

from our viewpoint...

## Clear message needed on Lybia

It would be easy just shrug, and ask how much harm another military adventure could do for a nation that often considers itself the world's policeman.

But perhaps we should be asking, just what does the United States hope to gain by interfering in Libya?

To protect innocent lives?

Perhaps, but as soon as we began bombing Colonel Gaddafi's forces, taking the pressure off the rebels, they began to advance on Tripoli. We did nothing to discourage them. So, are we on their side?

Maybe our goal is regime change, to get Mr. Gaddafi out, force him to leave the country.

We say he needs to go. So do the European nations who back us.

Who would replace him?

We do not seem to be sure, though we're told the CIA has operatives "on the ground" in Libya to keep an eye on things.

Who will rule? Freedom-loving Libyans? The Muslim Brotherhood? Al Qaida?

If the administration knows, they're not saying.

Seems from here if the U.S. is spending (already, we're told more than \$1 billion on this little military action, we should know where it's headed. That's small change compared to the national debt, but still a lot of money to most of us.

Should we be changing the government in Libya, even while urging former allies in Egypt, Yemen and other Arab countries to step aside for change?

Because Muammar Muhammad al-Gaddafi is a bad man who kills and tortures his own people? Because his mercenary troops are killing them on the streets?

That kind of thing happens every day in Sudan, Somalia, the Congo, the Ivory Coast. We have not stepped in.

What changed?

Do we have other, less noble goals? The State Department is not liable to admit them if we do.

Do we have a plan for North Africa, for the greater Muslim world, that served the interest of the U.S., of the peoples of the region, of world peace? If so, the administration ought to articulate it.

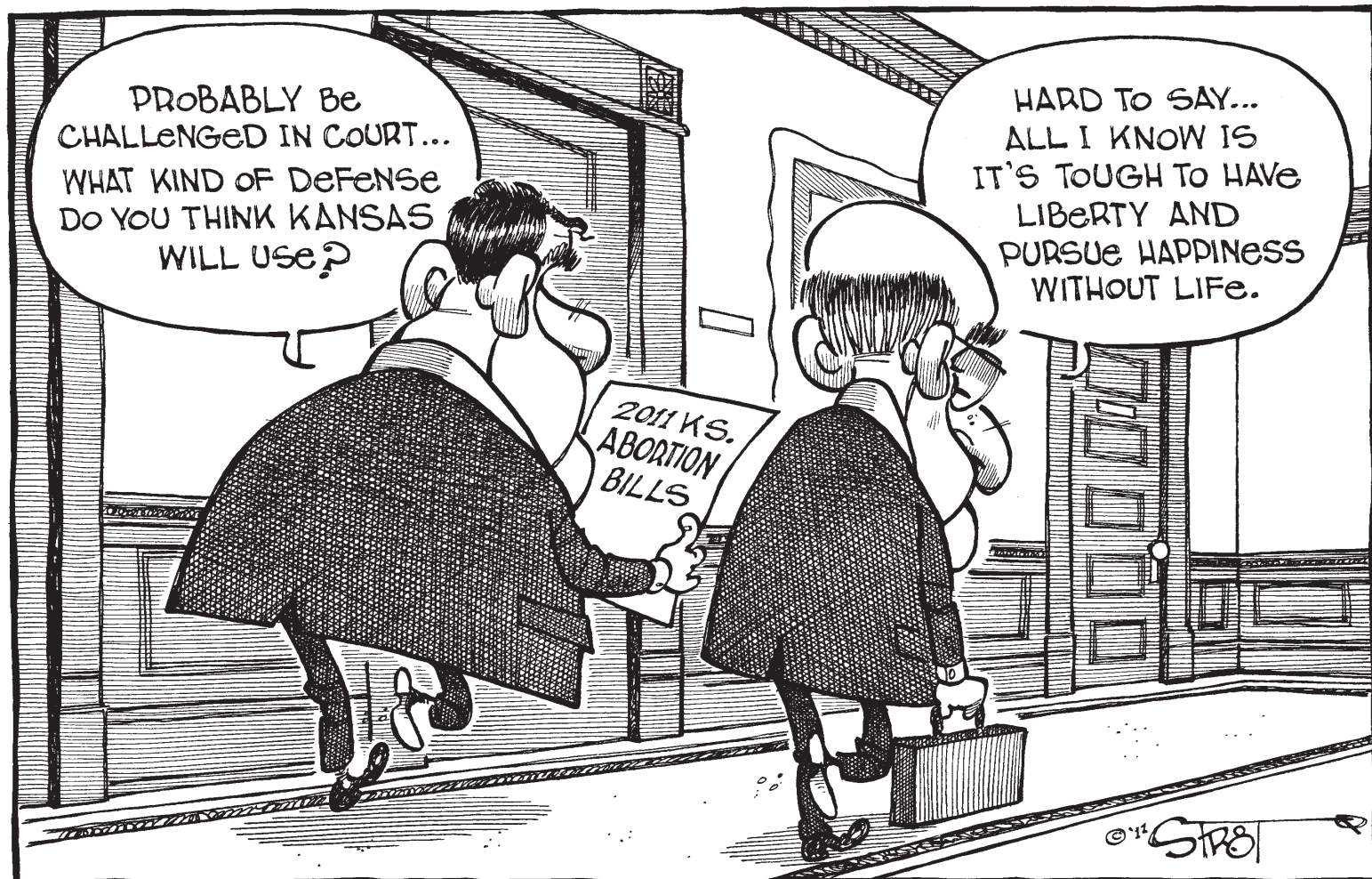
We cannot fight every fight. We should choose those that are important to us.

We are embroiled in two wars already. Our forces are stretched thin. The world's navies cannot stop unsophisticated Somali pirates from seizing international shipping and killing innocent civilians.

American troops are stationed in hundreds of spots around the world already. Must we return to the shores of Tripoli?

We are, supposedly, turning the combat role over to our European friends. We are, supposedly, not going to war in Libya.

If that's the case, fine, but we think the American people still need to hear what our goals and objectives are and have a say in this adventure. So far, they have not. — Steve Haynes



## Photos, cards like taking long trip

Visiting Mom in Concordia is a like taking a trip around the world.

My mother lives in a single room at the Mount Joseph Nursing Home, but her walls are covered with photographs and post cards from all over.

As you enter the room, you're met by photos of Taylor Morgan Blake, her one and only great-granddaughter.

My mother has pictures of Taylor before she was born—both from sonograms and from photos of a very pregnant mother Lindsay. She has pictures of Taylor eating, playing, walking, sleeping, upside down, crying and laughing—just about anything a baby can come up with between birth and age 1.

There are pictures of Taylor with her mother, father, grandmother, grandfather, aunts, uncles and one in a frame with Great-grandmother Emma.

And then there are the pictures of my father, my mother's father, her children and grandchildren, brother and sisters, nieces and nephews, friends and acquaintances and of course, my parents' wedding picture.

These take up about one-quarter of the covered wall space. My mother's baby blanket, made by her mother, takes up some space and



**cynthia haynes**

• open season

the rest is post cards.

I travel a lot, and when I'm on the road, I send a card home to Mom. My children and my sister have started doing the same, so now Mother has more cards than she knows what to do with, and her walls are a travel-and-tourism Mecca.

As I visited Mom the other day, I cataloged some of the postcards just to see where they were from and what they depicted.

There are people. Smiling down on her are Elvis, John Wayne, several baseball players, Ho Chi Minh, Roy Rogers and Trigger and George W. Bush. A mixed lot, to be sure.

A lot of state postcards. I found North Carolina, New Mexico, Wisconsin, Michigan, Kansas, Nebraska, Alabama, South Dakota, Georgia, Texas, Colorado, Delaware and Tennessee.

City cards offer skylines and vistas of Seattle, Kansas City, Omaha, Denver, Chat-

tanooga, Atlanta, Washington, Santa Fe, Wisconsin Dells, Aiken, S.C., Savannah, Ga., Baton Rouge and Boston.

Places of interest show up Machinac Island, Mich.; Mount Nebo, Ark.; Crazy Horse and Mount Rushmore, S.D.; Cumbres and Toltec Railroad, N.M. and Colo.; the destroyer USS Kidd, docked in Louisiana; battleship USS Alabama, docked in Mobile Bay, Ala.; the Chickamauga Civil War Battlefield in Tennessee; Coors Field in Denver; Hoover Dam; and the Tennessee Aquarium in Chattanooga.

And there are the foreign spots—Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Taiwan, Tunisia, Baja California, Hong Kong and Paris.

After Taylor, the most pictures are of animals, fish, birds and bugs.

My mother's wall is adorned with pictures of butterflies, deer, lizards, alligators, sharks, horses, cows, mountain lions, mice, ducks, toads, frogs, cats, dogs, beer, penguins, crows, moose, geckos, road runners, mosquitos, pheasants, a cobra and prairie dogs in four places.

My mother may not travel much anymore, but she can go lots of places by checking out her walls.

## April is child abuse prevention month

In each community, strengthening families is imperative to protect children from abuse and neglect.

Each family can build upon protective factors that will significantly increase the chances of protecting their children.

Strengthening Families research suggests parents practice five protective factors to buffer against abuse and neglect happening to their children:

- Nurturing and Attachment – Building a close bond helps parents better understand, respond to, and communicate with their children.
- Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development – Parents learn what to look for at each age and how to help their children reach their full potential.



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• Parental Resilience – Recognizing the signs of stress and enhancing problem-solving skills can help parents build their capacity to cope.

• Social Connections – Parents with an extensive network of family, friends and neighbors have better support in time of need.

• Concrete Supports for Parents – Caregivers with access to financial, housing and other concrete resources and services that help them meet their basic needs can better attend to their role as parents.

April is the time for parents and the community to engage in the five protective factors to keep children safe. The five protective factors can be practiced for a lifetime, and they will be passed down to future generations.

Reach out to people around you and be a role model. Start using the five protective factors with your family and in your community today!

As an outward sign of your support, I urge you to wear a blue ribbon or pinwheel pin—the symbol of child abuse prevention efforts. If you do not have one, you can get one by contacting: Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (PCAN) 140 West Fourth, Colby, Kan. 67701, (785) 460-8177.

Paige Campbell  
PCAN Program Director

## Expand voters' rights to recall politicians

With American politicians still refusing to substantively address the looming consequences of their fiscal irresponsibility, it only makes sense voters are feeling frustrated and powerless. Last November's elections sent an unambiguous message to leaders at all levels of government unsustainable spending will no longer be tolerated – yet it's becoming increasingly obvious only a handful of leaders are heeding this message.

If our nation is to be governed in a manner consistent with the taxpayers' best interests moving forward, then serious structural reforms are necessary. In addition to passing term limits that cap politicians' time in office – the right of voters to recall their elected officials should be expanded.

Currently, recall elections are not permitted in the United States for federal officeholders, and at present only 19 states allow recall elections for state officeholders. Of these 19 states, seven (Alaska, Georgia, Kansas, Rhode Island, Minnesota, Montana and Washington) require specific grounds for a recall election to be held, while Illinois provides for the recall of governors only. There are arduous signature-gathering requirements that serve to dissuade voters from initiating recall efforts.

In spite of its relatively sparse implementation as a part of our American democracy, voter recall is firmly grounded in the history of representative government. Unlike passing political fads or rhetorical buzzwords that come and go from year-to-year, voter recall (like term lim-



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its) traces its roots all the way back to ancient Athenian Democracy. On this continent, its lineage can be traced to the Massachusetts Bay Colony, meaning recall pre-dates the American Revolution by more than a century.

And even though the U.S. Constitution failed to include a recall provision, several of our founding fathers argued on behalf of its insertion. In his 1787 "Virginia Plan," James Madison paired rotation in office (i.e. term limits) with a recall provision as part of his blueprint for the lower house of the new federal government. More recently, recall elections were promoted at the turn of the 20th century as part of citizen-empowering initiative and referendum reforms – prompting a handful of states to adopt these measures.

Unfortunately both the limited availability of voter recall provisions and the hurdles that must be cleared in order to get them on the ballot have limited their effectiveness. Only two U.S. governors have ever been recalled—Lynn Frazier of North Dakota (1921) and Gray Davis of California (2003). A third governor—Evan Meacham of Arizona—faced a recall election in 1988 but was impeached and removed from office by state lawmakers before the vote could be held.

Yet with frustrated voters demanding immediate results and new methods of holding their leaders accountable if they fail to produce those results, voter recall could be on the verge of making a comeback.

Last year saw a noticeable uptick in the number of recall petition drives mounted at the local level, and just last month Miami-Dade County residents voted overwhelmingly to recall Mayor Carlos Alvarez—who had angered his constituents by raising property taxes and handing out huge pay raises to his staffers.

Voters are clearly weary of unnecessary government spending and increasingly agitated at the growing tax burden and mountain of deficit spending necessary to subsidize spending. More importantly, they have become equally indignant of politicians who campaign on fixing the problem but then fail to take the necessary steps to do so once they are in office.

In other words, political "talk" is cheaper now than ever before—and voters don't want to wait two, four or even six years to "throw the bums out" when their actions don't align with their rhetoric.

Accordingly, expanding the ability of voters to recall their elected officials could serve as a much-needed deterrent to further unnecessary government growth—as well as an impetus for forcing long-overdue cuts.

Howard Rich is chairman of Americans for Limited Government.

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