

commentary

from our viewpoint...

Time for state action to legalize all raffles

Isn't it about time that Kansas legalized church and civic raffles and other common fund raisers?

Under our strict gambling laws, the church ladies and the hospital auxiliary are breaking the law when they sell tickets on a quilt. The Lions Club is committing a crime if it raffles off a big-screen television. The Chamber of Commerce is in violation of the criminal code if it wants to sell chances on a bike.

And while much has changed since the days when all forms of gambling were outlawed in our straight-laced state, common charity fund-raisers still are not legal.

The state runs the biggest gambling racket today, with its Lottery scratchers and the numbers game known as Lotto. Across the U.S., states have muscled the mob out of this field, taking the money for schools, prisons, economic development and other public purposes.

Indian tribes are allowed to run casinos in Kansas under an agreement with the state. This was more or less forced on the governor under federal law, which allows tribes to run casinos if gambling is legal in a state. The Legislature authorized gambling at horse and dog tracks, hoping (in vain, as it turned out) to spark major economic development. The tracks have never made much money.

Bingo is legal here. Churches and civic groups can get a license to run bingo games, another form of gambling. Nearly every town has at least one bingo game.

Merchants commonly run raffles as part of sales promotions, either for a single store, a chain or a group promoting town business. These are limited, though, because they cannot contain all three elements of a classic lottery, or gambling scheme. Usually merchants get around this by offering free entries, with the tag line, "no purchase necessary to win" or some such.

A little-known fact is that it's not legal to advertise gambling and raffles for the most part. Federal law prohibits advertising lotteries, other than legal lotteries, in the mail or on a broadcast station. That keeps newspapers and local radio stations from promoting the ladies' aid quilt drawing or the Rotary cruise raffle.

Because these things are so common and so benign, the authorities usually don't pay much attention. Postal regulations, which once forbade any promotions of gambling, now allow newspapers to mention legal lotteries.

If the Legislature made charitable and merchant lotteries legal in our state, groups would be able to advertise them.

As it stands now, however, the state and the tribes have a lock on legal gambling, other than bingo, in Kansas. There has been no move to change that lately, except for the constant attempts by the dog and horse tracks to install slot machines.

Isn't it silly to make grandma a criminal when she works the church bazaar, while so many forms of serious gambling are legal in our state?

We think the Legislature should change this law, and make charity gambling legal. — *Steve Haynes*

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Working our way through the stages of grief

I don't know about you, but I've been experiencing grief.

Whenever something of value is lost, humans go through a grieving process. There are many stages of grief and most of us have traveled through those stages in rapid order the past weeks.

It hasn't been a steady climb up a ladder. We've been up and down and back through many of the stages - depending on what we've heard or the reactions we've seen from others. The emotions we've felt have been like a roller coaster:

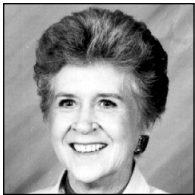
We all started with shock and disbelief. Some of us are still there.

We've gone on to express that shock and the emotions that go with it. Some of us are still in that stage.

Some of us feel ourselves slipping in and out of depression. We feel lonely and helpless. At times, some of us have felt physically ill. Our minds want to shut down and protect our bodies from the pain.

We have had moments of panic - wanting to scream our outrage to keep from feeling helpless.

I felt relief that all my sons who are military-re-



lorna g. t.

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lated were out of harm's way. Then I felt guilty to be so happy about it, knowing other mothers would no longer hear their children's voices.

Many of us are stuck in the anger stage of grief. We want revenge. We want punishment. We want the nebulous leadership killed. We want the hate to stop. But it can't stop, if we keep hating.

Some of us have not wanted to return to normalcy. We hesitate to get our lives back to a regular schedule. It's almost like by doing that we're denying the evil that has happened.

These are all normal stages of grief. They are all ways of coping with loss, being able to go on living until we can find a way to celebrate life again.

More innocence is gone from our society. His-

torians talk about the care-free, innocence lost after Pearl Harbor. That attack came deliberately on a Sunday morning when it was known that Americans would be the least vigilant. They liked their weekends off; they had established regular patterns of getting Sundays off from work.

Now we have had another disruption to our comfortable, predictable habits of life. This attack was aimed for a weekday - wanting the maximum number of people to be at work.

This attack was not just to hurt Americans; it was to strike at freedom on the very soil that sustains freedom around the world.

We have been initiated into the pain and terror and misery that much of the world has faced for generations. We are no longer out of reach. It can happen to us!

The stages of grief can be crippling, or they can be healing. Much depends on our attitudes and determination. We can never get through this ordeal if we let ourselves be stuck in the anger stage.

We need to stamp out evil, wherever it exists. We may seek punishment, but never revenge.

Post-stress disorder



diana west

• commentary

Something is different. You can feel the adrenaline of fear and fury subsiding as a sense of resignation prevails, cooling heads and quieting the bang of runaway pulses.

The question is, are we resigned to our cause, or resigned to our fate? I sometimes wonder if, in the end, we will just get used to a more perilous world. Let's hope not. Let's hope that it's just the jitters of a limbo period before America's course of action becomes clear.

Still, there is something disquieting about certain developments large and small. Maybe it's in the sudden emphasis on "evidence" of Osama bin Laden's role in the attack of Sept. 11, as though we were preparing to bring someone to book, not to battle. Maybe it's in the necessarily dispassionate, and consequently numbing, process of assessing the damage to, say, lower-Manhattan subway lines. Or maybe it's in the jarring, fleeting note of celebration orchestrated to accompany a security decision to station National Guard troops at the nation's airports. Life does go on. But is there some vital edge lost in the "return to normalcy"?

It's not just at home where the first surge of outrage is abating. Already, air strikes on Afghanistan have been "pushed back" as key regional "allies" succumb to mass vapors — brought on by nerves, not nerve gas. This necessitated the immediate dispatch of top American officials, no doubt specially outfitted with fans and glasses of water, to the government buildings of Saudi Arabia, Oman and Uzbekistan to coax these not-quite-stalwarts into granting us permission to fly out of such bases as Prince Sultan air base, a state-of-the-art command center the United States finished building for Saudi Arabia earlier this year.

And we're only talking permission to strike at Osama bin Laden in Afghanistan. For all the rhetorical bell-tones sounding from the peaks of

power about the crusade — sorry, campaign — against global terrorism, the scope of our target on the ground has seemed to narrow before our eyes. It seems to have swung its sights away from the terror networks and the nation-states that sponsor them to zoom in on Osama bin Laden and Al Qaeda — with even the Taliban, perhaps, now out of the picture. This is cold comfort to those who believe that the forces making war on our way of life are not confined to a single man and his gang.

Then again, we could be entering Phase I of a methodical, long-term plan to eliminate anti-Western terrorism "root and branch," as the saying goes. Maybe there is a Phase II that will finally, belatedly neutralize Iraq, a bona fide root and branch of global terror if ever there was one. After all, the White House quickly contradicted reports that Jordan's King Abdullah said that George W. Bush personally assured him the United States wouldn't strike Iraq. Even so, a disappointing air of plausibility to this notion lingers.

Certainly nothing Secretary of State Colin Powell has said lately dispels it. When asked by The New York Times for a "definition of victory," Powell replied, "I see the success of this campaign measured in the restoration of a degree of security in society where people are not as frightened as they are now, or were, as a result of what happened on the 11th of September." Victory as "a degree of security ... where people are not as frightened"? Such a less-than-sweeping vision is unlikely to,

say, boost the consumer comfort index, let alone set hearts a-beating. Although not known for inspiring rhetoric, Powell doesn't sound as if he believes rush hour will never again be a killing field. Then again, he did warm to his subject, adding, more encouragingly, "I see success in this campaign when there is less terrorism, far less — preferably zero terrorism — with a global reach."

But what is "terrorism"? This may sound like a preposterous question, but there are sanity-defying discussions underway — so far largely confined to the Arab world — in search of a new meaning. Abdelouh Belkaziz, head of the world's largest Muslim organization, the Saudi-based Organization of Islamic Conference, has offered to devise a working definition of terrorism that includes suicide attacks on the United States, but excludes suicide attacks on Israel — which, he says, constitute "national resistance." At an Arab-Muslim conference in Beirut this week, "activists" and clerics, among them the leaders of Islamic Jihad and Hezbollah, went further still, defining the United States itself as a "sponsor of terrorism" for its support of Israel.

It's hard to say what success so obscene a movement to corrupt thought and language might actually enjoy. It shows, however, particularly as those first stabbing pains from the attack begin to dull, that there is an urgent need to keep our resolve firm and sharp, honed by both a strategic and moral clarity.

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