

CARROLL COUNTY COMET

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Our leaders must find a balance on Iraq

By Lee H. Hamilton

As Congress asserts itself on the war in Iraq, the White House has responded with irritation. The stalemate between these two branches of government is good neither for the Congress nor the White House, and it is certainly no good for the country.

The Bush Administration's verdict on the recently passed House and Senate Iraq supplemental spending bills was swift and stern. One White House spokesman said, "You've got to ask yourself, why go through this long, drawn-out exercise of going and wheeling and cajoling and trying to buy votes within your own party when, in fact, you know it's not going to go anywhere?" Another said, "I think the founders of our nation had great foresight in realizing that it would be better to have one commander in chief managing a war, rather than 535 generals on Capitol Hill trying to do the same."

Yet the founders of our nation never envisioned an unfettered president making unilateral decisions about American lives and military power. They did indeed make the president the commander in chief, but they gave to Congress the responsibility for declaring war, for making rules governing our land and naval forces, for overseeing policy, and - of course - the ability to fund war or to cease funding it. In other words, they set up a constitutional balance of powers that requires cooperation between both branches of government.

It is hard to find any recognition of this constitutionally mandated cooperation in the White House's recent comments. The President and the leaders of Congress seem unwilling to seek the genuine consultation and pragmatic accommodation necessary to avoid stalemate and produce a more sustainable policy. Instead, each branch views the other as an obstacle to be overcome.

This is a shame. If treated with the respect required by the Constitution, Congress could play a constructive role in forging a responsible way forward in Iraq. Those 535 members of Congress, Democrats and Republicans alike, are the politicians in Washington who have to reckon in an immediate way with the toll this war is taking on our nation. They listen to their constituents' anger and heartfelt doubts; they go to the funerals of men and women killed in Iraq and Afghanistan; they field calls from anguished parents with sons and daughters in harm's way; they visit the veterans' facilities where wounded troops confront the fact that their lives will never be the same.

Congress shouldn't call all the shots just because it has its ear to the ground. The President is, and should be, the chief actor in the conduct of American foreign policy. But Congress can and should serve as an essential resource and participant in policymaking.

Congress represents beliefs found in every American community. And the American people have the war in Iraq figured out - they want Iraqis to take responsibility for their future; they want U.S. forces to leave Iraq, but they want them to leave responsibly; they want to protect U.S. interests in the Middle East. In many ways, ordinary Americans have been ahead of their political leadership in coming to grips with the situation in Iraq.

The war is an American dilemma, not a partisan one or solely a presidential one. We are not going to succeed in charting a responsible transition out of Iraq if the President and Congress are constantly at odds. The President must respect the constitutional role of Congress and its understanding of public opinion. Congress needs to find a balance between responsible criticism and responsible cooperation, supporting the President when it can and opposing him when it feels it must.

The differences between the President and the Congress are real. But consultation, not confrontation, is the best way to work them out. In the absence of consultation, relations between the President and the Congress become poisonous. Charges and counter-charges dominate the political discourse. Both sides divert their energies toward political battles, rather than policymaking. Americans lose confidence in their government. Meanwhile, Americans continue to serve and die in Iraq.

The plain fact is that for nearly two years President Bush will have to deal with a Democratic-controlled Congress, while Congress will have to deal with President Bush. Our political leaders have failed the American people on Iraq. If they cannot build bridges between their positions and respect one another's constitutional roles, neither side will succeed, our policy will suffer, and another sorrowful chapter will be added to the history of the Iraq War.

Lee Hamilton is Director of the Center on Congress at Indiana University. He was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives for 34 years.

"It seemed like a good idea at the time," that's the thought to which I hold.

I don't like inertia. I see it as the enemy. I like change and the promise of the future. But I don't like the inevitable mess one encounters between point A and point B.

Having said that, it all really started with my printer/copy machine.

The cord on my little HP printer/copier and the electrical outlet devoted to the printer dictated that the printer had to sit precariously on a corner of my office desk. There were many close calls that threatened sending the printer crashing to the floor.

What I should have done was purchase a three dollar extension cord.

Instead, I dreamed of organizing the mess that resides 24/7 on the surface of my desk.

Visions of a kind of "copy center" danced in my head. I saw neat, orderly cords, shelves for copy paper and supplies. I imagined one of those copy places with paper clips, staplers and scissors always filled and at ones disposal. In my mind I was organized, efficient, productive.

And then a friend told me about Alex, the carpenter.

On a whim, I phoned Alex. I explained what I wanted built.

Soon he was at the house measuring for the little wooden cube that would hang from the wall and finally organize my home office once and for all. The initial drawing looked good, the estimate seemed reasonable, the timetable worked. We were in business.

And then I uttered the words I would ultimately regret,

Midwest Memo

by Alan Shultz



Fiasco

"So while you're here..."

It was then I had Alex look at a walk-thru closet that I thought could be put to better use.

"More storage...and a clothes hamper."

My wife was skeptical, she left the details to me.

The plan allowed Alex a four-foot span for the built-in he was to construct. That four feet required removing part of an existing built-in. To transition between the old and the new Alex was to build a small clothes hamper at a different height and that would make the visual work.

To the drawing board Alex headed.

A week or so later my fax machine kicked on and out came drawing one - the little copy/printer center. It looked right, I initialed the drawing and faxed it back.

So far so good.

Next came the closet built-in. There it was - an armoire looking floor to ceiling built-in with drawers on the bottom, hanging in the middle, storage up top. The hamper cabinet looked good and it made the transition visually pleasing. Again, I initialed and sent back.

I sent in my deposit.

Time passed.

Then the call came from Alex, the date was set, the areas cleared

and made ready.

I will say, the copy center, the original idea behind that first call to Alex, worked fine. The piece fit the space, the copier fit on top. I can't say that the paper clips, staplers and scissors ever found their fit. I can't say that I'm more efficient. What I can say is that the copier/printer has a home and no one is going to knock it to the floor.

After the head scratching, after the disbelief, after the re-measure we reviewed Alex's drawing, the one I initialed. The drawing lacked certain essential details. There were no measurements anywhere on the page.

Alex's custom floor to ceiling wardrobe and transitional hamper combination, the one that was to fit in a space of four feet, well, it arrived "supersized." The wardrobe alone came in at five-feet wide. And for humor sake, and for the life of me I can't explain this one, Alex made the clothes hamper into a recycling center.

No kidding.

Two feet too big, and a kitchen function instead of a laundry function, who would have guessed?

In the end, Alex's jumbo wardrobe wound up on the wall that wasn't to be disturbed. It wasn't big enough to fill the entire space, so there's an awkward gap now. That gap wasn't big enough for the clothes hamper/recycling center- that has yet to find a home.

So far, whites go in the tin can section and colors go where newspapers should be.

And me, I'm learning to appreciate the finer qualities of inertia. That, and a good tape measure.

Superior Court Judge Jeffrey Smith

Superior Court judgments are gathered from public records on file in the Carroll County Clerk's office on the second floor of the courthouse, Delphi.

New Filings

Jeremy R. Riggles was charged with driving while suspended.

Randy E. Francis was charged with operating while intoxicated - endangering.

Richard C. Everett was charged with possession of marijuana.

Tyler P. Bitner was charged with illegal consumption of an alcoholic beverage.

Robert W. Pulawa was charged with reckless possession of paraphernalia.

Hayleigh C. Davis was charged with illegal consumption of an alcoholic beverage and driving while suspended.

Ernesto Trevino was charged with operating a motor vehicle without ever receiving a license

Circuit Court Judge Donald Currie

New filings are from public records available in the Carroll County Clerk's office on the second floor of the courthouse, Delphi. Other information regarding judgments and marriage dissolutions is gathered from public records found in the clerk's office.

Aames Home Loan filed a complaint on note to foreclose mortgage against Jon E. Reed and Teresa A. Reed.

Countrywide Home Loans filed a complaint to foreclose mortgage against Elmer J. Crider IV.

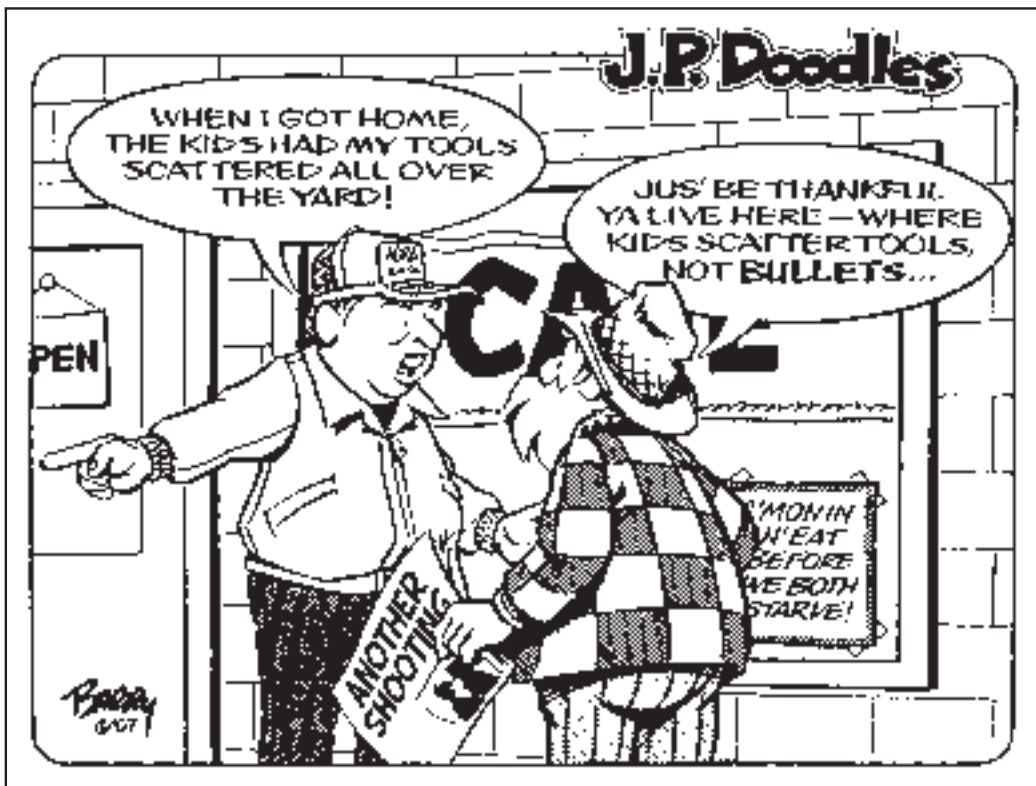
Wells Fargo Bank filed a complaint to foreclose mortgage against Jeffrey Daily.

LaSalle Bank NA filed a complaint on note and to foreclose mortgage against Sherri A. Moore and Terry R. Moore.

Kurtis G. Fouts was named executor of the estate of the late Lieselotte Wert.

The following cases were dismissed: Bank of New York Trust Co. NA vs. Rodney L. Moudy; Capital One Bank vs. Steven A. Fultz; Bank of New York vs. Travis L. Davis; and Wells Fargo Bank Minnesota NA vs. Michael L. Taber and Catressa K. Taber, et al.

Correction: David Demaggio was incorrectly reported as in arrears in the payment of child support in an earlier edition of the Comet. Jenny Demaggio is in arrears in the amount of \$3,984.



Letters to the Editor

The Comet welcomes letters to the editor responding to articles and events in the news. They must include the author's name, address and telephone number. The letter writer's name and city/town will appear in the paper - no exceptions. Letters must be 400 words or less in length. Please send your letters to: editor@carrollcountycomet.com; Letters to the Editor, Comet, P.O. Box 26, Flora, IN 46929 or P.O. Box 179, Delphi, IN 46923; or fax 574-967-3384 or 765-564-2010. By submitting a letter or opinion article, the author grants the Comet the right to publish, distribute, archive or use the work in print, electronic, on-line or other format.

Indiana HB 1008 was a bad bill

Recent Indiana House Bill 1008 known as the cigarette tax, was wisely defeated 52-44. Only 19 of 49 Republicans voted for it. It was a classic mistake of combining various good intentions with poor, complex legislation.

HB 1008 would have raised the price of cigarettes 25 cents per pack. It would have funded with this increase various social programs for the poor. It also makes a pilot project for small employers to obtain health care coverage for the employees. Here lies a big problem. Is the bill's objective to get people to quit smoking? Maybe it's trying to raise taxes? Or, possibly, the bill is bent on making new social programs.

Conservative Republicans bristled at this tax increase and expansion of government. Regional Republican State Reps. Jim Buck, Bill Friend, and Eric Gutwein voted against it. Only Representative Rich McClain voted for it. Rep. Bill Dais called it, "The biggest entitlement program ever seen." Muncie Republican Jack Lutz said it would "create another government bureaucracy."

Sin taxes on alcohol and cigarette sales are traditionally unreliable and who would pay for the \$260 million current price tag on getting these programs started? If the original dollar per pack had been passed on cigarettes imagine

that fiscal nightmare. Fortunately, long-term visionaries defeated this bad bill. They should be commended for it.

Rick Gibbs
Forces Indiana President
Logansport

New cemetery flagpole to honor our veterans

This past winter the board of directors of the Maple Lawn Cemetery announced that they were beginning a fundraising project for a new flagpole for the Veteran's Memorial at the cemetery. Numerous community organizations and individuals have already donated to this worthy cause but more money is needed. The original plan was for the installation to be done in time for a dedication ceremony that would take place during the Memorial Day holiday.

The old flagpole is in bad shape and is definitely in need of replacement but there is a greater cause that exists in this project. We have many veterans already at rest at the cemetery and many more who someday will. The men and women who have served our country in times of war and times of peace made a sacrifice of their time and sometimes of their lives for the rest of us to enjoy the freedoms that we have. Those of us who have never served cannot truly understand the love for our country and their comrades that

makes up the special bond that veterans share.

The veterans of World War I are gone and the veterans of World War II are joining them all too quickly. We have many among us who have fought in Korea, Vietnam, and Desert Storm. They have had duty stations that took them to the far corners of the world in all types of situations.

You may personally know someone who is on active duty right now in the Mideast in combat or a supporting role. They all serve because they love their country, their families and the friends they left behind. It is because of their sacrifice for us that they are worthy of being honored.

The flagpole that will be placed and the flag that will be raised is

for all of them. Every donation that is given, \$5 or \$500, is for them.

I ask that every member of this community look at their lives and consider what it might have been if not for the sacrifice of our veterans. Please consider giving what you can for this worthy cause as it is truly larger than the flagpole itself.

Please make your checks payable to: Maple Lawn Cemetery Flagpole Fund and mail to Jerry Reinke, 1495 E. 50N, Flora, IN 46929. (Reinke is the chairman of the fundraiser.)

Please do not delay as the deadline is upon us. Thank you for your consideration.

Tom and Jill Kressley
Flora

Because the public has a right to know...

In an effort to help our readers understand what government meetings are happening when and where, the Comet will now print upcoming meetings on a weekly basis.

- Wednesday, April 18
- √Delphi Board of Works: 5:30 p.m.
- Friday, April 20
- √County Council Special Meeting: 8 a.m.
- Tuesday, April 24
- √Area Plan Commission: 7 p.m.
- Thursday, April 26
- √Twin Lakes Regional Sewer District: 7 p.m.
- White County Government Building, Monticello
- Friday, April 27
- √County Council: 8 a.m.

Public Notices appearing in this issue of the Comet:

- Sheriff Sale-Merlin5B
- Sheriff Sale-Rosenbarger.....5B
- Carroll Sch-Pool Bids5B
- Sheriff Sale-Tyra5B
- Sheriff Sale-Thatcher.....5B
- Sheriff Sale-Marchand.....5B
- Sheriff Sale-Powers5B
- T.L. Schl-Not. to Bidders5B
- Jackson TWP-Taxpayers5B

Questions concerning Indiana's Open Door and Public Access Laws may be directed to the state's public access office, at 1-800-228-6013.

Fear diary will harm environment

I am hopeful the people responsible for controls in the state and county have the necessary tools and people to keep our lands from becoming an environmental nightmare. However, I suspect our enforcement will drift along the path of Michigan and Ohio since their regulations didn't work well for them either.

I have already informed Myron Sink, our present tenant that our farm will not be used as part of the 1,700 acres he says will be needed for a "dumping ground" for the millions of gallons of manure. I wouldn't allow that to happen to our good friends and neighbors for any amount of money.

My dad always impressed upon me to try to "leave the place a little bit better than it was when you found it."

Lord help us as we throw ourselves upon the mercy of the state and county regulators to respect our property rights and to prevent our area from becoming an E-coli cesspool.

Bob and Bobbi Shaffer
Vero Beach, Fla.

Letters Cont'd. next page

Marriage Licenses

Bill Francis Williams II, 31, and Latasha Lynn Duvall, 20, both of Flora.

Web poll

Tell us starting Wednesday at our web site, carrollcountycomet.com

Each week the Comet polls its readers on a different topic. Vote online at carrollcountycomet.com starting each Thursday, and then click the Comments link to send us an email voicing your opinion. The best responses will be printed the following week.

Should the commissioners hire a certified engineer as the next county highway supervisor?

Yes
No

Last Weeks results

The Indiana House has approved legislation that would establish a statewide ban on smoking in most enclosed public places, including sports arenas, indoor places of employment, and residences licensed to provide daycare.

63% Am in favor
38% Not in favor
Total responses: 48