodland, Kan. 67735.

Periodicals postage paid at Goodland, Kan. 67735; entered at the Goodland, Kan., Post Office under the Act of Congress of March 8, 1878.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Goodland Star-News, 1205 Main Ave., Goodland, Kan. 67735.

TELEPHONE: (785) 899-2338. Editorial e-mail: star-news@nwkansas.com. Advertising questions can be sent to: goodlandads@nwkansas.com

The Goodland Star-News assumes no liability for mistakes or omissions in advertising or failure to publish beyond the actual cost of the ad.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: In Sherman County and adjacent counties: three months, \$24; six months, \$42; 12 months, \$76. Out of area, weekly mailing of two issues: three months, \$34; six months, \$49; 12 months, \$84. Mailed individually each day: 12 months, \$119. (All tax included.)

Incorporating:

The Goodland Daily News

1932-2003

The Sherman County Herald

Founded by Thomas McCants

1935-1989

THE SHERMAN COUNTY STAR

Founded by Eric and Roxie Yonkey

1994-2001

Nor'West Newspapers

Haynes Publishing Company