

from our viewpoint...

Governor isn't clear on how cuts hurt

When Gov. Kathleen Sebelius visited last week, it was pretty clear she did not have much of a handle on how the state affects rural Kansas.

She tried to say the right things, as state officials usually do when they come out here, but when people had tough questions, she didn't have much in the way of answers.

She's not the only one. Most people coming from the relatively prosperous belt along the state's freeways in eastern Kansas forget that 80 percent of the state does not share in their growth and wealth.

Our counties are dying. Our people are leaving. Our Main Streets are folding up. Our schools are shrinking. Jobs flee, and no one wants to move here.

It's not just northwest Kansas. It's the northeast, the southeast, the north central, much of the southwest, pretty much all over. Any county without an Interstate highway or a major state institution has a sick economy and a shrinking population base.

Towns are dying out here. Whole counties may be next. Just what is the problem?

It's complicated. It's not even the state's fault, but the state is not doing much to help, and what little it does often is negated by — the state. The population decline has been going on for a century, fueled in part by federal farm policy and the economic trends for automation, consolidation and efficiency.

Those are immutable laws. We have to have something besides farming to survive.

Economic development officials come to rural Kansas often, and they always say they are here to help us. Gov. Sebelius and her team have been on the bandwagon, but so have their predecessors.

Not much has happened.

The state comes in, tries to help attract business here. The effort is sincere. But while the economic development agencies attract a few jobs, other state agencies take jobs away.

The Highway Patrol closed all its small-town dispatch offices. No jobs were cut. No money saved to speak of. Some troopers would argue that service got worse, not better.

Same with the Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services. Managers thought is inefficient to have offices scattered all over the state, so they closed most of them.

Jobs were shifted to larger towns, and in the next round, will be shifted to still larger towns. The governor answered rather lamely that it was not meant to cut jobs, just offices.

But three people who used to work and live in Oberlin do not have jobs here. Offices were closed in St. Francis and Atwood and, eventually, Norton. No one who fills them in the future will live out here.

That's the problem, governor. When it comes to helping rural Kansas, the state often is its own worst enemy. And ours.

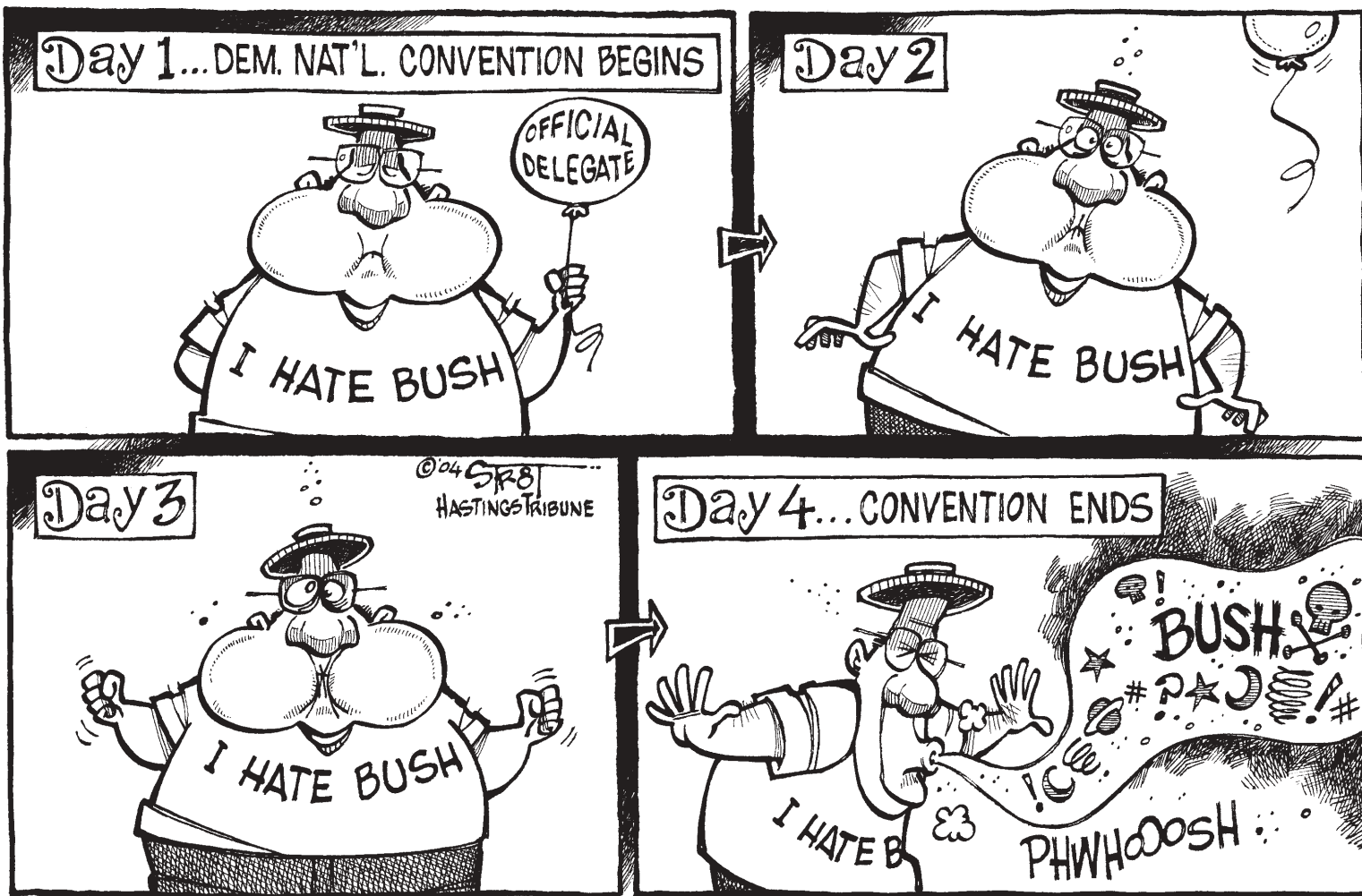
Create a few jobs. Give us a loan program. Help business expand. Then the Revenue Department decides we need a fancy new sales tax scheme, and the cost drives jobs away.

To save money, state departments contract whole bureaus out of state, though the work could be done in Kansas.

Those are jobs that could be done in rural Kansas, and if the state is going to spend the money, why not spend it here?

Isn't it about time the state of Kansas got its act together and examined each move it makes in the light of how it affects our economy, as a state and especially, the starving rural areas?

We think so. We'll have more to say next week. — Steve Haynes



New kitten spends night up a tree

I blame Steve's sister Barbara for the new kitten.

Barb lives on a farm near Emporia. She likes cats and tries to keep a couple in the house and four to six in the horse barn to keep the rodent population in check.

She was having trouble keeping cats because the local coyote population found the felines a tasty treat. She even lost one to a bobcat.

Barb started putting the cats in the barn each night and solved the coyote problem, but between horses, husband, son and spring garden, she forgot something. She forgot that she had three female cats.

Now she has five cats and 15 kittens. The cats all have dates to see the vet but, in the meantime, she has lots of kittens to give away.

She asked me about taking a kitten. I heartlessly suggested a classified in the Emporia newspaper.

She invited youngest daughter Lindsay to come for a going-away visit. She is moving from Lawrence to South Carolina next week and won't be around any more.

Lindsay returned from the farm with a bundle



cynthia haynes

• open season

of fur that her other cats hated on sight.

We assured her that adult cats always hate kittens. In fact, most cats are pretty territorial. They hate any new cat you bring into the house. We've had April Alice for almost three years, and she and Molly Monster still maintain an armed truce.

The first problem was to name the newcomer. Barbara called her Fluffy because she is.

Lindsay felt that was a little simple and was searching for a better name when we came to visit. I suggested Aphrodite, Diane or Athena. She liked the goddess names, but went with her brother's suggestion of Penelope.

Penelope is a cute little monster who attacks the older cats every time their backs are turned. However, the new kitten almost got lost last week.

Lindsay had her outside to show her off to a

neighbor when a loud car drove by and the kitten took off. First she went under a car, then another cat chased her under a fence and through a hedge. Since it was about 11 p.m., Lindsay gave up after about half an hour of searching with a flashlight and calling.

In the morning, she went out again and looked where she thought the cat had been. She could hear her but not see her. Finally, she looked up, and there was Penelope about 15 feet up a tree.

Lindsay said she considered trying to climb the tree but decided that even if she could get all the way up to the cat, it might be tough to hang onto the kitten and the tree on the way back down.

She called a friend with a tall ladder and Penelope was soon back on the ground.

I don't think that little cat will be back outside anytime soon, at least not without a cat carrier.

I'm just glad she got her cat back. With the addition of Penelope, the family cat complement is back up to 10. Steve and I have two, both daughters have three each and son has a pair.

It sure does take the pressure off me to get that third cat.

Column may not be the whole truth

To the Editor:

A friend shared Sharon Corcoran's July 13 column with me. Sharon apparently writes from the Jehovah Witness perspective, and so is anxious to show that Jesus as "son" of God is not God. She warns that Christians should be careful to learn the truth for themselves and not just "rely on what others have always told them." I'd like to assure Ms. Corcoran that what other Jehovah's Witnesses have always told her is not the whole truth.

The Jehovah's Witnesses, for example, teach that before he became a man, Jesus was the archangel Michael, although there is not a shred of support for such a view in the Bible.

The Jehovah's Witnesses teach that at death, the human soul completely perishes along with the body, although the Bible clearly teaches the opposite. Witnesses are therefore hard pressed to explain how the departed soul of Samuel could have spoken to Saul (1 Samuel 28:15), or how the souls of the departed cry out from under the heavenly altar (Revelation 6:9-10), or how Jesus himself was able to converse with the departed souls of Moses and Elijah in front of his disciples (Luke 9:28-36) or preach to the departed souls in the "prison" of Hades (1 Peter 3:18-20).

As to the equality of Jesus as Son of God with God the Father, I noticed that Ms. Corcoran carefully edited the words of Colossians 1. Part of what she edited out is this: "He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in everything he might be pre-eminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell (Col. 1:17-19). He is "before all things." What existed before "all things"? Only God himself. Paul's phrase that Jesus is "the firstborn of all creation" means, as the historic creeds put it, that he is the Firstborn Son "begotten" from the



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• to the editor

very being of God himself before anything of creation was made. In other words, the Son shares essence and eternity with the Father. Even in the created world, what son is there who does not share the essential being and nature of the father who begot him?

The phrase "the firstborn of all creation" cannot mean that St. Paul considered Jesus some sort of lesser demi-god, as Ms. Corcoran and other Witnesses suggest. For if we look at Paul's entire letter to the Colossians (not to mention his other letters), Paul's teaching is clear. In the very next chapter of Colossians, for example, we find this: "See to it that no one makes a prey of you by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the universe, and not according to Christ. For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have come to fullness of life in him, who is the head of all rule and authority (2:8-10). The "whole fullness of deity" has never dwelt in Michael the archangel, nor any other created being. The whole fullness of God is possessed only by God himself, and it was God's divinity, in the person of his equally divine Son, that took on human flesh from the Virgin Mary.

Interestingly, Ms. Corcoran quotes two verses from St. John referring to the fact that the Father spoke directly to them through his Son. She would do well to read the rest of the Gospel of John carefully. For while in his incarnate human life Jesus could rightly say "the Father is greater than I" (John 14:28), since he was at that moment limited in the time and

space of his human life, in the same Gospel Jesus says "I and the Father are one" (John 10:30). And just before promising to send his disciples the gift of the Holy Spirit, Jesus says, "He who has seen me has seen the Father; how can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father in me; or else believe me for the sake of the works themselves" (John 14:9-11).

Notice the repetition, referring to himself, of the words "I am." Anyone who knows the Bible knows that those two words are the holy name of God himself (Exodus 3:14). No Jew would dare use those two words to refer to himself. Yet Jesus said exactly this: "Before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58). When he said this, the crowd threw stones at him for blasphemy, for using of himself the holy name of God. That's why they killed him.

When the people criticized Jesus for healing a man on the Sabbath, "Jesus answered them, 'My Father is working still, and I am working.'" This was why the Jews sought all the more to kill him, because he not only broke the sabbath but also called God his Father, making himself equal with God" (John 5:17-18). Equal with God. How is that unclear?

If we look truthfully at the Bible as a whole, there is no doubt it teaches that as Son of God, Jesus shares the very being of God and equality with his Father. The only way to avoid that conclusion is to do as Ms. Corcoran did, to take verses out of their context and then edit out parts of verses in order to make the scripture say something other than what it actually says.

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