

commentary

from other pens...

Jeffords' stand recalls other historic moves

By Lawrence L. Knutson

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — A quiet Vermonter with no taste for theatrics adds his name this week to a short list of Americans whose actions challenged the prevailing political currents. For some, it had an unhappy result.

Sen. James Jeffords has history looking over his shoulder as he steps across the aisle, casting off a lifetime as a Republican to vote as an independent and throw control of a 50-50 Senate to the Democrats.

From the republic's earliest days through the national dispute over the Vietnam War and beyond, some politicians at odds with government policy or the demands of their parties have been unwilling to alter course or bend with the wind, even under extreme pressure.

When Jeffords defended his action in terms of "my own conscience and the principles I have stood for my whole life," he placed himself where other political figures have stood. Few found it comfortable.

Sen. Edmund G. Ross of Kansas "looked down into my open grave" when he stood at his Senate desk, rebuffed fellow Republicans and voted "not guilty" at the impeachment trial of Democratic President Andrew Johnson. Angry voters ended Ross' political career.

John Quincy Adams was addressed as "Lucifer" and called a "renegade" when as a senator in 1807 he defied the Federalist Party's fierce opposition to President Jefferson, becoming the only Federalist to vote for purchase of the Louisiana Territory.

Sen. John F. Kennedy included Adams, Webster and Ross in his 1961 Pulitzer Prize-winning history, "Profiles in Courage," listing them on a list of politicians he believed exemplified "grace under pressure."

Last month, former President Ford received the "Profiles in Courage" award for his 1974 pardon of Richard M. Nixon. Ford's act spared Nixon possible criminal charges growing out of the Watergate affair. It may also have cost Ford election as president in his own right in 1976.

Senate historian Donald A. Ritchie says 18 senators have switched parties since 1890. Five are still in the Senate, including Jeffords and Sen. Strom Thurmond of South Carolina who switched from Democrat to Republican in 1964.

In terms of impact, Ritchie calls Jeffords' switch "definitely unique" for the first time it changes control of the Senate outside of an election.

Searching for the closest parallel, Ritchie points to the party switch by liberal Republican Wayne Morse of Oregon who declared himself an independent after he broke with Dwight D. Eisenhower during the 1952 election campaign. That helped switch party control of the Senate, but only in slow motion.

When faced in 1953 with the possibility that his vote could decide Senate control, Morse said he felt ethically bound not to tilt the balance of power. But in the 84th Congress (1955-1957) Morse moved his seat to the Democratic side of the aisle. That gave Democrats a slim majority. In 1956, Morse ran for re-election as a Democrat and won.

"There have been a lot of people who at one time or another had to bite the bullet and stand by their convictions," Ritchie says.

Jeffords decision to leave the GOP brought a round of condemnation familiar to others who challenged their political peers.

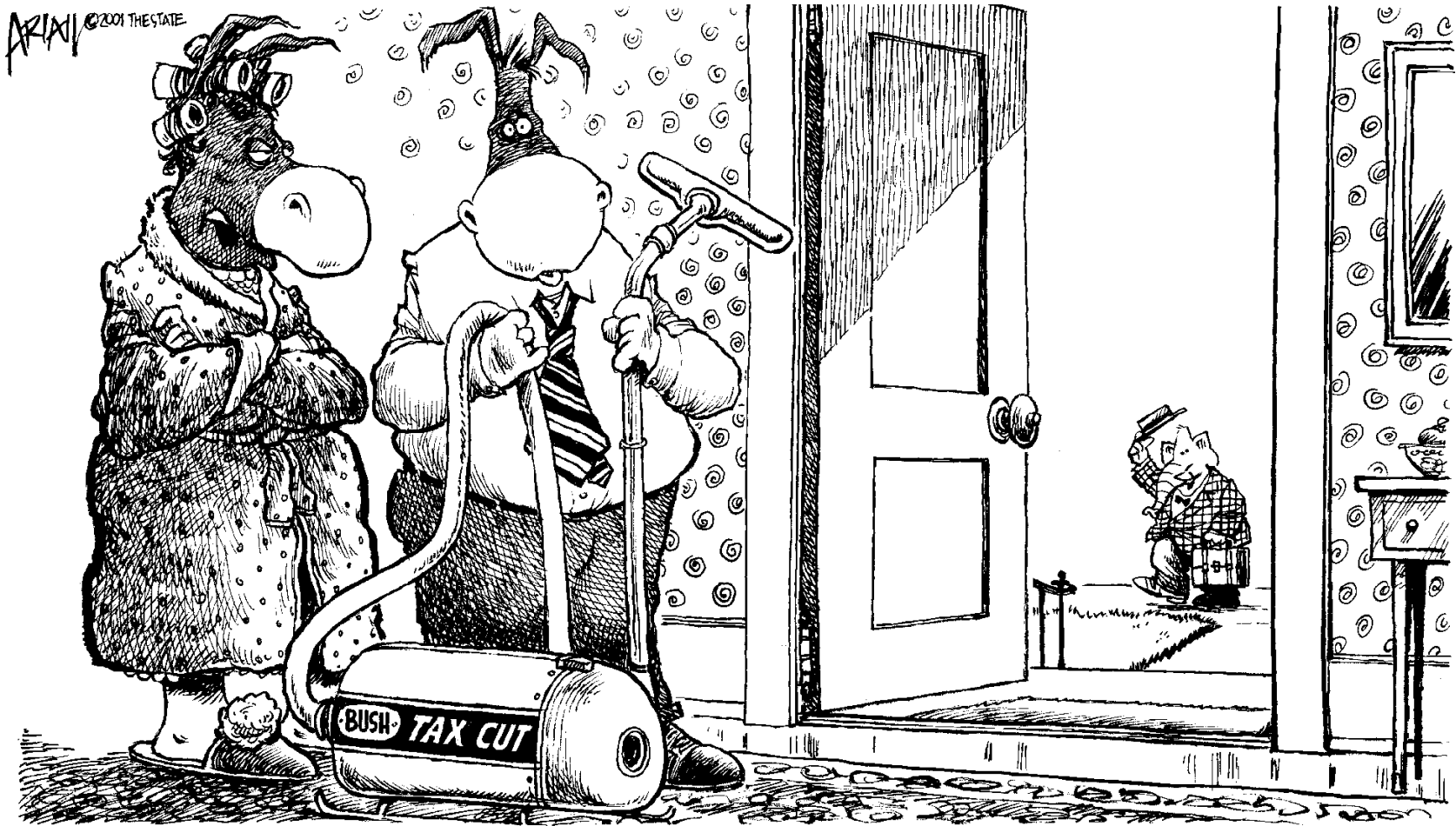
"Benedict Jeffords" and "Turncoat Senator," hostile headlines proclaimed. "A coup of one," said Senate Republican leader Trent Lott.

Announcing his switch, Jeffords invoked the memories of independent Vermont politicians going back to Rep. Matthew Lyon in the 18th century, who was re-elected while serving a four-month jail sentence for exercising free speech and violating the Alien and Sedition Acts.

He included Sen. George Aiken, who famously said that the way to extricate America from Vietnam was to declare victory and get out.

"They spoke their minds, often to the dismay of their party leaders, and did their best to guide the party in the direction of those fundamental principles they believed in," Jeffords said.

EDITOR'S NOTE — Lawrence L. Knutson has covered the White House, Congress and Washington's history for more than 30 years.



"WE DON'T NEED ONE," YOU SAID! "LET ME DO THE TALKING — I KNOW HOW TO HANDLE THESE SALESMEN," YOU SAID!

A dust bowl in China? Nay it's farm surpluses!

Would we still have farm surpluses if there was a dust bowl in China? Would the U.S. be in trouble if there was? No but China could be.

There are reports that great clouds of yellow dust has been reported in the western United States. China has dust bowl and the eco-terrorists want to plant trees to hold back the Gobi Desert?

Let's see here how do you grow trees in the desert without watering them, and China doesn't have enough of water for its crops. Bet China won't blow up the dams on the Yellow River they would wine and dine Caterpillar and John Deere and build more.

Jiang Zemn is already reconciled to importing more food not less to feed his people, so why has China just sold 600,000 metric tonnes of corn at \$2.62-\$2.67 a bushel?

That sounds like he needs the money more than a corn reserve. Then again it might mean he wants to import something like American satellites. On the other hand it is better to sell China more satellites than to let them steal em!

Since the world currency crisis trade has become a four letter word, the best American farmers could do was \$2.00 a bushel with the marketing Loan Deficiency payments (LDP). So once again it's fried chicken for Jiang and chicken litter, for U.S. farmers.

Even if you can believe that a U.S. surveillance flight in the Taiwan Straits was a spy plane, you would never believe Chinese grain stocks were



wayne gattshall

• wayne's world

increased nearly 250 percent by the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization, (FAO). Such an absurdity would make a peeping tom blush. Furthermore, the grain reserves in China is not the Los Alamos nuclear labs in New Mexico. Nobody, knows how much they have.

Anyway whether China had a grain reserve of three billion or nine billion it would need every kernel. How would you like making it on five table-spoons of Corn Chexs a day.

In China a grain reserve includes such things as pulse (straw), potatoes, millet, rice, wheat and corn. Just like the old Soviet Union, it's soft underbelly is how to feed one billion three hundred million people.

The opening of agricultural trade with the U.S.S.R. was the beginning of the end to the cold war. If there had not been grain exports to The U.S.S.R. there would have been no Salt Agreement. Even Arthur Burns, Chairman of the Federal Reserve was aghast over how much Ivan wanted.

He was told use the most favored nation status that gave him the right to use our export-import

bank but he got neither most favored nor financing, he had to sell gold to buy the grain.

Well what was wrong with that? Nothing! There was nothing wrong with him paying market prices for it either. He was told if you want it buy it...buy it, and the American wheat millers should do likewise. Use our open market system. All you have to do is show us the money and you pay the freight. But now we say we will give the grain away under 416(b) Food For Progress and pay the freight too... and the fancy guys say this is free trade?

Even more so when the U.S.S.R. bought grain the prices went up, but when good ole Uncle Jaing sells 600,000 metric tonnes of corn he manipulates the U.S. corn market.

China has always been vulnerable to food embargoes. At the very same time of the downing of a U.S. surveillance plane Jiang was in Argentina and other South American countries doing something.

Even if you had been kicked in the head by a mule who would believe Chinese grain stocks, was increased nearly 250 percent by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization. That is more then we have here in the good ole U.S. of A.

What we need is a Most Favored Farmer status.

As long as we have a monetized U.S. dollar that is on the moon, we will always have farm prices, lower than a snake's belly. Wonder if Jiang was in South America buying corn for a \$1 a bushel?

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How to cancel your long distance service

Dear Attorney General Stovall:

I've had the same long distance carrier for years, but I rarely make long distance telephone calls. Recently I have become increasingly annoyed by the monthly bills I pay just to keep the company as my service provider.

I have decided that I want to cancel the service, but they keep ignoring my written requests. I am becoming very frustrated.

Attorney General Stovall, just how does someone cancel their long distance service?

Dear Kansas Consumer:

While my usual advice to consumers is to always put any request in writing, you have touched upon one of the few exceptions. In order to cancel your long distance service, you should actually call your



carla j. stovall

• consumer corner

local phone company and ask to be placed on "no PIC" status. There is a one-time fee that will be assessed to your bill for the first month, followed by a minimal monthly fee. The monthly fee is usually less than what you pay the long distance company to keep the service, so it is economically feasible.

Many consumers have attempted to write "can-

cel" on their bill when they pay it. This does not work, as the long distance company does not read phone bills. Others have included a note with their phone bill, or sent the note to the billing address. Once again, this is futile as the billing center for the long distance company does not read any correspondence.

Although it seems to not make sense to contact your local carrier to cancel your long distance service, this is actually what needs to be done.

To protect yourself, make a note of the date, time and person at the phone company with whom you spoke. If you have any problems, you can reference this record when you call to follow-up. Finally, if you continue to have problems, you may contact my Consumer Protection division at 1-800-432-2310.

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Steever Water Park the envy of other area cities

To the Editor:

I am writing in response to the article about our wonderful new water park. I am thrilled that it's doors are finally open. We now have a community pool facility that is the envy of other area cities. It was an expensive venture, but worth every penny in my estimation.

I moved here from Wichita almost four years ago. I spent many summers at our community pool. It is an old facility, but decently maintained. A diving pool with high and low boards, a lap pool, and an infant pool complete the swim area. Today, it costs \$4.25 for 13 and older, \$3.50 for 6-12, \$3 for 2-5 and 2 and under are free with a paying adult (18 or older). Passes are available, but I don't know the cost.

Our new Steever Water Park is far superior to my "old pool" and much cheaper to use. One concern I have is for the many parents who send their children to the pool every day and essentially use the pool staff as a babysitting service. I see it happen every summer. I think raising the entrance fee is not only necessary to cover operating costs, but may also be a deterrent to parents who depend on the lifeguards for child care.

I for one, will gladly pay the higher fee. I look forward to enjoying our new water park with my son this summer. By the way, it will cost me \$4 every time we come. That's still cheaper than Wichita and a lot more fun.

Tracy L. Skipper
Goodland

To the Editor:

Oh, Happy Day! There is a rooster in the neighborhood. What a JOY to hear early in the morning ... How perfect if an entire flock could replace the



from our readers

• to the editor

legions of barking dogs, guarding their "home-steads," in dire peril before sunup, from the coughing, explosive vehicle of the morning paper delivery person, the flowing water run-off from sprinkler systems washing away the bricks on Main Street, squirrels, birds, blowing trash, loose dogs, and, horror of horrors, innocents striving to lower cholesterol before the evil sun aims to inflict malignant melanoma. One can only hope the rooster can remain ... Be a crying shame if we lose him and his one- or two-hour long morning serenade, and have to keep the day-long hysteria of unattended outdoor pets.

M.B. Cooper
Goodland

To the Editor:

The Sherman County Historical Society would like to thank everyone for their support of the First Annual Northwest Kansas History Conference sponsored by our society. Your door prize donation was greatly appreciated and helped make our conference a successful event.

We appreciate your support .
Brenda S. Ross
Goodland

To the Editor:

Thank you for your generosity in awarding me with a \$220 scholarship. It will help tremendously

in furthering my education.
Laurie A. Scott
Goodland
Editor's Note: Thanks goes to the businesses that make the Student of the Week Scholarship program possible. We are proud of the businesses who support this program and happy to be able to aid some of our young people in pursuing their education after graduating from Goodland High School.

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