

# commentary

from other pens...

## Governors want anti-terror training

By Will Lester

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — The nation's governors want federal help to get the training, the tools and the money to respond to terrorist attacks. Then they want the freedom to use them.

"It's not a question of if, but a question of when the next terrorist attack will occur," Idaho Gov. Dirk Kempthorne said. "Some state will have the distinction" of being the place where that attack occurs, he added.

Governors will have to be prepared to take on the role of crisis managers, the way governors in New York and Virginia had to after Sept. 11.

Several governors said they are lucky to have Tom Ridge, a former Pennsylvania governor, as the nation's first director of homeland security, because he understands the role they need to play in their states. The homeland security position was created by President Bush earlier this month as a response to the threat of domestic terrorism.

"We need intelligence — what to look for and how to respond to it," said Oklahoma Gov. Frank Keating. "And we need a recognition that the first and best response is state and local — do not federalize the response."

The governors acknowledge, however, they will need plenty of help from the federal government to prepare for challenges that no political leaders dreamed of before the Sept. 11 attacks.

"We need the federal government to speak with one voice on critical security and public safety issues," said New Hampshire Gov. Jeanne Shaheen. "I am hopeful that is the role Governor Ridge will play — making sure we are getting the same message from the CDC, Health and Human Services, the White House, the FBI and any other agencies involved."

The Bush administration has been criticized for the mixed messages it has sent out as it grappled with the recent mailed anthrax attacks.

Shaheen said early signs are Ridge is listening carefully to the concerns of the governors. Among the tools the governors want to see are better communications systems, better training and equipment to handle bioterrorism and a national laboratory for developing vaccines.

Colorado Gov. Bill Owens said residents of his state need to have more confidence in the safety of air transportation and reassurance the mail will be delivered.

"These have a ripple effect across the economy," he said.

Virginia Gov. Jim Gilmore, who heads an anti-terror task force that recommended the creation of Ridge's position, said a national laboratory for vaccines is needed and states need additional money to better protect their most vulnerable targets.

For Connecticut Gov. John Rowland, the first priority is a better communications system.

"We've got great radio communications with our state police," he said. "We want radio communication with local law enforcement, firefighters, rescue workers. But that costs a lot of money."

The need for improved communications is not only within the states.

Gov. Gary Locke of Washington said he wants better communication between state and federal authorities, including sharing of intelligence.

He said Congress should provide enough money "so every state can achieve at least a baseline level of emergency preparedness and security."

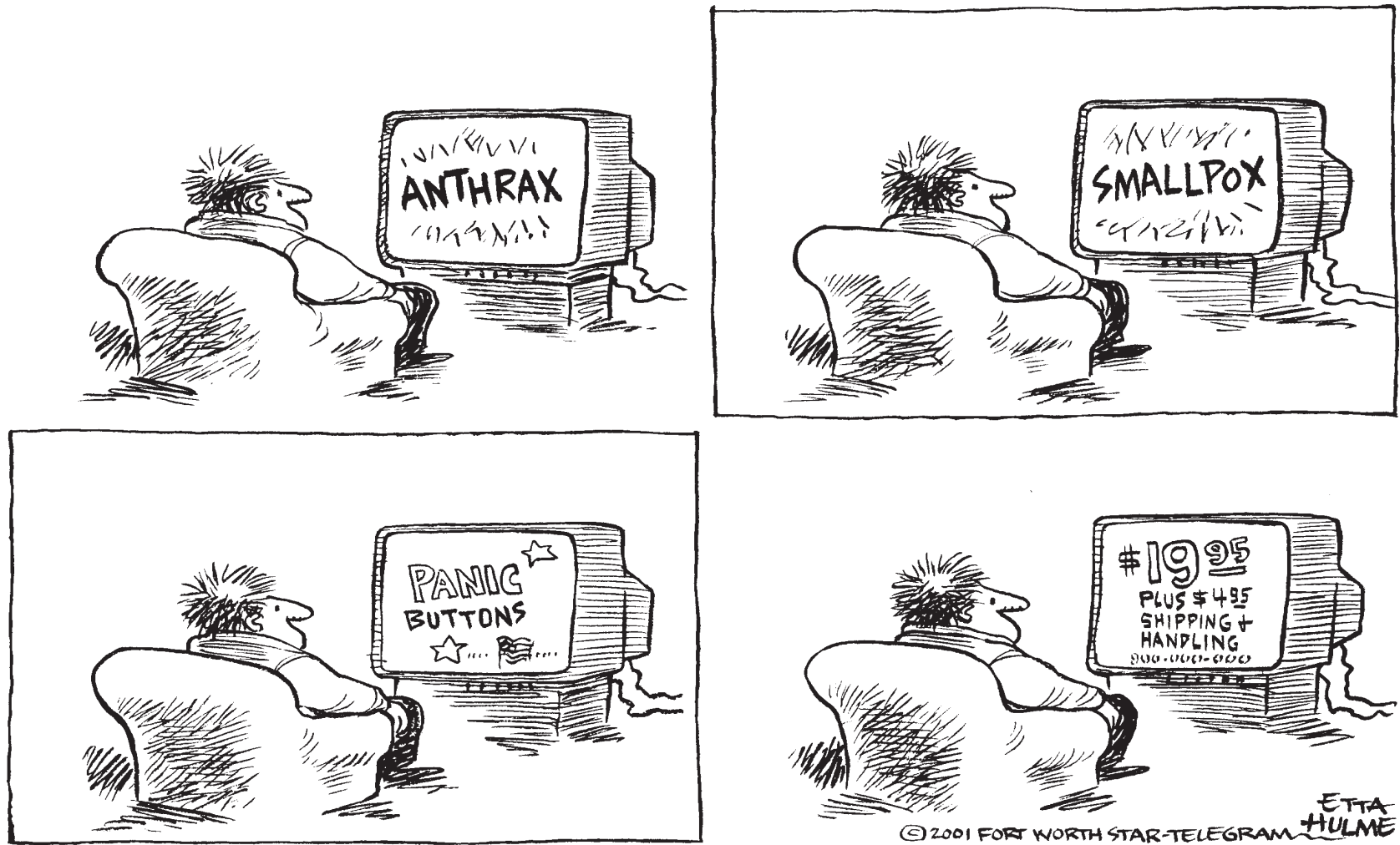
The development of a coordinated homeland defense system must be set up quickly because no one knows when a terrorist attack may occur. But Gilmore said the development of the federal-state relationship will take time.

"This is going to be a long process," said Gilmore. "It will take just as long domestically as it does overseas."

The governors acknowledge they don't have money in their budgets for many of the essential security tasks that have to be done this year.

"I'm not here with my hat in hand asking for money," said Owens, who was in Washington on Thursday for a meeting of governors. "But I am here to accept any help that they're willing to offer."

**EDITOR'S NOTE** — Will Lester covers politics and polling for The Associated Press.



## The day W. really became President

WASHINGTON — George W. Bush has an 88-percent job approval rating from the American people. That potent endorsement arises from his mission and the sacramental ritual through which it was assigned.

The mission is to deliver justice to the killers of 6,000 Americans on Sept. 11. It became Bush's mission as he stood in the rubble of the World Trade Center, his arm about that older New York fireman.

"We can't hear you!" someone yelled from back in the crowd.

"I can hear you," the president yelled back through his bullhorn, "and the rest of the world hears you, and the people who knocked these buildings down will hear all of us very soon."

With that spontaneous retort, George W. Bush became this country's unchallenged leader. His communion with those firemen on that third day after the horror brought him the broadly accepted legitimacy that was denied him earlier.

Those brave firemen, elevated to a kind of secular national priesthood, gave Bush what the oath administered by Chief Justice Rehnquist on Jan. 20 and the 5-4 Supreme Court decision about Florida's votes could not.

Let me try to explain why.

I have spent the last year writing a book that ex-



chris matthews

• commentary

presses my deepest beliefs about this country.

Digging back into my life, I came across my brief career as member of the U.S. Capitol police.

I remember a fellow officer named Leroy Taylor. A country boy from West Virginia, he had been a "lifer" in the army.

Like a lot of those country boys, Leroy would have done anything to save the U.S. Capitol from harm. They loved and revered the place and knew deep in their souls what it means to the American people.

Leroy was especially eloquent on this point. "The little man loves his country," he said to me one day, "because it's all he's got!"

It was "little" men like Leroy Taylor who raced up those stairs of the World Trade Center while others raced to the bottom and to safety. It was "little" men like him who invested in George W. Bush the American presidency in a way that the

men and women in black robes could not.

This is the great untold story that was unveiled by the horror of Sept. 11. Just as we discovered the evil out there in the world, we discovered the good here at home — the deep, gut love of country residing in the hearts of those working class people who protect us from fire, crime and other daily horrors.

"Now, Let Me Tell You What I Really Think": That's the name of my book, which comes out this week from the Free Press.

And what I really do think is that we Americans love this country more than we ever knew and more than we were ever comfortable saying.

That is why President Bush is respected today: because he shares that love and because he has accepted the difficult mission of winning justice for this country.

On Sept. 10, he lacked a mission. Now he's got one.

On Sept. 10, we lacked a leader. Now we've got one.

Chris Matthews, author of "Now, Let Me Tell You What I Really Think" (Free Press, 2001) and "Hardball" (Touchstone Books, 1999), is a nationally syndicated columnist for the San Francisco Chronicle and the host of "Hardball" on CNBC and MSNBC cable channels.

## Pessimism dominant as state budget nears

By John Hanna

Associated Press Writer

TOPEKA — Legislators and other state officials have heard plenty of bad news about the Kansas economy and the state budget in recent weeks.

Some of those officials and university economists will take all of the bad news and translate it this week into numbers for Gov. Bill Graves and legislators to use in drafting the next state budget.

The numbers will represent the first predictions about how much revenue the state can expect to collect during its 2003 fiscal year, which begins July 1. They're likely to become the source of many a headache.

Graves, his staff and legislators anticipated a tough year even before the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks in New York and Washington. The 2002 Legislature is certain to face painful choices.

"Following Sept. 11, we fully believe our state revenues will be less," Budget Director Duane Goossen said during a recent public meeting on social services. "There just isn't room for everything to be funded."

The Consensus Estimating Group is scheduled to meet at 1:30 p.m. Friday to work on revenue estimates for fiscal 2002 and make the first predictions for fiscal 2003. The group is Goossen, members of his staff, legislative staff and university economists.

The estimators will have to factor in how layoffs in aircraft manufacturing and telecommunications are likely to affect Kansans' income and the taxes derived from it or the purchases Kansans make.

They'll face similar calculations involving corporate profits, gains from investments and farm

income.

Senate President Dave Kerr, R-Hutchinson, said the 2002 session looks to be the most difficult in his nearly two decades in the Legislature.

Putting together a budget would have been tough enough without the Sept. 11 attacks. It's something legislators knew even as they finished their 2001 session in early May.

In April, after state officials and economists made new revenue estimates, legislators found themselves with a \$206 million gap between spending they'd already approved for fiscal 2002 and expected tax collections. They approved a package of spending decreases, small tax increases and accounting maneuvers.

"We ran out of a lot of creativity last session, so there's not many creative things left," Graves said recently.

"Most of it is pretty straight forward. Do you raise fees? Do you raise taxes? Do you implement gaming? Do you unwind some previously made commitments? There's not a whole lot of clever ways to get through this."

The current budget assumes that \$4.48 billion in taxes and other revenues will flow into the state general fund during fiscal 2002. The general fund is the largest source of money for Kansas government programs and where the state deposits most of its tax dollars.

Graves' budget staff made assumptions about revenue growth so that they could start work on his budget proposals for fiscal 2003. They assumed the state would collect between \$100 million and \$130 million more in revenues in fiscal 2003 than in fiscal 2002.

That's a significant amount of money, but it's not

enough to cover promises legislators and Graves made in previous years.

For example, the 1999 Legislature approved a 10-year transportation program and reorganized the higher education system. Both came with promises to funnel more tax dollars to highway projects and universities and community colleges. Keeping those promises would cost \$91 million more in fiscal 2003.

When extra spending on state employee pensions, pay and health insurance coverage are factored in, the total commitments come to \$140 million.

That doesn't count an increasing demand for social services. Federal law requires the state to provide some services to all eligible Kansans, regardless of the expense. Extra costs could amount to \$70 million.

None of those figures take into account the single biggest item in the state budget, \$2.3 billion in aid to public elementary, junior high and high schools.

State officials go into the Consensus Estimating Group's meeting expecting to start with the Budget Division's assumption about new revenues and go down from there.

"In fact, it'd be pretty easy for that \$100 million to \$130 million to evaporate," Goossen said.

Correspondent John Hanna has covered state government and budget issues since 1987.

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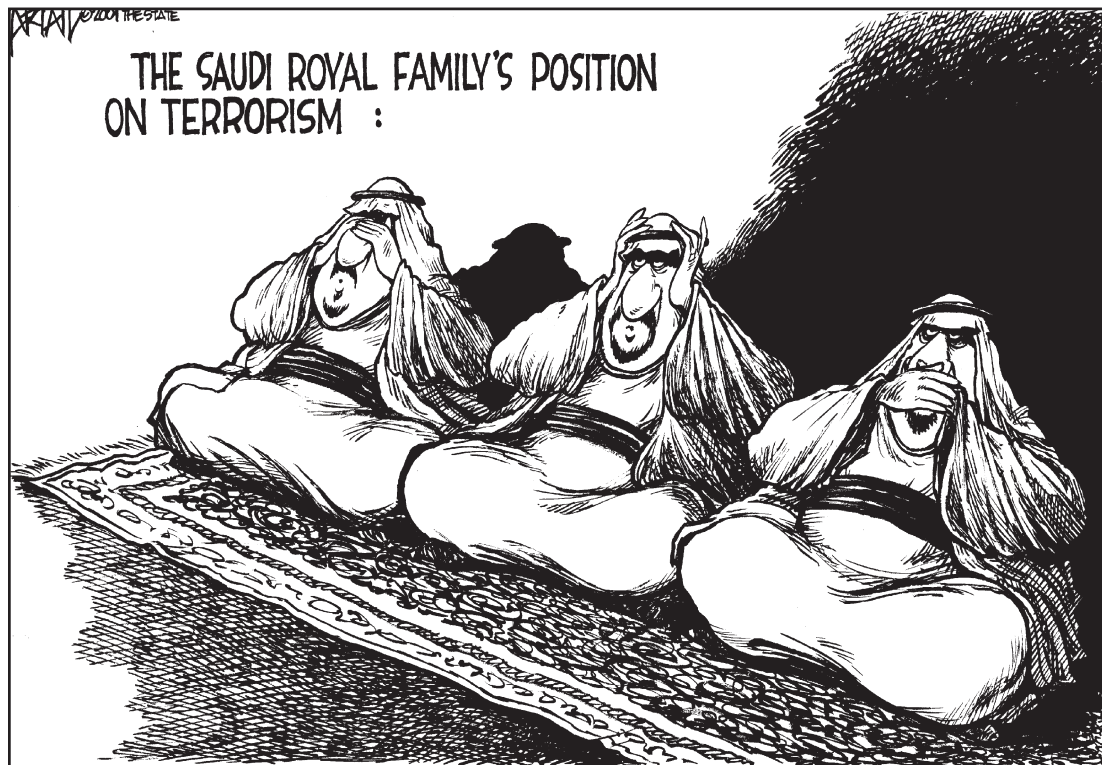
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