

# commentary

from other pens...

## Lady Bird talks about ‘the city of troubles’

By Lawrence L. Knutson

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — “I can’t get out,” the president told his wife. “And I can’t finish it with what I have got. And I don’t know what the hell to do.”

It was the late winter of 1965. Lyndon and Lady Bird Johnson had celebrated their 30th wedding anniversary the previous November. Now it was March, and the unrelenting agony of war in Vietnam was threatening to destroy much of what they had achieved together.

As she was to do many times in her White House years, the first lady found a quiet moment and spoke her fears and hopes into a tape recorder. The overriding topic was her husband and his obsession with Vietnam.

“He won’t leave it alone,” she told her tape-recorded diary on April 18, 1965. “He can’t separate himself from it.”

The president, she said, had left standing orders to be awakened whenever an operation was under way in Vietnam. “I want to be called every time somebody dies,” he told his wife.

Lady Bird’s words and thoughts are interleaved with those of the president’s in “Reaching for Glory, Lyndon Johnson’s Secret White House Tapes, 1964-1965,” compiled by historian Michael Beschloss.

The second volume of a series, the book is centered on LBJ’s conversations with top officials, friends and congressional leaders as the war in Southeast Asia began to overshadow his vision for a war on poverty.

Mrs. Johnson’s observations serve as sympathetic commentary as the unpopular and costly war provokes demonstrations and personal attacks.

“How much can they tear us down?” the first lady wondered. “And what effect might it have on the way we appear in history?”

She worried about the strain of the war on her husband’s health even though the doctors could find no immediate dangers in his charts.

The doctors advised a vacation break.

“But Lyndon feels chained right here, and it’s having a corrosive effect on his personality,” Mrs. Johnson said.

Prospects looked brighter in mid-July. The voting rights bill had passed the Senate and the Medicare bill had passed the House, both important milestones in the president’s domestic agenda.

Even after three decades of marriage, Lyndon Johnson could still amaze and amuse his wife. One day in the summer of 1965, during a short getaway at the LBJ Ranch in Texas, he handed her the phone.

“I’ll let your mother talk,” he said. “She’s like an old cow when her calf gets out. She just moos and bawls and looks around for her.”

“If Lyndon has lost a certain something by the lack of a polished Eastern education,” his wife concluded, “he has the compensation at least of the earthy expressions, some so amusing, that really say what he thinks in a clear way.”

Later as the president headed back to Washington her mood darkened.

“It is a little sad to say goodbye to him, heading back to the city of sorrows,” she said.

Later, she complained that while her husband’s Great Society legislation was making solid advances in Congress, the newspapers paid relatively little attention.

“Vietnam got all the space,” she said.

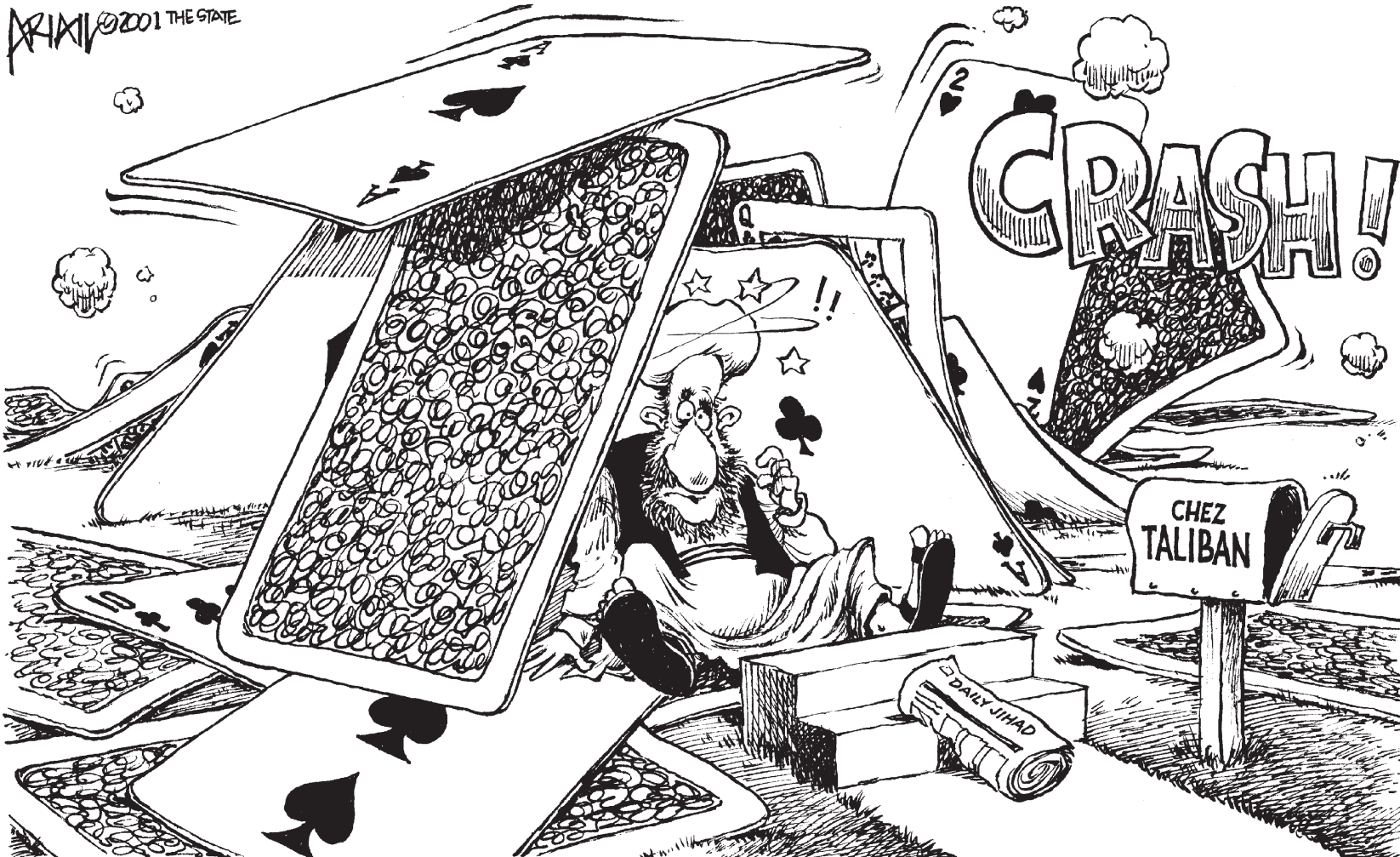
Mrs. Johnson constantly worried about her husband’s health. She rejoiced on the rare occasions when he got to sleep before midnight.

Although Lyndon Johnson would survive his administration by four years, his wife was clearly prepared for the worst.

She turned to her tape recorder on July 18, 1965, after a memorial service at Washington Cathedral for Adlai E. Stevenson, the ambassador to the U. N. and two-time Democratic presidential candidate.

“I ... put on the black silk dress I had bought in February and never yet worn,” she said, “having, in the back of my mind when I bought it, the grim, thought that I might need a black dress for a funeral.”

**EDITOR’S NOTE** — *Lawrence L. Knutson has covered the White House, Congress and Washington’s history for 34 years.*



## Right wing terrorists or Left wingers?

What is terrorism in America? That is a stupid question that only C-SPAN would ask.

Terrorists in America is as American as apple pie. King George surely called George Washington a terrorist. Of course the American Indians believed those pale faces were a bunch of terrorists, too.

Even then it was technology, technology, technology!

However, the spread of anthrax is defined as terrorism. The only question is if foreign or domestic?

Some say look out for the extreme-right. We know they are fascists, racists and anti-abortion activists. Remember Timothy McVeigh and Randy Weaver? They were pretty anti-government weren't they? You may be right, but if McVeigh couldn't keep a license plate on his car or if Randy Weaver couldn't saw off a shot gun right, how could those guys sneak anthrax into the tribal council (Senate) on Capitol Hill?

On the other hand, if you listen to the clattering nabobs of negativism, the Anti-government conspiracy theorists who come from the left wing of American politics. They are the ones who think Beltway news organs are Rush Limbaugh's brother-in-law. They would rather believe bin Laden and the Al Jazeera 24 hour network, than our semi-schizophrenic media.

Yes, the events are a little too neat, the economy was headed south before 9-11 and some fear this Big Chief would drill oil on the White Teepee lawn if the tribal council would let him. But America has been in the cross hairs of history before.

Our founding fathers believed providential intervention saved them from starvation in 1621 when a ship arrived from England. That may be but our government has not been in the pursuit of



### wayne gattshall

• wayne's world

domestic terrorism. During the Vietnam War there were plenty of terrorist acts.

There were the Weathermen, Black Panthers and a black power movement. So this nation has been very tolerant when it comes to anti-government protests.

However, the most glaring is that of the militant environmentalists. So far their terrorist acts have been treated as just youthful pranks like stealing watermelons.

There is a legion of incidents where the eco-nuts have gotten their jollies out of plastering pies on the faces of prominent Americans who they don't agree with. They pied the face of economist Milton Friedman a Nobel Prize-winner. They pied the face of Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman too.

The reason being Americans were eating too much meat.

That may be, but this was all a bunch of pranks and cannot be compared with the New York City 9-11. No doubt about it, but for 20 years the radical environmentalist have struck more than 1,500 times.

They may be a bunch of rich kids who lived in their homes with redwood patios but they have been known to drive metal spikes in trees to discourage timber companies from logging them.

Eco-nuts may love the woods the way God made it but they show no compassion in behalf of science

to harvest body parts from stem cell research. But just let research centers use animals on behalf of science. That would be against their religion. It's a religion for them.

These eco-nuts have committed some really destructive acts. An underground organization called the Earth Liberation Front claimed responsibility for fires at the ski resort of Vail, Colo. It caused \$12 million in damage, the costliest act of eco-terrorism in America at that time. Even though the Earth Liberation Front claimed responsibility they are like Chinese spies. No one ever was arrested.

Is terrorism a right-wing conspiracy? We don't know but the Norfolk, Va. based People for the Equitable Treatment of Animals thinks so.

They complained when the military taught recruits how to catch rabbits and prepare them for food. Something special Services personnel might use.

So what, that was the hated military-industrial-complex. They have other fish to fry. The Rocky Mountain Fish and Game Commission ordered a jumping mouse reserve. What's next a cat leash?

Sounds like a one liner but it's not! If you want to stay out of the slammer either keep your cat locked up or put them on a leash.

So who are the terrorists? Are they left wingers? Well the left wing librarians are the ones who are making all the noise. They say we know the war in Afghanistan is blood for oil.

Maybe but they don't want to drill in their backyard, and it would be a crying shame if America would not have to get its oil from the bin Laden family in Saudi Arabia. So let's go watch channel 645 on the Al Jazeera network.

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## Detariffing long distance telephone service

Dear Kansas Consumers:

The Federal Communications Commission has recently changed some of its rules regarding long distance service. These changes, referred to as “detariffing,” will make it easier for consumers to compare rates between companies offering long distance service.

With detariffing, long distance companies will no longer be able to file a document called a “tariff” to notify the FCC and the public about the rates, terms and conditions concerning their long distance service. Starting July 31, 2001, long distance companies are required to provide the information contained in their service agreements directly to consumers.

You should have received a notice from your long distance company which answers the following questions:

- What is the price of the calling plan to which you currently subscribe?
- What is the duration of the plan?



### carla j. stovall

• consumer corner

- How does a consumer accept or reject the terms of the plan?
  - What are the notification procedures your long distance company intends to use regarding changes in the plan?
  - How do you and the company resolve disputes?
- Many interstate long distance companies are now using billing inserts and letters to inform consumers of their rates and conditions. If the company has a web site, it must post its domestic calling plan information on it. By January long distance companies must make international calling plan information available on their web sites as

well.

Detariffing will make it easier for consumers to find out how much they are paying for long distance service, and how much other interstate long distance companies are charging. That way, terms of service can be compared with other companies, and those companies should have a greater incentive to reduce prices and improve service terms in order to remain competitive.

Attorney General Carla J. Stovall offers this public service to help you avoid becoming a victim of consumer fraud. Although some of the details have been changed, the cases appearing in this column are based on actual complaints. For further information or to file a complaint, please write Attorney General Carla J. Stovall, Consumer Protection Division, 120 SW 10th, 2nd Floor, Topeka, Kansas 66612, or call the toll-free Consumer Hotline, 1-800-432-2310. Leave your name, number and subject of your inquiry with the receptionist and your call will be returned promptly.

## Cow/calf man has been taken

To the Editor:

Taxing any animal more than once is unfair, unjust and illegal!

The cattle complex is very competitive. The cow/calf man does not sell beef. He hath a right to promote sale of his calves. (Knowing the cowboy buying them is trying to buy them as cheap as possible!)

The cowboy running yearlings does not sell beef. Hath a right to promote sale of his feeders. (Knowing the feedlot is trying to buy them as cheap as possible!)

The feedlot does not sell beef. Hath a right to promote sale of their fat cattle. (Knowing the packers are trying to buy them as cheap as possible!)

The packers sell beef. Have a right to promote sale of their beef. (Knowing the retailers are trying to buy it as cheap as possible!)

The retailers sell beef. Have a right to promote sale of their beef. (Knowing the consumer is trying to buy it as cheap as possible!)

If the cheat-off crowd could prove they promoted beef in Japan (who bought beef from Australia), the U.S. cow/calf man, yearlings cowboy, feedlot, packer and retailer have all been took on a snipe hunt!

What have the cheat-off crowd done for wheat? Sixty years of fantasy. Where have the beef billions



### from our readers

• to the editor

gone? How much to quash those who object to their thievery?

If Lord Cornwall and National Cattle Buyers Association spend \$150,000 for court fights and million dollar payroll, for the pack they have in Washington to keep their monopoly, ARE THEY PROMOTING BEEF?

If ranchers and farmers won't support the check-off voluntarily at the time of sale, will the cheat-off crowd explain how they force sale barns and elevators as free slaves to seize/steal from those who grow crops, raise livestock (want to do their own promoting), then claim to spend the money more profitably, than those who earn it?

“Deliver thyself as a roe from the hand of the hunter, and as a bird from the hand of the fowler.”

Pr:6.5

Frank Sowers  
Benkelman

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N.T. Betz, Director of Internet Services ([nbetz@nwkansas.com](mailto:nbetz@nwkansas.com))  
Evan Barnum, Systems Admin. ([support@nwkansas.com](mailto:support@nwkansas.com))

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