

U.S. needs to help Iraq build up army, leaders

What happens next in Iraq? Oh, we'll track down Saddam Hussein. He's living on borrowed time.

There'll still be resistance. Terrorists are killing a couple of American boys — and a dozen Iraqis — every week. It's keeping up, may get worse, but the Army is a lot better at dealing with this stuff than it was in the last century.

One of the top American commanders, Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez, said the other day that U.S. troops will be in Iraq for two to three years while the country learns to govern itself.

More importantly, the Iraqis will have to develop their own police and military. The nation will need at least three modern divisions to protect its borders, he said.

And having taken on the responsibility of running Saddam out, we're stuck with the task of building up a reasonable alternative. We're just going to have to face that.

To leave quickly, as some would have us do, would throw Iraq into chaos far worse than what we saw right after the fall of Baghdad. Warlords would begin to fight, pitting Muslim sect against Muslim sect. Bloodshed might make the years of Saddam's rule look right peaceful by comparison.

So far, it seems that our forces are being selective and yet certain in enforcing their rule and tracking down holdovers from the old regime.

The next problem will be outside terrorists,

who may already be operating in Iraq and may well have been behind the bombing outside the Jordanian embassy the other day.

The international terrorist brigade, led by al Qaida and friends, has to see a tremendous opening here, in a nation with no functioning government save the hated U.S. military.

It's not a burden that we particularly want, but it's a role we're stuck with right now.

It's easy to see the U.S. troops, with Kelvar helmets and M-16s, astride their Humvees, as the modern equivalent of the Roman centurion. There's some truth in that, but where the Romans conquered for the good of Rome, we at least like to think we're doing this to make the world a better place.

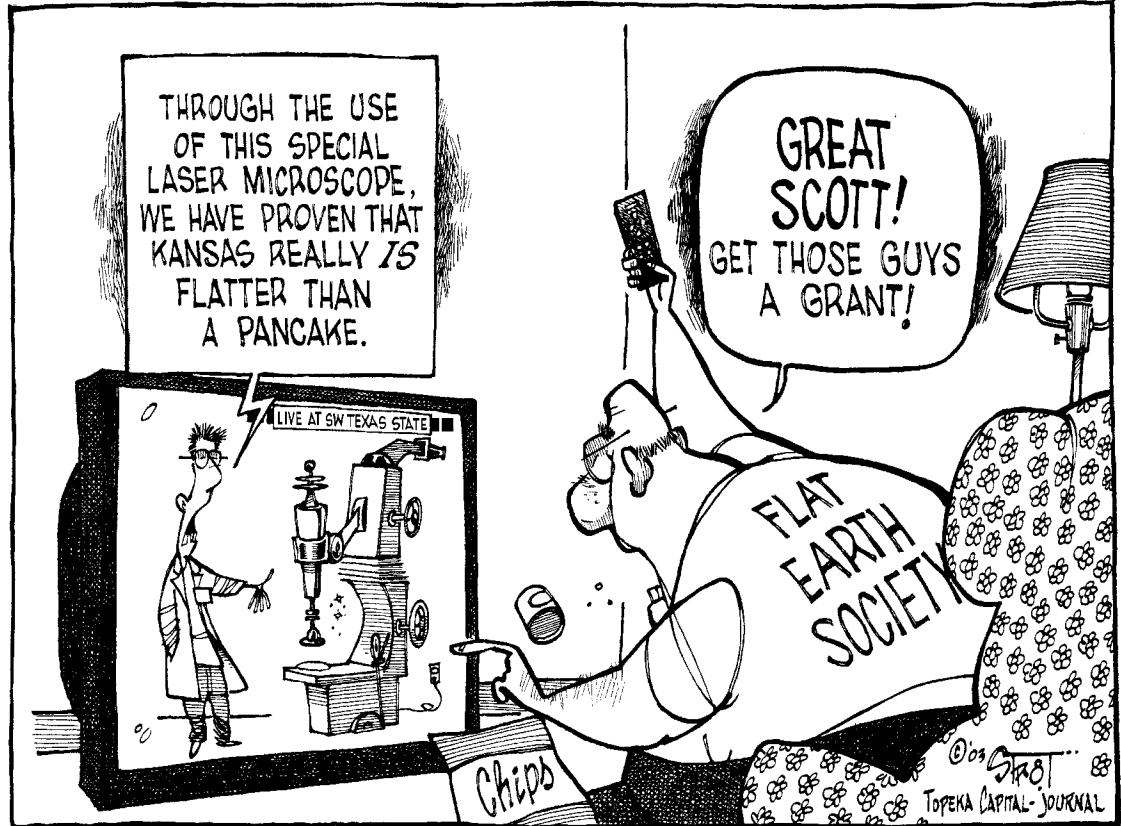
We should not forget that, as we've swept away repressive regimes in Afghanistan and Iraq, we not only eliminated bases for terrorism and death, we've been welcomed with open arms by ordinary people glad to have us there and more than happy to see the thugs blown away.

We can't solve all the world's problems, but acting on our own and with other nations, the U.S. has done some good the last few years.

And as the world grows both closer and more complex, it's likely that the only remaining superpower will have to continue to play policeman. It's part of the duty that comes with wealth, power and good fortune.

Think of it as the price of freedom.

— Steve Haynes



Gay bishop tears church apart

It seems like the dear old Episcopal Church is bent on tearing itself apart again.

This time, in fact, the church may read the entire Anglican Communion, the worldwide offspring of the Church of England.

Now that the church's general convention has ratified the ordination of an openly homosexual bishop — and blessed a service for same-sex marriage — many are talking about leaving.

Worse yet, the victors — the supposed champions of diversity — seem to feel that's just fine.

It's no surprise that Episcopalians would rather fight than do God's work. It's been the church's lot for the last 20-30 years. First we fought over the modernized Book of Common Prayer, then the ordination of women to the priesthood.

The modernists won both battles, as they have won this one, and then proceeded to quash any opposition. That's the problem: the liberals seem to believe in diversity only when it's *their* diversity.

After the change in the prayer book, which for the first time abandoned the 1559 language of Thomas Cranmer, bishops forced the new book on many congregations. In Colorado, the bishop sued a church that refused to use the new list of Bible readings and ousted them, installing a new liberal leadership.

Many left the church. Whole congregations loyal to the old ways fled, calling themselves Anglican or Anglo-Catholic, anything but Episcopalian.

Then came ordination of women to the priestly roles reserved to men since the time of the apostles. Many thought it was about time. Many others left the church when the change came. Some priests made a point of leaving for the vastly more conservative Roman Catholic Church.

And they were welcomed with



Along the Sappa

By Steve Haynes
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open arms.

Now the issue of homosexual clergy threatens more of the same, only worse. The archbishop of Canterbury, titular leader of all Anglicans, has called a conference. It's possible, given the uproar around the world, that the Episcopal Church in these United States may find itself ostracized for this decision. Third-world bishops have been outspoken, though no more so than some Americans.

Some observers have remarked that the church spends entirely too much time and energy talking about sexuality and not nearly enough on other matters of faith.

Perhaps that is true, but sexuality, morals and the teaching authority of the church are central to organized religion.

One pastor boils the issue down to whether the church will continue to accept scripture as its moral authority, or whether its members will just do as they please. It's a good point, though open to debate.

There is not a word of support for homosexuality in the Bible that I know of. But it's always fascinated me that while the Old Testament and the Epistles condemn the practice, Jesus apparently had no word to say on the matter while on earth.

What that means, I'm not sure. In terms of science, we understand little about the root causes of homosexual behavior. It has been loathed and feared in most societies, but is that just prejudice?

It would be easy to see all this as just a continuation of the quarrels

that have, since the Reformation which created the Episcopal Church, split Christianity into a thousand sects.

What difference will a couple more make? Other denominations have struggled with these issues, some deciding one way, some the other.

But Episcopalians have long prided themselves on their diversity. In a kinder, gentler era, that meant the division over whether you said a mass every Sunday — High Church, more Catholic — or just the Bible readings and prayers — low church, more like the Methodists.

Until the prayer book change, though, we mostly managed to live with our differences. You found a church where you felt at home, and then lived with its quirks.

No longer. But it's hard to imagine that God put us here to quarrel. I think it's our own poor understanding of what God wants that creates the problems.

And it's not the argument that is the problem. We have to argue out our differences and pray greatly to find God's way.

It's the lack of tolerance for different views on both sides that makes the fight so wrong. It speaks to a lack of humility, a lack of prayer, a lack of good will. It's nothing new, but I don't think it's anything we should be proud of.

The Lord, after all, will sort these things out in His time. I don't think he'll be giving points for those who hate and fight one another in His name.

Girls 'help' her arrange kitchen

Now, where would they have put the garlic salt?

Since my two girls left, I am finding kitchen utensils, spices, dishes and appliances in the oddest places. Maybe it's an age thing, but I am to the point in my life where I like things accessible, not necessarily where they look the prettiest.

I want my spatulas and mixing spoons in my crock container sitting smack-dab in the middle of my stove. I'm sort of a two-fisted hash slinger and I don't want to rummage around in a drawer on the other side of the kitchen for a long-handled wooden spoon when I'm stirring pudding that will set up like concrete if you quit for even a moment.

Don't get me wrong. I'm not complaining. In fact, I'm thrilled that they washed the dishes in the first place. They both have dishwashers and my "wash-in-the-sink/stack-to-dry" method seems pretty antiquated to them. And Halley single-handedly kept all the laundry done for four adults and one very busy 4-year-old. But it's going to take me about a week to relocate all the kitchen stuff and sort Jim's socks out of my underwear drawer.

While the girls were here, we stayed up way too late talking, didn't get all the things done we wanted to, and didn't see all the people we intended to. But we had a ball.

The old house kind of echoes this week. It feels pretty empty. How can one little person fill up a house so? Taylor has been an absolute joy to have with us. She has such a good little heart.

Last Sunday, as we prepared to leave for church, Taylor wanted to



Out Back

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know if there would be church for the little kids like she had experienced the week before when she and Alexandria went together. I assured her there would be. She got a little "antsy" during the opening songs.

"How many times are you going to sing, Grandma?" she wanted to know. She sat attentively during communion and the offering; she even paid attention during the announcements, but when the preacher said, "No children's church, except for 2- and 3-year-olds," she started to pucker.

"But Grandma, you SAID there would be church for the kids," she started to sob. This looked like it was going to get ugly.

As the little kids began marching down the center aisle behind the teacher I made a split-second decision. Let her go with them or risk having to get out of there. Besides, I didn't think the teacher would check their ID to see how old they were. It was worth the chance of getting busted. Taylor is a little on the short side for a 4-year-old, so hopefully, they just thought she was tall for a 3-year-old.

I have to share something Taylor said. I think it is pretty profound. Remember it says in the Book to

have faith as a little child.

I was fixing waffles for breakfast one morning and Taylor, of course, wanted to help. I told her she could get two eggs out of the refrigerator for me. As she was carefully balancing them while she shut the fridge door she asked, "Grandma, what would happen if I dropped one?"

"Oh, it wouldn't be the end of the world if you dropped one," I answered.

"No," Taylor said thoughtfully. "The end of the world is when everybody dies and goes to heaven." She paused, then continued. "At least everybody who believes in God."

Out of the mouths of babes.



From the Bible

He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. Luke 16:10

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Sense of direction always fails

My son has a job as delivery boy with Godfather's Pizza in Lawrence.

It's his job to get the pizza from the shop to the customer as fast as he safely can.

While visiting him last weekend, we discovered that he knows every shortcut, byway, alley, underpass, overpass, shoot-fly, through driveway and turnaround in town. He knows where the construction zones are and the fastest way across busy streets. Stoplights, he said, are bad because they just slow you down.

"If I get stopped at some of these long lights, the customer calls the shop and asks where their pizza is, and I don't get a tip."

Ah hah! That's the bottom line. He makes more in a good night in tips than he does in wages, and he doesn't want to miss out on any.

I need someone to tip me. I've always been directionally challenged. My husband says that when I was a baby, he thinks, my parents passed my head under a big magnet and it took away my sense of direction.

I told him that I have a perfectly good sense of direction. The elevator is north.

My Daddy taught me my directions when I was a little girl growing up in Concordia, and the elevator was north.

Unfortunately, I never got past that point. No matter where I am, the elevator is always to the north. My compass needle is at least bent, if not outright broken.

I have been known to head into the rising sun thinking I'm going west and wondering why the sun is in my eyes.

Once, in Colorado, I took a wrong turn and ended up in Ouray instead of Gunnison. Since these towns are



Open Season

By Cynthia Haynes
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several mountains apart, you might think I would have noticed my mistake before reaching the city limits sign at Ouray. Not so. One mountain looks a lot like every other mountain as far as I'm concerned.

You go up in fifth gear, you go down in second. You try not to hit anything like deer, elk or rocks in the road. Sometimes you're successful. When you're not, your insurance company and husband get mad at you. Your husband cools off, but the insurance company raises your rates.

Mountains are simple. Out here on the plains, it's even more fun. I go from town to town by

the elevators — they're always on the north. As I leave Goodland, I watch for the elevator at Edson, then the one at Brewster, then at Levant, then Colby.

Then, I try to figure out what that big building is over on the hillside. At this point, I stop and ask questions and directions. I'm female. I can ask directions.

Burlington, Colo.? But, how did it get here in the middle of western Kansas?

Can someone direct me to Oberlin? I need to go home?

I'd appreciate it if you didn't mention this to my husband. He says I have no sense of direction.

Write

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