

commentary

from other pens...

Lafayette's return trip is legendary, profitable

By Lawrence L. Knutson

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — In the summer of 1824, an aging French aristocrat with a passion for liberty crossed the Atlantic and went on the road. The return to America of Marie Jean Paul Joseph Roche Yves Gilbert du Motier, the Marquis de Lafayette, became a legend all its own. Over the next 14 months, Lafayette traveled thousands of miles and visited all 24 states. After an absence of 40 years he was thronged, feasted and endlessly toasted throughout. Lafayette mania ruled America. There were reasons Americans longed to salute the 67-year-old Frenchman they quickly dubbed "The Nation's Guest."

The 50th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence was approaching. Lafayette was the last surviving general officer of the American Revolution and an advocate of its ideals before his death in 1834. As a young volunteer in 1776 he poured his own fortune into the cause. Cannon salutes roared out from the moment Lafayette landed in New York City. There were parading soldiers, illuminations, banners, bonfires, triumphal arches and countless reunions with grizzled but enthusiastic revolutionary veterans.

"There was, in fact, no town where Lafayette was not anxiously awaited, no state which could bear to miss his visit," one biographer wrote.

Arriving in Washington, the general was ushered into the rotunda of the Capitol while cannon boomed outside and thousands of people "rent the air with acclamations of joy and welcome."

At a dinner that evening Lafayette delighted his hosts with the toast: "The City of Washington, the central star of the constellation which enlightens the whole world."

Aware the French Revolution and wars had drained Lafayette's fortune, Congress voted him \$200,000 and 25,000 acres of land in Florida. Being Congress, it couldn't quite do it without debate.

Sen. Nathaniel Macon of North Carolina said, while it was true Lafayette had spent much money in the service of the United States, so had many native-born Americans.

Sen. Robert Hayne of South Carolina calculated that in the six years beginning in 1776, Lafayette had spent \$140,000 of his money in the service of the United States, a total that reached \$200,000 with interest. "He put shoes on the feet of your barefoot and suffering soldiery," Hayne cried. "He spent his fortune on you, he shed his blood for you; and without acquiring anything but a claim upon your gratitude he impoverished himself." The bill passed the Senate, 37-7. President James Monroe quickly signed it into law.

Lafayette accepted with the thanks "of an old American soldier and adopted son of the United States — two titles dearer to my heart than all the treasures of the world." He quickly sold most of the Florida land.

The general revisited the battlefield at Yorktown, stood silently before Washington's tomb and was Thomas Jefferson's guest.

"They flew into the arms of each other," one newspaper reported.

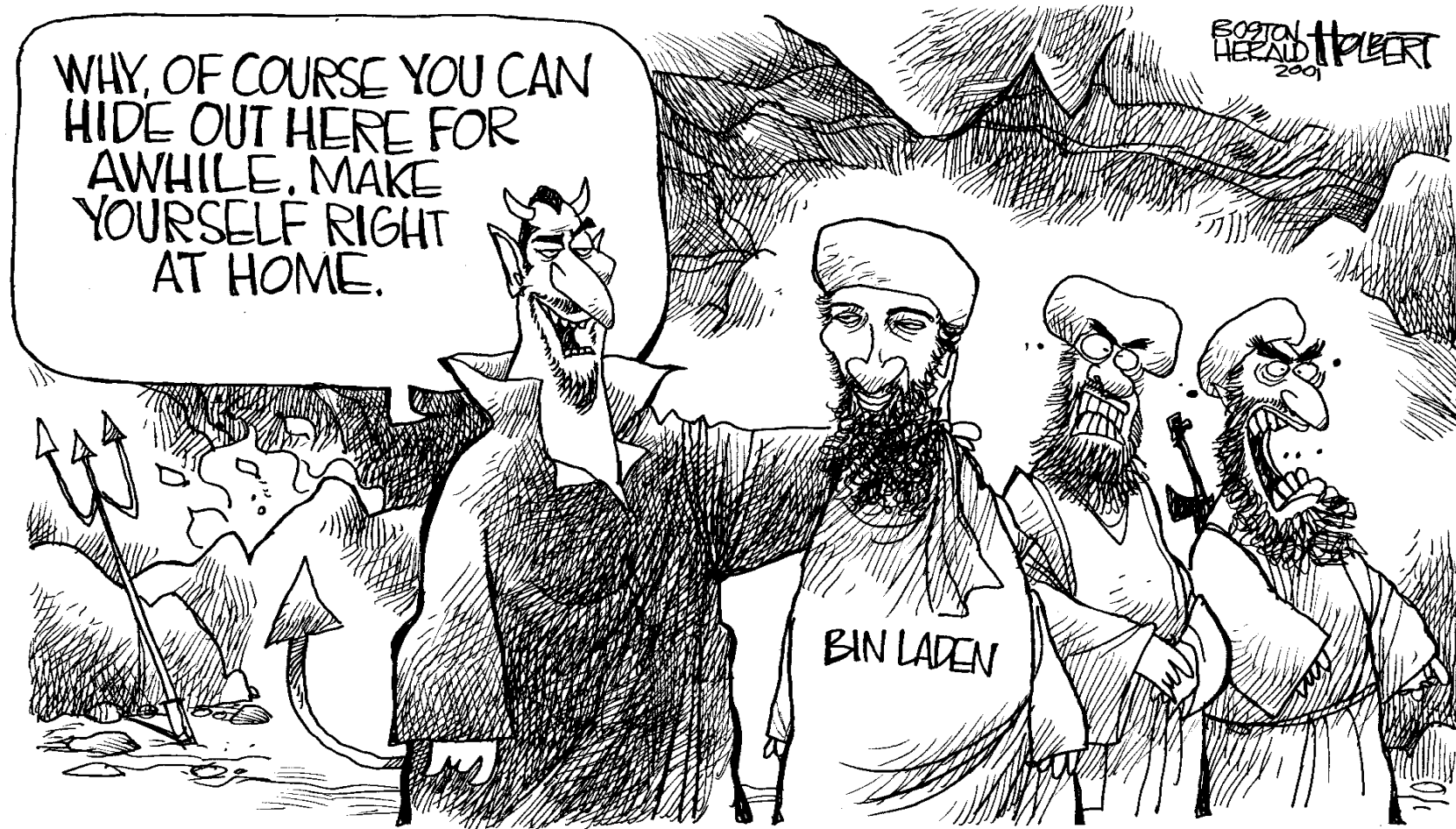
On his travels Lafayette witnessed an American presidential election in which Monroe was succeeded by John Quincy Adams. He was called upon for every imaginable service: giving away brides at weddings, laying cornerstones, presenting trophies for prize pigs and cattle.

A souvenir industry grew up in Lafayette's wake. It produced a cascade of sheet music, portraits, commemorative plates, bottles, jewelry and medals of all descriptions.

Towns and counties in at least 26 states named themselves for Lafayette or for LaGrange, his home in the French countryside.

The park across from the White House was renamed Lafayette Square. And the House of Representatives accepted a full-length portrait of the old general.

After 177 years the painting remains in the House chamber. **EDITOR'S NOTE** — Lawrence L. Knutson has covered the White House, Congress and Washington's history for 34 years.



AFGHANISTAN HAS MANY CAVES WHERE BIN LADEN COULD BE Like grain embargos and bombing Afghanistan?

Another farm-food bill you say? Yupe the Tribe (Congress) took up cock fighting and pit bull imports. Have a ethanol reserve for ADM and rice in Texas. And yes the eco-terrorists got an 80 percent increase in spending.

The Gypsy Moths north-east congressmen think a wildlife preserve is something you eat for breakfast.

They debated a point of order for an hour you would think they all was Senator Joseph McCarthy hunting commies in the State Department and Hollywood.

The Gypsy Moths wanted more money spent on food stamps and food aid. They say its unfair we are not getting enough money for our shangrilas in the hills. They want money to make their private game preserves.

It's like a tax cut for the rich, Its tacky to pay the farmers who produce 54 percent of the commodities but get 42 percent of the payments.

Their kissing cousins in Florida wanted Joe six pack to help them buy back the everglades, and call it sugar subsidies. Bet they want a shark reserve too.

They just don't get it — it's all about cheap corn sweetener from Mexico, Pepsi and Coke. Even if our Chinese agent (Secretary of Agriculture) gave them the sugar out of the Department of Agriculture sugar reserve candy bars would still go up.

Its like 70 \$2.00 loaves of bread from \$2.50 wheat. Good ole Viagra Bob (Dole) was duped again.

Farmers don't have a have a consistency in Congress, and, quicker than a New York City hedge fund gets a bailout, the free-food-pentagon (food processors) have their own armies marching up and down the halls of Congress.

They would tear capital hill down brick by brick if we didn't have farm subsidies. They may say farm subsidies faster than Chinese spy gets out of jail but it's nothing but a processor subsidy.



wayne gattshall

• wayne's world

Everything farmers produce are in the tank. So another farm bill from that mosquito infested swamp along the Potomac is xenophobic stupidity.

When they say free trade it means more agriculture imports. It would be better to farm in Mexico and Canada.

Just in case anyone has noticed the frequent mention of the embargo of farmers grain it's because it is why we have this Department of Agriculture-free-food-complex, legislation.

After having said that, there is a striking similarity between grain embargoes and the bombing of the World Trade Center. One closed down the Stock Market and the other closed the futures exchanges. However, that is the end of any similarity.

Was there a "be patriotic and buy U.S. grain?" Was there a \$215 billion bailout when the farmer's futures market closed down. Wasn't that about the same thing as closing down the stock market?

When the futures did open grain prices headed for a dead cat bounce from nearly \$4 a bushel to under \$2, and the stock market is trying to hold at the 9,000 level.

Where was this proactive Federal Reserve then? Guess it was saving their money for New York City and the nations airlines.

It is ironic that said policies may have an abstract connection to war in Afghanistan. Come to think of it we never should have allowed grain exports to the Soviet Union, then there would not have been grain embargoes when the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan where all those terrorists are.

Does anyone think that if there had not been grain embargoes would it have changed history? Maybe not, then again, we always did know Richard Nixon was nuts — but he didn't need fast track to trade with the Soviet Union, they just traded — that is until Uncle Ivan invaded Afghanistan.

Back in 1978 the Soviet Union had been shell-ing out \$43.3 billion to feed 12 of those Islamic nations like Tajikistan, Azerbaijan and Kyrgyzstan but after the grain embargo U.S. exports fell to \$27.9 billion.

My, how the global market place has not changed. Even before the September 11 attack on the World Trade Center, the United State was supplying 80 percent of the free food imports to Afghanistan. There are as many as 20 of these Islamic nations who still need U.S. grain imports. They, like China, export their grain when they need hard currency, and then ask good ole Uncle Sugar to give them our grain, it's called food for progress.

Well maybe U.S. policy in the Persian Gulf is a core issue but then again it may not be. There is a possibility the anti-American sentiment in these Islamic nations may have came about in the way the U.S. reacted to the financial crisis in Asia.

For 25 years these Islamic nations had adopted the American kind of capitalism, but all of a sudden it was "we are out of here pal."

Furthermore, they couldn't understand why we didn't do like we did after WW II when President Truman created the Marshal plan and pegged their debauched currency to the good as gold U.S. Dollar, (the Bretten Woods agreement).

To them there was a double standard. It was OK to help that bunch of white guys, but when it came to Asia it was "you don't know how to run your companies." So it is possible this anti-Americanism is more than how much of Jerusalem, Yassin Arafat gets.

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No need to dial to have your line checked

Dear Attorney General Stovall:

Our business has a serious problem. Apparently our telephone line has been accessed by outside parties and we now have a phone bill amounting to several thousand dollars for phone calls we never made! A man called and posed as a representative with our phone company, saying he needed to check our phone line because several lines in our area had been having problems. He asked our employee to punch in a six-digit number, which supposedly would allow the computer to check our line. This happened several times over the course of a day. Each time the employee answered the phone and each time she punched in the number he gave. It turns out this number was a code that gave the man access to our phone line. As a result, several out-of-country calls were made that were billed to our business. General Stovall, please make others aware of this scam and let us know what we can do.

Dear Kansas Consumer:

My office has done some investigation into scenarios such as the one you described. The most important thing for all consumers to remember is that there is no reason for a phone service representative to call and ask you to assist with the checking of your phone line. This is something your phone company can do on its own.

Individuals posing as telephone technicians target businesses with Customer Provided Equipment (CPE) Private Brand Exchange (PBX) telephone systems; that is, telephone systems the business buys from a source other than the telephone company which have two or more line capabilities. Oftentimes these systems come equipped with a remote access feature, which allows employees of the business to dial into their PBX from remote locations and obtain access to an outside line for purposes of placing local or long distance calls. However, some businesses are unaware their PBX systems come equipped with this feature and they run the risk of the system being compromised by unscrupulous individuals who wish to make costly phone calls on their lines.

Many businesses that have PBX telephone systems are ones which have different offices in one building, care homes for the elderly or disabled,



carla j. stovall

• consumer corner

retirement homes, hospitals, large companies with busy switchboards, and even telephone companies. It is a very common system, and the need for education of all who work in or reside in these businesses is extremely important. Individual residences are not targeted because there is usually no remote access feature on residential phones.

If your business should find itself a victim of this scam, you will need to contact the long distance company billing you for the charges to dispute your bill. In your case, the long distance company was willing to credit half the charges. However, phone companies generally maintain that the customer is liable since it is the customer's employees that control access to its phone lines and such access cannot be prevented by the phone company. You may also file a complaint with my Consumer Protection Division and we will try to mediate the matter; however, we only have jurisdiction to handle complaints from sole proprietors, individuals and family partnerships. Under the Kansas Consumer Protection Act, we do not have jurisdiction to act on behalf of corporations or non-family partnerships, so these kinds of businesses must seek private legal counsel.

Again, there is never any reason a phone company technician should need your assistance with dialing in order to check your phone line. Kansas

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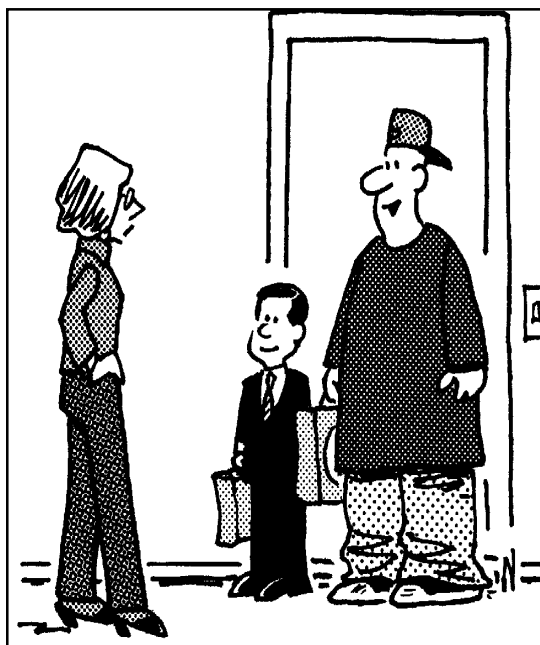
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