

## How tyrants work

It's only a conspiracy theory if the conspiracy is not real. Sometimes, though, it doesn't have to be deliberate for the effect to be the same as if a secret cabal had actually planned the thing. I refer specifically to the COVID-19 disaster that has been so instrumental in reshaping the socioeconomic situation of the entire planet. If it were not a conspiracy, that's really too bad because someone missed a great opportunity. It certainly worked like one.

As Stanford University economist Paul Romer, recipient of the Nobel Prize in Economics in 2018, so famously said, "A crisis is a terrible thing to waste." And it's no secret that the coronavirus crisis has been exploited to maximum effect, even to the point of altering the outcome of a U.S. presidential election. But before you dismiss me as a conspiracy theorist (and maybe you have a point), I am only saying that IF there were collusion and skullduggery involved, it most probably would have looked just as it does. It was a perfect political storm.

Most likely the beneficiaries of the crisis just recognized their opportunity and took

it. Smart people get things that way. Which brings me to the point of this little essay. (You were wondering if I had one, weren't you?)

Oligarchy, or "government by a few", is the unacknowledged reality of both our domestic and international political life. It's the subject of a lengthy article, "The Thirty Tyrants", by Lee Smith on [tabletmag.com](http://tabletmag.com). Contrary to our beliefs about how things work, namely that we live in a democratic federal republic in which our directly elected federal representatives vote our local interests in national affairs, we are in fact subject to the de facto rule of a few "oligarchs". This has been observed, some say, to be the reality of things in Russia today. Smith says it's true over the entire planet as well.

He notes, though, that, concerning the U.S. in particular, our American oligarchs have cut a deal with the Chinese Communist Party that profits the oligarchs and protects their power while selling us out to the Chinese.

Smith's model for this is Ancient Greece. He takes his example from none other than

By: Leo Chapelle

Niccolo Machiavelli, author of the classic 16th century text book on political intrigue, *The Prince*. In 404 BC, Sparta defeated Athens after 27 years of war. They cut a deal that allowed the government of Athens to remain in power and to exploit the people under them. Those oligarchs were called "The Thirty Tyrants". The object of the Spartans was to create "a state of the few" who would remain friendly to them. The whole thing fell apart after about a year anyway, but not before the tyrants had vindictively destroyed their own domestic enemies and enriched themselves.

Today Smith sees a similar relationship developing with China. It isn't difficult to find people on top today, from Jeff Bezos (Amazon) to Hunter Biden, who are profiting from the new arrangement of things.

Of course, it may be a stretch to say that these people sat down together in their private jet at the airport like Bill Clinton and Susan Rice. But they know where their interests lie. And it's no stretch at all to say they would work together to serve their own interests, even at the cost of ours.

## JEB Tales

### CLASS C 1966 GIRLS STATE CHAMPIONSHIP (Part Three)

#### OUR ROUTE TO THE "SWEET SIXTEEN"

A year of wins would be a good title as well as a way to describe our 1965-66 season. That year our team posted championship wins in the Westin, Monterey, Sicily Island, Block, Enterprise, Catahoula Parish, and District 8C tournaments. We failed to win the title but did come close by placing in the runner-up position in both the Caldwell Parish and Harrisonburg Invitational tournaments.

In our first game we were matched against the Lady Jena Giants. I think that was the name Coach Geraldine "Jelly" Pigott preferred people to use when referring to her team.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT:

Enterprise Lady Indians rose to the challenge and put the Lady Jena Giants in the dust that day. Sorry, I can't remember the score but I do recall the discussion in the dressing room after our win. Members of Jena's squad said that the game did not count as a defeat for their team because all their starters were not present that day. Feeling challenged by that comment I felt a need to respond. How dare her try to minimize our accomplishment! I promptly pointed out to her (and the rest of their team) that they had entered the Caldwell Parish Tournament and were playing as the high school team from Jena. Therefore they had just lost their first game. Later in the year we would meet the Giants again in the finals of the Harrisonburg Tournament (the other tournament we did not win that year). This time we were defeated by their squad. Jena did not always enter the Harrisonburg Tournament so I have wondered if Coach Pigott wanted one more go at us. Needless to say, it was not as devastating a loss to our little "Class C" team as it must have been to their "Class AA" defending state championship team. I remember clearly in March during the state tournament when we all read the descriptions of the competing "Sweet Sixteen" teams, Jena listed themselves as undefeated with a record of 30-0. As young people say today "Whatever".

Our semi-final game of that tournament was probably one of the most exciting games I remember playing. We were matched against AAA West Monroe Rebels. I recall that it was nip and tuck most of the game. By the time we reached the last minute of the fourth quarter we were tied 38-38. Coach Lewis called a timeout to allow us to rest and give us a much needed plan of action. This was one of the few games that I remember that he did not allow us to come up with the play that gained a win. Remember, he had that "do what you usually do" method with us. This time was different. He broke it down clearly for us. Our instructions were the following (as I remember) "Lois (or" Little Bit" as he usually called me) you and Judy keep the ball out front, meaning near center, until about 10-15 seconds are left on the clock. Then I want one of you to dribble down toward the top of the key. Elaine, I want you to try to break free so one of them can pass the ball to you under the basket. Great! We had a plan to try to win. No sooner had we stepped onto the court than Elaine Poole grabbed my shoulder

and whispered in my ear "Lois, don't pass it to me because I will throw it right back to you. I'm not going to shoot". Have you ever had someone tell you something you did not want to hear but that you knew was the truth. I rushed over to Judy Prudhomme, our other forward, to share this disturbing information. I asked her "What are we going to do?" I suggested that she work her way down to the basket on the opposite side and let me try to get the ball to her. She promptly informed me that she would not be taking the last shot either. Both these individuals were very determined and meant what they said and I knew that. My nerves were getting the best of me by that time and I had no idea how to handle this particular situation. We had been given our instructions. How could they or we go against the plan? Following the coach's instructions ruled the day for me and I did as I was instructed. Judy and I handled the ball "out front" as the clock ticked down to the last few seconds. Judy cleared the way by moving to the left side of the court near center. I began to look to the basket for Elaine's help. From the corner of my eye I saw Elaine cross the lane to the left side. I knew she was making it clear to me that she was unavailable for a pass under the basket. Tick, tick, tick! What to do, what to do? I knew someone had to make a move. I had started dribbling toward the top of the key as Elaine moved farther away from the goal. I saw the opening. No way were we going down without an effort to win. I drove hard and fast to the basket for a layup attempt. Hearing the buzzer sound, I was so disappointed that we had not followed through with the plan and had just lost the game. All my teammates came rushing over very excited and cheering. I thought to myself, how can you be so happy and act this way when we just lost this game. One of the players must have seen my expression and said to me "Lois, you made the basket before the buzzer went off. We won!" Oh, happy day! Enterprise Lady Indians had just defeated the West Monroe Rebels in the semi-final game. On to the finals to play against a stronger Winnfield team. They handed us a 40-34 loss that night, but that loss faded easily because of the two strong wins earlier in tournament play.

Following our regular season play we went on to win the District 8C Tournament, which allowed us to go into the Regional II Class C tourney as a first team placement. The tournament was held on the Northeast College campus in Brown Auditorium. Yes, it was still a college and not a university at that time. It was a small court with limited seating but most spectators left after their home team completed play, leaving plenty of seats from the next group of supporters. We would play against a team that had placed second in their district. For our first game we were matched up with Monticello in a game that we won. I don't remember the score in that game. In the semi-finals we met the team from Atlanta. At the end of that game we were on top with a score of 57-46. Next we were to play the "favored" team from Summerfield in the finals. I didn't know where Summerfield was but afterwards I would refer to it as the "land of the giants". Bishop Sisters, Sandra

and Cindy, each standing 6'2" in height led the team. Sandra played the forward position and Cindy lined up as a guard. We faced formidable heights on both ends of the court but Sandra and her ability to score was our real threat. Mr. Lewis scheduled an extra practice to show us the game plan. The forwards were to continue with their usual play. The guards would be called on to play tougher and smarter. The average height of our guards was about 5'5". Practice revolved around the guards trying to stop a 6'2" forward from scoring. Doubling teaming her was the main attack. The purpose was to prevent a pass to her or to force her to pass the ball instead of allowing her to shoot the ball. The third guard would try to steal the pass if she attempted to pass the ball to a teammate. You would have thought our guards were little fleas. If they got knocked off their target, they just jumped back on and went back to work. Though they won, I am sure that Sandra Bishop and her teammates knew they had worked hard to gain that win. Both teams would continue play in the quarter-finals.

I will always remember what Coach Clyde Lewis said to us the following Monday at practice. Girls, we might be better off by losing that last game. Now you will go into a loser's position in the opposite side of the bracket. In other words, we would not meet the Summerfield team again until the finals of the state tournament. This ending would require two things to happen. Summerfield would have to reach the finals in their side of the bracket and we would have to do the same in our bracket.

I had hoped to end this series about the Enterprise Class C State Championship team with this article, but we have progressed only through the 2C Regionals. It will require one more article to complete the story and move us through quarter-finals and the two games played at the "Sweet Sixteen". So I guess I'll title the next article "The Rest of the Route" or "Riding the Last Wave with the Champs".

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