



Other Viewpoints

Public needs to know changes

The Kansas Legislature has been busy in its work this session, which has included passage of several laws affecting the state’s criminal justice system.

If you haven’t been following along at home, switchblades are now legal, warrants are a little easier to secure – even before a crime has been committed – local prosecutors now have more flexibility in seating a grand jury, and it’s a potential crime for a federal agent to enter the state with a mind toward gun control enforcement. The statute of limitations has been removed from rape cases, and the indefensible crime of human trafficking now carries significant penalties.

Regardless of whether one thinks such changes are good or bad, the list of legislative alterations to the state’s criminal statutes highlights the need for Kansans to stay informed about the legislation that is introduced and debated in Topeka.

All of the crime-related laws hold the potential to affect individual Kansans throughout their lives – some in relatively minor ways, others in a significant and profound manner.

For instance, one relatively minor change is likely to make life much simpler for Kansans who seldom remember to put their updated insurance information in their glove boxes or wallets. Now, thanks to a change in state law, motorists can pull out their phone and use an electronic version of their insurance card to avoid a ticket and its consequences.

More concerning are changes that loosen the requirements for securing warrants. Now, instead of proving that a crime has been committed, law enforcement officials will be allowed to secure a warrant in advance of a crime. While law enforcement says the measure is a time saver that will allow them to better fight criminal activity and that it’s not a significant change to current protocol, it’s a change that will require oversight by the public.

Likewise, another change allows local prosecutors to more easily seat a grand jury to hear evidence in criminal cases. In some parts of the state, active use of a grand jury could be an effective tool to bring to court cases that languish under the ordinary process. Yet, thanks to the secretive nature of the grand jury, there is legitimate concern the legal mechanism could be used to keep secret – even from the defendant – otherwise public information.

Every session the Kansas Legislature tackles issues that carry the potential to change the way Kansans live their everyday lives, conduct their businesses and protect their families. Such weighty issues deserve and rely on scrutiny from a public that is informed and educated about what those laws might do and how they might affect their lives.

– The Hutchinson News, via the Associated Press

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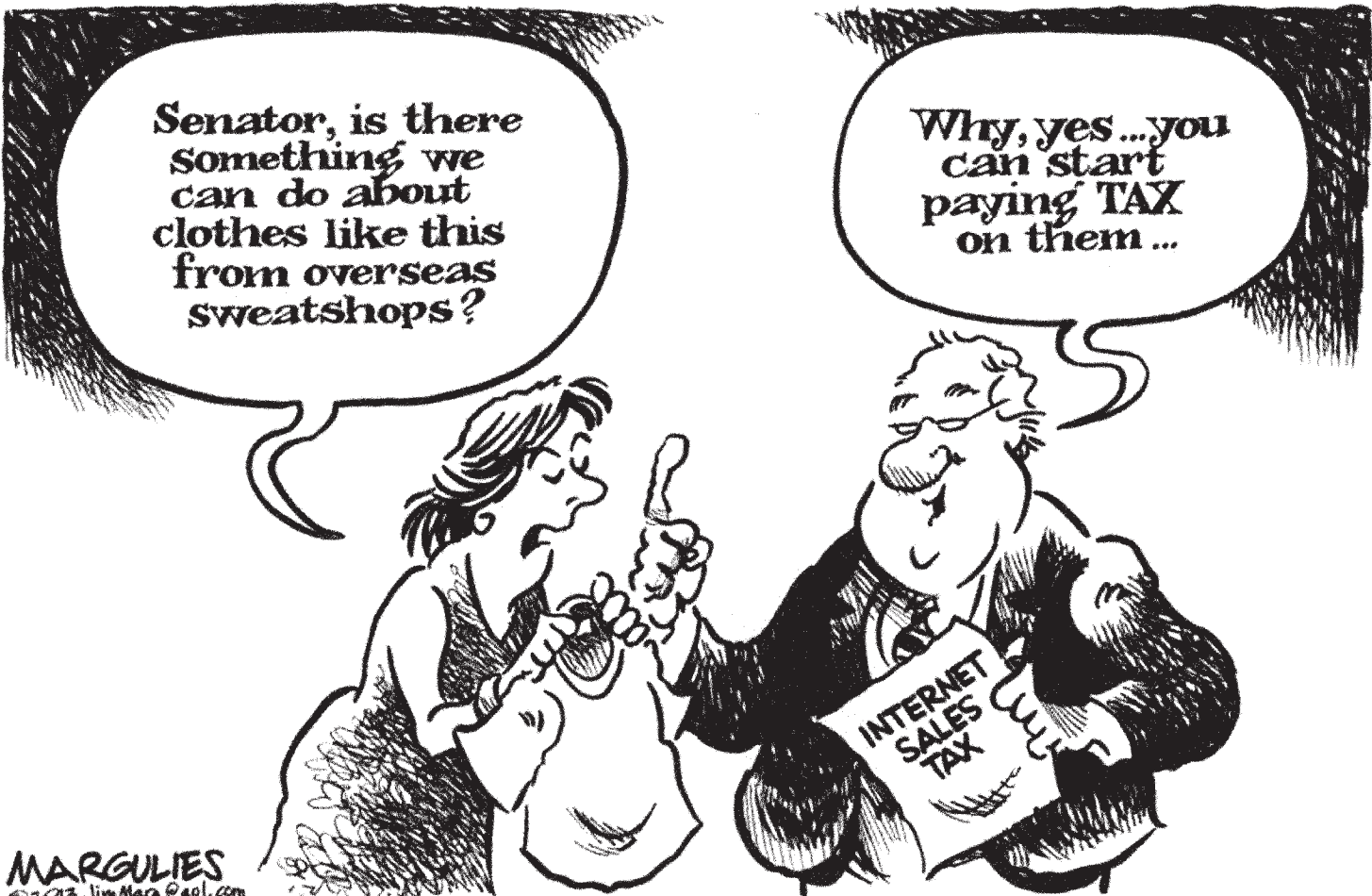
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Schedules fill up fast in May

I’ve been meaning to write, but I’ve been busy with all of the end-of-the-school year activities.

Sort of like just about everyone else.

I have an axiom about the month of May: Never try to schedule anything that involves other people during May.

This thought came to me years ago, when I was a mother of school-age children setting up appointments with the parents of other children. Everyone was unavailable, for every hour of every day, what with Mother’s Day, graduations, concerts, school picnics, Memorial Day, prom, school art shows, grade school teas, field days, Scout and 4-H activities – and so forth.

The cartoon light bulb went on.

May needs to be removed from the calendar as far as everyday, run-of-the-mill business is concerned.

The month is booked solid with special events, even once-in-a-lifetime events. There is no room in May for going to the dentist, seeing your accountant or cleaning your carpets. Forget lunch with a friend or wandering through your favorite store. Cross off a week-end spent fishing or hiking.



Marian Ballard

Collection Connections

If you shop in May, it’s because you desperately need something – whether it’s food for unexpected guests or a dress for an unexpected reception for an eighth-grade graduate.

If you clean in May, it’s because you’re the host for the party.

Ditto if you cook. Families are reduced to sandwiches or pizza, though you may get caught making hors d’oeuvres or frosting cupcakes.

Like the winter holiday season, invitations begin to overlap. Whoever planned Mother’s Day obviously forgot graduation season. Everywhere I’ve ever lived, somebody is graduating from something on Mother’s Day.

What do the grandparents do when they have to attend two or three graduation ceremonies hundreds of miles apart on the same

day? Sometimes they split up, sometimes they watch one online (you can do that now if you can figure out how).

Meanwhile, those who have finished up school for the semester are scattering to the winds. That means that those clever enough to wait until after the last track meet and awards ceremony to make their plans suddenly have no one available for an entirely different reason.

The last half of May lends new meaning to the phrase “Great American Desert” as dorms and dorm parking lots empty out. High school seniors – graduates, that is – vanish into thin air. Families that have postponed crossing state lines to see sick old Auntie Florabelle have their cars packed before the Field Day sunburns have faded.

Do you suppose we could manage if the calendar skipped from April to June?

Marian Ballard has collected careers as counselor, librarian, pastor, and now copy editor for the Colby Free Press. She collects ideas, which are more portable than other stuff.

Whose kid is that in the classroom?

By now most have heard of MSNBC host Melissa Harris-Perry’s recorded commercial in which she stated that children do not belong to their parents, but are instead the responsibility of the members of their community. She said, “We have never invested as much in public education as we should have because we’ve always had kind of a private notion of children. Your kid is yours and totally your responsibility. We haven’t had a very collective notion of these as our children.” Her solution, “we have to break through our kind of private idea that kids belong to their parents, or kids belong to their families, and recognize that kids belong to whole communities.”

She is expressing what is a common underlying belief in the socialist world; government should raise and educate the children. Most who espouse this philosophy seek an expanded role for the central government. When this notion is openly expressed, as she did, a nation is in the advanced stages of socialism.

In 1975 the book “From Under The Rubble, “authored by a variety of Soviet dissidents, all but one of whom were still living in the Soviet Union, was published in the West.

The participants were fully aware that their commentary on the socialist system, smuggled to the “Free World,” would undoubtedly unleash the wrath of the Soviet Bear and result in imprisonment, torture, and possibly death for them. Nonetheless, they felt that the West could avoid the loss of freedom that they experienced if only it were warned.

Igor Shafarevich, a corresponding member of the Soviet Academy of Sciences and former Laureate of the Lenin Prize, attempted, in his chapter of the book, “Socialism in Our Past and Future,” to tell the West what socialism eventually worked out to be in practice. This is, of course, after any significant means of resistance had been removed by gun control. A tyrannical government cannot tolerate a population that can resist it. They must have a monopoly on force.

Socialism, wrote Shafarevich, resulted in

Other Opinions

Harold Pease Liberty Under Fire

complete control of private property, which was defined as anything that existed – including one’s own family and person. This included subordination of the individual to the power of the bureaucracy and state control of everyday life.

For the Soviet Union, socialism meant the destruction of the family as the basic institution of society and the rearing of children away from their parents in state schools or daycare centers.

The word “education,” or anything like unto it, is not in the U.S. Constitution and therefore, as per Amendment 10, is a state, county, city or parental responsibility.

The word “education” is too close to the word “propaganda” to allow the central government to have any role in it. Even Plato questioned the attributes of a “proper” education. A “proper education” for Richard Nixon would have excluded Watergate; for Bill Clinton that the Branch Davidians set themselves on fire, for George W. Bush, that we invaded Iraq because they were involved in 9-11, and for Barack Obama the exclusion of Benghazi and Fast and Furious fiasco’s. This is why the Founding Fathers gave the federal government no influence over education.

Today Joseph Stalin is the second most famous person in Russia because a “proper” education there excludes any reference to his millions of mass murders. The hand that rocks the cradle, or decides what a “proper” education is, rules the world and in a free society that hand can never be the government.

No, Ms. Harris-Perry, the federal govern-

ment should have no public investment in education. Johnny’s mother cares more whether he or his friends can read than any bureaucrat in Washington. That is why we place her on the local school board. Families best foster creativity, incentive and love of learning. Certainly many parents fail to provide the model they should and that is why grandparents and relatives, sometimes friends, step in.

Your endless bureaucratic programs and central planning pale in comparison to what can be achieved at the local level under freedom. George W. Bush’s “No Child Left Behind” left all children behind as will Barack Obama’s “Race to the Top” program. Socialism has never produced the scientists and great minds that freedom has and never will. Our children are not government property.

Dr. Harold Pease has dedicated his career to studying the writings of the Founding Fathers and applying that knowledge to current events. He has taught history and political science for over 25 years at Taft College. To read more of his articles, go to www.LibertyUnderFire.org.

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