

# 'Don't tell George I told you . . .

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Barbara Bush's favorite come-on these days is "Don't tell George I told you but . . ."

That's a spoof on herself because "I know NO secrets," she says firmly about the new life the Bush family has lead since George Bush became director of the Central Intelligence Agency.

As she talks, Bush — a direct woman — wants to make a couple of things politely clear. She's in town for one reason — to see her 11-day-old grandson. She's talking to the press to help the Alley Guild sell tickets to her June slide show on China. And the Bushes, absolutely, are NOT in political life anymore, she said.

"I find it hog heaven," she says of their current nonpartisan status. "George hardly even looks at the political pages anymore."

But there's one political question she is happy to answer. "I'm glad you asked that," she says of a question about reports that Texas Republicans are still mad at Sen. John Tower because he didn't give enough support through the years to other Republicans candidates, including George Bush.

"I'm glad you asked that because I do not know of anybody who has backed George Bush any more than John Tower. Now, this isn't exactly answering your question, but when George was given this job (CIA director), he was attacked on all sides." She says she doesn't know of anyone who supported her husband more.

And what about during Bush's 1970 Senate race, "Yes, we were political then, so we understood. He (Tower) did what he could."

She is asked about the changing role of political wives and says the role is changing, but she hasn't. "Now, I am not political," she reminds, but says in the "old days" she was an appendage to her husband's political career.

"I know my claim to fame is I am George Bush's wife."

While she credits First Lady Betty Ford with changing things and says Helen Jackson and Bethine Church and Nancy Reagan go out on their own and talk issues and Mrs. Wallace "certainly has political ambitions," her own philosophy is unchanged.

"If I were elected to public office, I would expect George to back me and be an appendage . . . and if I were elected to office and he did not agree with me, I

would hope he'd be very, very quiet." But Barbara Bush believes in choices and says there's no question the women's movement is one of the great issues of this decade. "We think we have come so far and yet when two great po-

come home to Texas." Barbara Bush, quite possibly, has seen the Great Wall in China more times than any other American. She says if there are 52 weeks in a year, then she probably saw it 53 times. Everytime



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litical women meet — Anne Armstrong and Mrs. Thatcher — the press describes what they wore and the fact each still back teases her hair."

With that statement, Bush says she's going to come off sounding very women's lib. "And I'm not."

Someone says they don't envy her husband and his CIA job. "Don't feel sorry for him. He doesn't. This is the job he really wants. It is just about the biggest job in the country right now."

On the issue of her husband's future, she is outspoken. "I'd like to see George Bush left in this job. If anyone would leave him in a job long enough . . ." Since 1970, Bush has been ambassador to the United Nations, head of the Republican National Committee, U.S. envoy to the People's Republic to China and director of the CIA.

"This is something we could cap off our career with . . . and then I want to

they had houseguests, which is more often than you would think, she went.

"George is always saying 'we have an extra sack' and so even in China we had wall-to-wall guests."

When she tells Americans about her China experiences she finds two things: They think they already know everything and if you say any nice things, they think you are a Communist.

Barbara Bush has some positive things to say about China. The beauty of ancient China. The charming people,

though she didn't get to know them. The honesty. "It's extraordinary. But then, if you're not honest you're done in. I walked C. Fred (the cocker spaniel) every night by myself because George Bush likes competitive sports, not walking the dog. And I never worried."

Someone suggests that for their (the Chinese) way of life, their system is not so bad. Barbara Bush firmly disagrees.

"I see a lot wrong with it. There are no choices of jobs, no choices of travel, no choice of what you read or think. You and I wouldn't make it. We'd be dead."

As an example of the time she came closest to seeing justice, Chinese style, she tells this story: A man hit a French lady on the head with a sickle. She dropped bleeding. The man jumped a fence and ran into an embassy. He could be

seen scratching and clawing the windows, though he wasn't trying to escape.

The next day the Chinese visited the woman in the hospital and apologized, and told her, "We have tried this man, found him sane and executed him."

"The man was clearly crazy," she said.

Though she took "copious" notes during her 14 months in China, Barbara Bush will not be writing a book. "I really do not like kiss 'n tell books. The only way there would be some interest is if I said some of the mean things.

"And I am not going to write the same old diary everybody else has, I am just not going to do that. I'm not going to cash in on the fact I'm Mrs. George Bush. That's the only reason it would sell."