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A New Generation of Conservative Thought

SkYROCKETING American debt



Obama's failed war • Ground Zero debate • Restoring civility



The conservative movement is in crisis. Modern conservatism was born in 1955 with the founding of *National Review*. Its editor, William F. Buckley Jr., said the publication's mission was to "stand athwart history, yelling stop!" But history has kept rolling along, smashing every traditional institution in its path. Family, faith, capitalism, our constitutional republic—they have all been shattered by modern liberalism. In the face of this ideological juggernaut, conservatives have offered sporadic and weak resistance. Their ideas have become stale. Too many prefer power to principles. The movement has become corrupt, lazy and ineffective. Having come to Washington to confront the political rot and moral decay, conservatives have become part of the establishment. In other words, they have become part of the problem.

The mission of *Reflections Magazine* is to launch a conservative moral and intellectual revival. We will bring together the finest minds and writers to defend the eternal principles of God, country and family. We seek to forge a reinvigorated conservative movement for the 21st century—one that champions a new nationalism, rooted in a culture of life, small government, a restoration of federalism and victory over Islamist terrorism. Capitol BuildingThe time has come for a one-nation conservatism that reaches out to minorities and women, the unborn and the poor, workers and students. The movement must go beyond its traditional base or else suffer a slow, agonizing death. Our goal is unabashedly counter-revolutionary: to roll back the forces of progressivism. Since the 1960s, a destructive liberal revolution has swept across our land. Characterized by radical secular humanism, sexual permissiveness and milk-toast socialism, it is transforming America into something our Founding Fathers would not only find unrecognizable but repugnant. We stand for the real America, the historic America, the eternal America—an America based on moral traditionalism, an America of limited government, self-reliance and entrepreneurship, an America that won its independence from imperial British rule, triumphed over Nazi Germany and Communist Russia, and has shed precious blood and treasure to liberate hundreds of millions of people around the world, and an America that champions human rights and freedom, in which every individual—regardless of race, color, gender or religion—possesses innate dignity and equal value in the eyes of our creator. We ask like-minded Americans to join us in this struggle for the heart and soul of America.

Edmund Burke, the great philosopher and godfather of Western conservatism, once said: "All that's necessary for the forces of evil to win in the world is for enough good men to do nothing." We refuse to do nothing. We will fight for what is right, true and good. This is the rock upon which we take our stand.

Mission:

The Edmund Burke Institute for American Renewal was founded in June, 2005 in the nation's capital, Washington, D.C. We are a non-partisan, non-profit, education and outreach organization which aspires to engage and mobilize the millions of African Americans, Hispanics, women and other minorities in this country who share conservative values. We will inform conservative leaders about the needs and aspirations of minorities in order to make the latter feel welcome amongst us. Also, we want minorities to appreciate fully how conservatism is congruent with their values and goals. In short, we will build a steadfast alliance between conservative leaders and minority groups. We hope to preserve all those elements in the American republic that render us a strong and vibrant nation. Simultaneously, we are open to new ideas that will allow more citizens to enjoy the blessings of freedom, prosperity and moral renewal.



How We Differ From Other Conservative Organizations:

1. We seek to update conservative thought. We want to find original ideas on how to bolster timeless principles.
2. We are attentive to the needs of women and minorities. These are not peripheral but are a primary focus of our institute. We want the conservative movement to make adjustments in order to accommodate the unique aspirations of previously marginalized groups. We also want minorities to learn how the conservative movement can benefit them.
3. We are devoted to cultural issues, not just politics. The main battle of our time is to seize the initiative in the cultural arena.
4. We hope to foster a broad alliance with those who adhere to traditional moral principles. We seek to build brigades with individuals of all faiths in order to combat assaults on human dignity.
5. We write policy initiatives, opinion articles and monographs as well as organize symposiums and conferences that appeal to our audience. Hence we do not just think and write: we take action!
6. We do not focus exclusively on one group or on one issue. There are excellent minority conservative organizations across the United States that are currently working in isolation from one another. Instead, we bring these groups together on a variety of issues in order to find common ground and, thus, to be effective in achieving political and cultural change.

Content

September 2010

Volume I • Number 20

Cover Story

- 6 Rising U.S. debt and inflation
By Vern Sunnicht

Politics

- 8 Islamic freedom of religion?
By Joseph Beaudoin
- 10 Liberals support Ground Zero mosque
By Kerry and Peggy McCarthy

Foreign Affairs

- 12 How Obama lost Iraq
By Jeffrey T. Kuhner
- 14 Arab views not altered by appeasement
By Herbert London

Culture

- 16 A rude new world
By Gayle S. Fixler

Public Policy

- 18 Icing global warming
By Dr. Leigh Broadhurst
- 20 Food for thought
By Kelly Kathryn Llobet



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Rising U.S. debt and inflation

By Vern Sumnicht

We have been living and investing in a low-inflation environment with falling interest rates for more than 20 years. Currently, all the evidence indicates we are headed for higher inflation and higher interest rates soon.

The inflation-adjusted data presented in the table below lends itself to a number of interesting comparisons. For example, notice President Barack Obama's average annual deficit spending, it exceeds the annual deficit spending of the last 12 presidents combined. However, for our purposes we want to consider how these deficits add to our nation's debt each year (See graph below).

Notice how our nation's total public debt has grown from \$100 billion (inflation adjusted) when President Ronald Reagan (1981 – 1989) took office; to almost \$20 trillion by 2012 according to Mr. Obama's budget.



Why so much excess spending each year? Maybe President Woodrow Wilson had a reason; he was fighting World-War I. Franklin Roosevelt was dealing with the great depression and World-War II. But what excuses do the rest of these administrations have?

Maybe we needed \$700 billion in bailout funds to keep us out of a second great depression. Why does the President's budget continue trillion dollar deficits for many more years? It took 205 years as a nation for total public debt to compound to \$1.36 trillion (in 1981). Looking only at Mr. Obama's budgeted annual deficit spending each year, it exceeds the total public debt it took 205 years to accumulate (\$1.4 trillion). The total public debt, unfortunately, is just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to U.S. debt.

According to the trustees of the Social Security trust fund, the United States has unfunded future obligations with a present value totaling \$18.8 trillion. The present value of unfunded future obligations of Medicare equal \$24.2 trillion. In all, \$43 trillion would have to

President	Political Party	Years In Office	Average Annual Deficit (Billions)
B. Obama	Democrat	?	\$1,412 (09 actual + 2 yrs budgeted)
G.W. Bush	Republican	8	\$376
W.J. Clinton	Democrat	8	\$110
G.H.W. Bush	Republican	4	\$282
R. Reagan	Republican	8	\$216
J. Carter	Democrat	4	\$99
G. Ford	Republican	3	\$133
R.M. Nixon	Republican	6	\$58
L.B. Johnson	Democrat	5	\$29
J.F. Kennedy	Democrat	3	\$24
D.D. Eisenhower	Republican	8	\$15
H.S. Truman	Democrat	8	\$4
F.D. Roosevelt	Democrat	12	\$116
H. Hoover	Republican	4	\$11
C. Coolidge	Republican	6	-\$5
W.G. Harding	Republican	2	-\$5
W. Wilson	Democrat	8	\$175

be set aside in the trust funds today to fully fund the unfunded portion of the social security and Medicare benefits.

Unfortunately there is more. "State and local government pensions appear woefully underfunded. If state and local pension benefits are discounted using a 3.271% interest rate ... total pension underfunding tops \$3.5 trillion," according to Andrew Biggs, resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute in Washington, D.C., whose research focuses on Social Security, pensions and population aging.

Can we possibly continue to finance these obligations? First, let's total up the present value of our U.S. debt and other estimated obligations at year-end 2009.

The U.S. Treasury reports our annual interest rate on all this debt is 3.36 percent. It will cost U.S. taxpayers [$\$14.2 \text{ trillion} \times .0336 =$

$\$477 \text{ billion}$ in interest per year, to maintain the total public debt. How much could we possibly afford to borrow if we used all of our federal government revenues to pay interest? We could afford to borrow a maximum $\$62.6 \text{ trillion}$ ($\$2.105 \text{ trillion} \div 3.36 \text{ percent}$) using every dime of government revenues ($\$2.105 \text{ trillion}$ in 2009) forever, just to pay interest. That assumes no additional debt and that interest rates don't increase.

How will we ultimately resolve this debt situation?

The United States will soon have no other choice but to default or pay off the obligations with worthless money (i.e. monetize the debt). Monetizing the debt through inflation has historically been the option of choice for other financially irresponsible governments.

The writing is on the wall; at this point inflation appears to be the

only approach to resolve the U.S. debt problem. Now it is a question of confidence. That is, will the Federal Reserve and Treasury be able to orchestrate a seven to nine percent plus inflation rate over the long-term, or will confidence in the dollar be lost, which could lead to hyperinflation?

Begin to prepare yourself and your investments now. Sell your longer-term bonds and start accumulating real assets. Then think about how to explain to your children and grandchildren why you are leaving them a legacy of unfathomable debt.

-Vern Sunnicht, CEO of Sunnicht & Associates, founder and president of iSectors, LLC is an investment advisor with 27 years of experience helping wealthy individuals, foundations, trusts and other institutional clients manage their investment portfolios.

2009 Total Public Debt	\$14.2 trillion
2009 Present Value Unfunded Social Security	\$18.8 trillion
2009 Present Value Unfunded Medicare Benefits = \$24.2 trillion	\$24.2 trillion
2009 Present Value Unfunded State/Local Gov't Pension Benefits	\$3.5 trillion
Total	\$ 61 trillion

Islamic freedom of religion?

By Joseph Beaudoin

In his Ramadan speech in August to an audience of Muslim leaders, President Barack Obama chose to lecture Americans on freedom of religion. His comments were both insulting to Americans and incongruous. Indeed, Islam demonstrates daily in dozens of countries that it has no concept of religious freedom.

Instead of lecturing Americans, Mr. Obama could have been factual about America and Islam. He could have contrasted the freedom Muslims enjoy in America with the oppression they experience in Muslim countries. He could also have spoken of the plight of non-Muslims in Muslim countries. He could have challenged his audience

of Muslim leaders to call upon Muslim countries to give all religions the same rights they give Islam. Unfortunately, perhaps because of a predisposition towards Islam or an unfavorable view of the United States, Mr. Obama chose to lecture Americans.

While it is remarkable that Mr. Obama lectured the world's freest country on freedom, it is even more remarkable to hear American Muslims talk about freedom of



religion as if Islam embraces the concept. There is no freedom of religion in Islam. American Muslims are free thanks to the Constitution of the United States which gives Muslims in America freedoms that Islam denies everyone wherever it is dominant.

Supporters of the mosque project in lower Manhattan, like Mr. Obama, argue that it is a First Amendment issue because Islam is a religion. This is a simplistic argument devoid of historical context and made in a vacuum. While it has a religious tradition, Islam has been and continues to be a great deal more political than religious. In most Muslim countries, Islam exerts immense political authority and it is often impossible to distinguish between religious and state matters.

To assuage legitimate fears about terrorism, the mosque supporters argue that Imam Rauf, the mosque project leader, practices moderate Islam. Talks of moderate Islam confirm a grave misconception. There is no such thing as moderate Islam. There is Islam. What seems to constitute moderate Islam is an apparent acceptance of the separation of church and state by some Muslims living in Western countries and, to limited degrees, by even fewer Muslim living in Muslim countries.

The “moderate” Islam argument raises a key question about freedom of religion and mosques. Would the First Amendment protect al Qaeda or Taliban mosques on U.S. soil? If not, the mosque debate is not as much about religion as it is about politics. And Islam is both religious and political. Most Muslims countries have not even

attempted to separate religion and politics. Most Muslims would argue that such separation violates Islam itself.

Religions are deeply rooted in their founders’ lives and believers often seek inspiration in the founders’ actions. Thus, Christians who want to emulate Christ will strive for peace; when attacked they will “turn the other cheek”; they will not judge “lest they be judged”; they will “love their enemies and pray for their persecutors.” While Christians have, throughout history, committed unspeakable brutalities in Jesus’ name and in violation of His message, Christ never engaged in violence, not even to save his own life.

By contrast, Muslims seeking inspiration in Mohamed’s life will learn that Mohamed repeatedly engaged in jihad—holy war against non-Muslims. Now, many Muslims define jihad as a spiritual struggle. While that may be true in certain contexts, it does not change the fundamental meaning of jihad. Jihad is war; jihad is bloodshed. It is, after all, with sword in hand that Mohamed established Islam. And Mohamed used the sword unsparingly.

Raids on towns and oases, rather than Sermons on the Mount, were the foundational impetus of early Islam. Mohamed used Islam to politically unite Arabs. And Islam turned desert tribes into conquering tidal waves that spread out of Arabia into the Christian Middle East, and westward into Christian North Africa, northward into Christian Spain, Portugal and France; and eastward into Persian lands and beyond. Islam’s expansion stopped because Muslim armies were

defeated in battles. Throughout this expansion, mujahedeen—Muslims engaged in jihad—were often as brutal towards conquered populations as Crusaders were towards Muslims and Jews three centuries later.

History clearly shows that early Islam was a conquering political movement immersed in religious fervor. Islam provided religious zeal to Muslim soldiers and Muslim armies provided more territories for Islam to expand into. It was a symbiotic relationship rooted in jihad—in bloodshed.

Today’s so-called Islamic terrorists see themselves as modern mujahedeen who kill infidels in order to expand Islam just as Prophet Mohamed did. Accordingly, until Muslim religious leaders unequivocally repudiate Mohamed’s bloodshed as un-Islamic and as sins of the prophet, Islam will continue to turn Muslims in search of inspiration into mujahedeen. Moreover, Islam will continue to be a threat to freedom wherever it takes root. The mere fact that there are no free Muslim countries denounces any pretension that Islam is peace or that it nurtures freedom.

Against this reality, it can be argued that the First Amendment ought to grant Islam no more protection than it would have Timothy McVeigh, the Oklahoma City bomber, had McVeigh chosen to preach his religious views while building his bomb.

Given opportunity and time, Islam will use the First Amendment to kill the Constitution.

-Joseph Beaudoin holds degrees in economics and finance, and worked in the banking and investment industries for 20 years. He is a contributor to Reflections.

How Obama lost Iraq

By Jeffrey T. Kuhner

“This is worse than a crime, it’s a blunder,” said French statesman Charles M. de Talleyrand. The statement sums up President Obama’s approach to Iraq.

In a nationally televised address from the Oval Office on Tuesday, Mr. Obama announced the official end of “combat operations”. He argued that with the withdrawal of the last combat brigade, he had fulfilled his campaign pledge to wind down the war.

“Operation Iraqi Freedom is over, and the Iraqi people now have lead responsibility for the security of their country. This was my pledge to the American people as a candidate for this office,” Mr. Obama said. “Through this remarkable chapter in the history of the United States and Iraq, we have met our responsibility.” He added: “Now, it is time to turn the page.”

No, it isn’t. Mr. Obama may want desperately to close this “chapter,” but he cannot because the war is not over.

There are still 50,000 U.S. troops who will remain until the end of 2011. They will conduct special-operations missions along with training and assisting Iraqi security forces to confront the continuing insurgency. In fact, terrorist violence is increasing. Bombs continue to detonate, killing dozens of civilians almost on a daily basis. Iraq threatens to break up along ethnic and religious lines should U.S. forces leave completely. The country remains in political gridlock, with no effective new government since elections earlier this year. The situation is fragile



and precarious.

Now is the wrong time for America to be pulling out. Mr. Obama is snatching defeat from the jaws of victory.

Mr. Obama opposed the invasion from the outset. His antiwar liberalism was pivotal to winning the 2008 Democratic presidential nomination. He repeatedly used Hillary Clinton's initial support for the war against her during the primaries. Iraq was the issue that propelled him to the top. Hence, Mr. Obama has never cared for the war – its mission, purpose and larger objectives. For him it is George W. Bush's war.

Hence, Mr. Obama is not walking, but running to the exit. He has let it be known publicly that America will be abandoning Iraq after 2011. This will be one of the greatest strategic blunders of our time – a colossal squandering of the sacrifices made by U.S. troops.

Contrary to leftist propaganda, the war in Iraq was both just and necessary. The 2003 decision by Mr. Bush to topple Iraqi strongman Saddam Hussein significantly advanced U.S. national security interests. Saddam presided over a totalitarian regime that posed a clear and present danger to the international community. His list of crimes was long and ghastly. The Butcher of Baghdad slaughtered more than a million of his own citizens. He invaded two of Iraq's neighbors, Iran and Kuwait. He amassed his army on the border of Saudi Arabia, threatening to exert a stranglehold upon the region's oil supply. He used biological and chemical weapons on the Kurds. He funded Islamist terrorist groups across the region. He allowed al-

Qaida-affiliated training camps to be established in Iraq. And he had an advanced nuclear weapons program.

The establishment media has repeated the mantra that no weapons of mass destruction were found; however, they have deliberately ignored the U.S. military's discovery of highly enriched uranium at several sites across the country. In the summer of 2006, this weapons-grade uranium was shipped out of Iraq to Canada and eventually to the United States. Washington rightly feared it would fall into the hands of Islamist insurgents, who would seek to sell it on the international nuclear black market. As the sanctions regime of the 1990s slowly crumbled, it was only a matter of time before Saddam acquired the nuclear bomb. The evidence is overwhelming and irrefutable.

No responsible president, in the wake of the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks and with America engaged in a life-and-death struggle against global jihad, should – or could – have allowed the Iraqi tyrant to remain in power. The Middle East and, most important, America are safer in a world without Saddam.

Moreover, the U.S.-led invasion helped establish a pivotal pro-American ally. Iraq is not only a fledgling democracy, but a model of liberal, pluralist governance in a region dominated by backward Arab autocracies. The path has been shown toward a viable third-way between theocratic extremism and secular authoritarianism: a fusion of constitutional self-rule with Muslim tradition. If democratic Islamic institutions can take root in the sands of Mesopotamia, they will

spread. This is why neighboring dictatorships, such as Iran, Syria and Saudi Arabia, are desperately trying to derail Iraq's noble project. Their long-oppressed peoples will seek to emulate what the Iraqis have acquired – control of their own destiny.

The Iraqis know that their future and that of the wider Muslim world is at stake. This is why they continue to pay a terrible price for their allegiance to a new federal constitutional system. It is the road out of the Arab darkness. Yet, instead of fostering this nascent, fragile process, the Obama administration essentially has turned its back on Iraq.

This is the opposite of what Mr. Bush did. In the face of overwhelming hostility in Congress and public opinion, Mr. Bush – at the height of the insurgency – doubled down on the war effort. In early 2007, he supported a troop surge. The addition of 20,000 troops, combined with a muscular counterinsurgency strategy, turned the tide of the conflict. Al Qaeda was smashed; the remnant Ba'athists became demoralized; and foreign Islamic fighters were killed in record numbers. The war was, for all intents and purposes, won.

All that remained was the political and diplomatic endgame. Mr. Obama inherited a winning hand. He failed, however, to consolidate those hard-won gains. Rather, he disengaged. He quickly – almost recklessly – drew down the U.S. troop presence. He refused to order his diplomats to wield behind-the-scenes influence to resolve Iraq's political stalemate. He did nothing to bolster Iraq's transition toward democracy and stability. His

top priority has been to get out as quickly as possible – regardless of the consequences.

Most important, Mr. Obama failed to forge a lasting security and political partnership with Baghdad. If all U.S. troops leave Iraq by next year, the precious sacrifices will have been in vain. Just as America stationed tens of thousands of soldiers for decades in Germany, Japan and South Korea following major wars, it must do so again today.

A long-term U.S. military presence will preserve Iraq's young democracy. It also will enable America to project its power in an area of vital national interests. Military bases in Iraq would serve as a strategic deterrent against Iran's nuclear adventurism and Syria's growing belligerence. Moreover, U.S. airpower and special-operations forces could strike Islamist groups, such as al Qaeda, the Taliban, Hamas and Hezbollah, at will. Iraq would become a key launching pad in waging the war on terror. In short, rather than rushing out, Mr. Obama should be negotiating to make sure that 10,000 to 20,000 U.S. troops remain behind to preserve American regional hegemony. It would mark a permanent victory for Mr. Bush's freedom agenda.

That is why Mr. Obama will not do it. He is the anti-Bush; a self-styled liberal transnationalist who believes in appeasement and multilateralism. His goal is not to augment U.S. power, but to reduce it. Hence, he is slowly frittering away the remarkable gains – paid for in precious blood and treasure – in order to placate his antiwar base. More than 4,000 Americans have died in Iraq, and 35,000 have been

wounded. Nearly \$750 billion has been spent. These enormous sacrifices were made for victory – a liberated Iraq that is fully inside the Western orbit and a major partner in the war against Islamofascism. They were not done to serve Mr. Obama's anti-American progressive agenda.

-Jeffrey T. Kuhner is a columnist for The Washington Times and president of the Edmund Burke Institute, a Washington think tank. He is the daily host of "The Kuhner Show" on WTNT 570-AM (www.talk570.com) from 5 to 7 p.m.

-This article was first published on September 2, 2010 at The Washington Times: <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2010/sep/2/how-obama-lost-iraq/>

Arab views not altered by appeasement

By Herbert London

In a recent 2010 Arab Public Opinion Poll conducted by Zogby International and the University of Maryland for the Brookings Institution, one can get a glimpse of Arab opinion in the so-called moderate countries of Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

Included in the findings are the following points:

- Arab views hopeful about the Obama administration policy in the Middle East declined from 51 to 16 percent between 2009 and 2010, while those discouraged rose from 15 to 63 percent;
- Those thinking Israel is a huge threat is at 88 percent (down slightly from 95 percent in 2008);
- The idea that the United States is the main threat to Arab countries and societies declined from 88 percent under President George W. Bush to 77 percent under President Barack Obama;
- The Iranian threat grew from 7 percent in 2008 to 13 percent in 2009 and down to 10 percent in 2010.

Asked which foreign leader is most admired, almost 70 percent name an Islamist or a supporter of extremist forces. Turkish Prime Minister Recep Erdogan received endorsement from 20 percent, Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez 13 percent, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad 12 percent, Hezbollah's Hassan Naarallah 9 percent, Syrian President Bahar al Assad 7 percent and Osama bin Laden 6 percent.

Several conclusions emerge from this very interesting poll. First and foremost is the obvious conclusion that the adjective moderate does not have any place in the Middle East where one man's moderate is another man's radical. The assumption that Mr. Obama's Cairo speech changed attitudes in the Arab world is certainly not borne out by the polling data.



Second, whatever change in tilt the present administration has given to the Israel-Palestinian question, negative attitudes to Israel persist and it is unlikely this will change substantially as long as Israel exists.

Third, despite the rhetorical shift in Middle East policy reflected in Mr. Obama's attitude and gestures, there is relatively little change in Arab attitude between Mr. Obama and Mr. Bush. Considering the hoopla given to policy shifts, it is remarkable that the Arab man on the street retains essentially the same position toward the United States that he held over two years ago during the Bush administration.

Fourth, despite the imperial aims of Iran and its threats against Sunni dominated states, Arabs believe that the United States is a greater threat to their societies by a factor of 10.

Fifth, it is remarkable that not one moderate leader in the Arab world, alas even in the non-Arab world, makes the list of most admired figures.

What this adds up to is an Arabic speaking community where radicalism is ensconced; where despite foreign aid, diplomatic appeasement and attempts at cultural understanding a passionate hatred of Israel and the West is unflagging. Judging from the data, conditions aren't improving. There is a lack of sympathy for democracy, liberalism and growing traction for Islamism even when compared to Arab nationalism.

As a consequence, policy implications are apparent. The effort to appease, flatter and buy off has not worked. The notion that Mr. Obama represents a new chapter in Middle East history is regarded as mythology. And perhaps the most useless expression in the English language is "Middle East Peace Process." There cannot be peace as long as Israel is regarded as a greater threat than Iran.

Apologias should be replaced by assertiveness. As long as the United States is regarded as "the

weak horse" unwilling to restrain the advance of radical sentiments, American interests in the region will be imperiled. It is only when the radicals realize their revolutionary goals cannot be successful that transformation or something approaching it, will be possible.

It is sometimes suggested that there is a huge divide between the realities in the Middle East such as poverty, hatred, adventurism, internal competition and the fantasy of an ultimate disappearance of Israel. Moreover, there is no doubt this divide exists and influences public opinion. But there is an even greater divide right here in Foggy Bottom where the fantasists contend that all we have to do is have the Israelis make greater concessions to the Palestinians and Middle East peace will flourish. The harsh reality is that appeasement has not, and will not, alter Arab attitudes.

-Herbert London is president of the Hudson Institute and the author of the book "Decline and Revival in Higher Education."

A rude new world

By Gayle S. Fixler

Rude new world or just new rules?

On August 9, JetBlue flight attendant Steven Slater slid to fame down an Embraer 190 jet's emergency evacuation chute clutching an ice-cold bottle of Blue Moon beer in both hands.

After 20 years on the job, the 38-year-old proclaimed that he had reached his limit of rude, abusive passengers. Apparently fed up with being disrespected, his departure was a flamboyant alternative to

throwing his hands up in the air and declaring, "I've had enough." So after using the plane's PA system to bid farewell to stunned travelers and crew, Mr. Slater chose an exit strategy that was beyond our wildest imaginations.

Say what you will about his now legendary exit, Mr. Slater has become an overnight sensation. He has spawned multiple Internet blogs, Facebook pages, ballads, a reality show proposal and potential talk show gigs, book deals, movie rights and even a beer commercial.

Initially, it was reported that Mr. Slater's dramatic farewell was in response to an insolent,

non-compliant female passenger. However, only days after that unidentified traveler was vilified and Mr. Slater deemed a hero, the inevitable conflicting stories began to emerge. Some claimed that Mr. Slater initiated the incident, others suggested that he sensationalized, even fabricated the scenario before his memorable exit.

But facts and motivation aside, Mr. Slater's behavior is a disheartening sign of the times, and far more than just a "take this job and shove it" mentality. His actions, be it as a victim or an instigator, are indicative of a more disconcerting issue: a breakdown in decorum and



our increasing disregard for and lack of respect and consideration towards one another. Civility, it appears, has become passé.

We live in a fast-paced, stressed, uncertain world and have all encountered and most likely participated in varying degrees of rudeness. And although there is no actual measure of the prevalence of social graces or lack thereof, there are persuasive indicators that Americans are cognizant of and disheartened by a perceived erosion of civility.

Nearly 70 percent of those questioned in an August 2005 Associated Press-Ipsos Public Affairs poll noted an escalation of rudeness in the last 20 to 30 years. The trend was observed in both metropolitan and rural areas, although 74 percent of urban dwellers reported a predominance of bad manners as opposed to 67 percent of those living in less populated regions. An overwhelming 93 percent of the respondents faulted parents for failing to teach their children the fundamental principles of civility. Celebrities, athletes, public figures, television and Hollywood were criticized for glorifying and perpetuating discourteous behavior.

The more recent August 2010 Rasmussen Survey of Rude Behavior concluded that 69 percent of the participants felt that Americans are becoming ruder and less civilized. It also found that what constitutes impolite behavior is determined by social and technological evolution, noting that 43 percent of adults—as opposed to 51 percent in its 2009 survey—considered it rude to engage in cell phone conversation while in public and within close proximity

to others. Not surprisingly, adults over 50 are to a greater extent, inclined to consider that behavior—compulsory eavesdropping if you will—disrespectful.

Daniel Post Senning, spokesperson of the Emily Post Institute dedicated to personal and professional etiquette and the great-great-grandson of the organization's namesake, explained this age-related disparity as a generational phenomenon. "Changing codes of conduct are perpetual. Social norms change so there is the perception of decline (in manners). Shifts occur in every generation and rules change around advancements in technology," said Mr. Post Senning. He stressed that although most people are not intentionally rude, the inevitable shifts and changes of new technology such as cell phones and the Internet do not excuse "unconsidered behavior."

Interestingly, despite generational differences, while the majority of us can attest to being on the receiving end of rudeness, fewer acknowledge our own unmannered behavior towards others.

"When someone else misbehaves it's due to their character; when I misbehave it's due to circumstances," according to clinical psychologist Dr. Pauline Wallin who explains this inconsistency as attribution bias. In her book, *Taming Your Inner Brat*, she notes: "We all believe other people are rude, but our behavior is justified. When someone else does something we consider wrong, we tend to blame their personalities. **The inner brat is the part that wants what it wants when it wants it and doesn't care who or what is destroyed in the process.**"

Even allowing for technological

advancement and its impact on behaviors and protocol, Dr. Wallin acknowledges that "cell phones are very distracting. But so are other things. So if we take cell phones out of the mix, people are still focused on their own agendas, which are so much more important than everyone else's. Thus, they are oblivious to other people's needs. The irony of all this is that people who do focus on others more than on themselves, even for a few seconds (such as holding a door open or doing another random act of kindness) are generally happier than those who focus on themselves."

Lynne Truss, author of the book, *Talk to the Hand—The Utter Bloody Rudeness of the World Today, or Six Good Reasons to Stay Home and Bolt the Door*, is more blunt, calling ours "an age of social autism in which people just can't see the value of imagining their impact on others and in which responsibility is always conveniently laid at other people's doors....The principle of civil reciprocity appears to be on its way out."

So what does it take to restore some good old-fashioned manners and respect to our routines? A smile, a simple "please" and "thank you" can go a long way. "Excuse me," "I apologize" or "I'm sorry" can often soften or even pardon a multitude of sins. This behavior is free but requires effort. It is a voluntary, learned conduct that transcends age, race, religion, political affiliation and socioeconomic status. It requires discipline, practice and reinforcement.

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Icing global warming

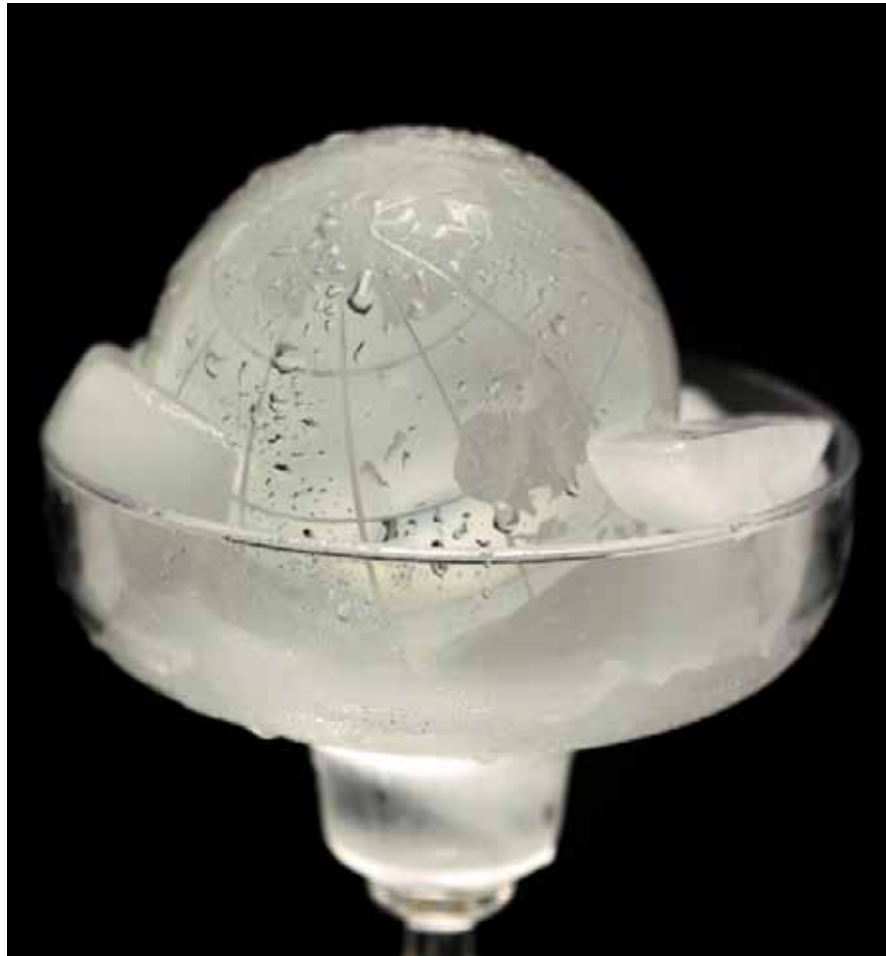
By Dr. Leigh Broadhurst

On a sweltering September 1, James Lee entered the Silver Spring, MD headquarters of Discovery Communications with a firearm and explosives and took hostages. Unable to negotiate, police eventually shot and killed him. As his manifesto reads, Lee was angry at the human race for abusing planet Earth and its creatures, and had repeatedly protested that Discovery Channel did not take issues such as global warming and habitat destruction seriously. Lee wrote that former Vice President Al Gore's movie "An Inconvenient Truth" heavily influenced his thinking.

In past summers, we have had Mr. Gore to remind us that we only have a decade or so to visit the seashore until it is literally in our backyard, but he's in a hotspot of his own due to sexual harassment charges of which he has been cleared, but still chooses to lie low. Two decades have passed with man-made global warming and its attendant catastrophism being virtual gospel, and now Lord Gore's disciples' misguided faith is powerful enough to spawn what was essentially an environmental suicide bomber.

The fallout from 2009's Climategate certainly put a chill on global warming, but did it stop the issue cold? Will Lee be celebrated by the left for resurrecting climate change?

Climategate involved 1,073 messages written by 166 scientists involved with the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) that were purposely leaked to a public access Web site. Some person or persons—perhaps scientific colleagues, graduate students, office workers, etc.—thought the public should know that arrogant scientists were preventing open discourse on global climate systems and ignoring data at will. The emails show top scientists conspiring to control the message



that the public receives—that man-made global warming is real, deadly, inevitable and the fault of Western societies.

Their arrogance was so egregious that the Independent Climate Change Emails Review panel, chaired by Sir Muir Russell, was formed to publicly review the careers of those involved. The primary alleged conspirators were Dr. Philip Jones (Director, Climatic Research Unit, University of East Anglia) and Dr. Neil Mann (Director, Earth Systems Science Center, Pennsylvania State University).

After six months, the Russell panel cleared Drs. Jones and Mann and colleagues of scientific misconduct charges. Internal reviews at Penn State and East Anglia agreed and allowed Drs. Jones and Mann to return to work. However, Dr. Jones moved to another position at East Anglia: in interviews

with the British press, he said he received death threats, considered suicide, lost a stone in weight and started taking beta-blockers and sleeping pills. Although unsettling, it's correct that what was presented in the emails doesn't constitute scientific misconduct. Selective use of data and rejecting or harshly criticizing the research of others with whom you don't agree or dislike personally is not uncommon. There was no evidence that data were wholly ignored, falsified or invented.

However Drs. Jones, Mann and others were not cleared of ethical and public relations misconduct by Russell's panel. The peer review identified patterns of unhelpfulness, open disdain toward opposing viewpoints, extensive delays or outright evasions in response to reasonable requests, and disrespect for the statutory requirements and reputations of the universities involved. They concluded that the blogosphere demands an unprecedented openness and access to data: "like it or not, this indicates a transformation in the way science has to be conducted in this century." A 2010 InterAcademy Council review of the IPCC itself came to the same conclusion, noting that the 2007 IPCC report (which won the Nobel Prize) ignored opposing viewpoints and sometimes used only anecdotal evidence to support conclusions.

Most importantly, the Russell review identified the root problem: scientists had become too political. They pandered to politicians, giving all answers as "yes" or "no" and not facing up to the uncertainty that is science. For 20 years, certain climate scientists have had the ability to influence global politics

and economic development based almost wholly on theoretical predictions. Outside wartime, such power had never before been accorded to scientists, and they were not going to let dissenters take it away.

Unfortunately, James Lee has just shown the world what political global warming means. Political global warming is based on environmental fear-mongering—it's the latest incarnation of Malthus. It has an agenda where overpopulation is the ultimate source of excess carbon dioxide, with an evil, Stalinist dark side whereupon the leftist elite gets to decide who lives and dies. This has nothing to do with respectable climate science and in fact tarnishes it.

To summarize respectable current science: (1) the Earth's global average temperature increased 0.6° C from 1956 to 2006; (2) atmospheric carbon dioxide has increased 36 percent since 1850; (3) humans are responsible, and even if we stopped all emissions now, warming will continue for 200+ years. There's no problem with (1) and (2), since they're derived from impartial satellite or ground-based measurements--good data are inarguable and will now be more accessible than ever. But (3) is an *interpretation* which assumes that today's computer models accurately predict long-term planetary climate, and input conditions remain static, which is totally unrealistic and every scientist involved knows it!

Here are some examples on global warming issues where there is a lot of exaggerated speculation but little scientific understanding:

Clouds reflect most of the sunlight that hits them and cool

the Earth's surface during daylight hours, but may warm it at night. The all-time low of summer Arctic sea ice coverage observed in 2007 was due to a 16 percent reduction in cloud cover. The roles various types of clouds play in the global climate are highly complex, and are the largest source of uncertainty in climate prediction models.

Many glaciers surge, meaning they have a 3-5 year active phase followed by 10-100 years of relative quiescence, and others are covered with rock debris. The cause of surges is unknown. No reliable predictions about past or future climates can be made with surging or debris-covered glaciers, yet the media shows you a surging glacier and reports that it's moving rapidly because the Earth is warming so fast.

"Dirty" clouds filled with aerosol particles from dust, forest fires, volcanic eruptions or coal, wood or diesel fuel combustion are less likely to produce rain than "clean" clouds. Absent an active volcano or a Saharan dust storm, where are almost all of these dirty clouds on any given day? That would be over communist eastern China!

Please look into these areas and more, and arm yourself with understanding, not propane bombs and a death wish for humanity. We need honest scientific work in these fields juxtaposed with the inventiveness of the capitalist free market to guide us. Mr. Gore and Lee preach a doomsday gospel which even Drs. Mann and Jones don't really believe!

-Dr. C. Leigh Broadhurst is a research geochemist and geobotanist.

Food for thought

By Kelly Kathryn LLobet

The recent salmonella outbreak this August in the egg industry with the assault on salt as a food additive in restaurant cuisine brings into question the appropriate role of government intervention into the lives of its citizens. Government should protect against catastrophic events and provide information for the general welfare, while allowing the citizens to exercise personal responsibility in food choice. In short, 'We the People' should look to the Magna Carta, the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution and other great documents of Judeo-Christian socio-political philosophy

for nutritional inspiration and establish the subsidiarity of sustenance with common sense.

The principle of subsidiarity simply states that a higher entity in the social order may not do for the lower order what it is capable of doing for itself. This idea was definitively pronounced in 1931 by Pope Pius XI in his encyclical, *Quadragesimo Anno*. In other words, government should keep us safe from cataclysmic occurrences, but should let the individual be free to do for himself.

For instance, the salmonella outbreak demonstrates the correct placement of governmental intercession in the public food

supply. On August 13, Wright County Egg and Hillandale Farms in Iowa recalled more than a half-billion eggs linked to as many as 1,300 cases of salmonella poisoning. Salmonella is the most common bacterial form of food poisoning. Symptoms of salmonella are typically acute and include diarrhea, abdominal cramps and fever within eight to 72 hours of eating a contaminated product. It can be life-threatening, especially to those with weakened immune systems. FDA, USDA and CDC oversight of food manufacturer and distributor sanitation is critical in preventing these unseen and unwanted dietary hitchhikers. Bacterial food poisoning is something which one could unwittingly ingest and



become acutely ill. Food sanitation is a public safety issue, and here the higher entity must intervene.

Salt, or sodium chloride, presents a different issue in nosh regulation by the powers that be. Salt has been in use in the food chain since antiquity and is referenced throughout the Bible. Today, an elevated sodium intake is just one of numerous factors along with obesity and a sedentary lifestyle linked to hypertension (HTN) which is a contributing component to cardiovascular disease. Obesity, on the one hand, is viewed as an unforeseen disease with the victim assuming little personal responsibility. Only recently did fatness earn the label of epidemic rank. It can be overcome quite effectively by not eating to caloric excess. The salt specter, however, has achieved almost omnipotent status as the cause of chronic HTN with a magical ability to invade the peoples' food and in great need of legislative management.

On March 5, New York Assemblyman Felix Ortiz, D-Brooklyn, introduced bill A. 10129, which stated in part, "No owner or operator of a restaurant in this state shall use salt in any form in the preparation of any food for consumption by customers of such restaurant, including food prepared to be consumed on the premises of such restaurant or off of such premises." The legislation would

have fined restaurants \$1,000 for each violation.

"The consumer needs to make their own health choices. Just as doctors and the occasional visit to a hospital can't truly control how a person chooses to maintain their health, neither can chefs nor the occasional visit to a restaurant. Modifying trans fats and sodium intake needs to be home based for optimal health. Regulating restaurants will not solve this health issue," stated Jeff Nathan, the executive chef and co-owner of Abigail's on Broadway. Here, Chef Nathan articulates the principle of subsidiarity with the lower order being capable of doing for itself by assuming personal responsibility for food intake choices. Ingredient policing and banning is not the appropriate role of government in the communal food chain. This decision should be left to the individual ingestor.

My Food My Choice.org was founded January 11 in response to government's restaurant ingredient incursions. It is "a grassroots coalition of chefs, restaurant owners, consumers and organizations that promotes the advancement of consumer choice in the marketplace and an environment of economic vitality." The Web page features articles and videos countering the idea that nanny state food regulation is the solution to America's nutritional hurdles. "Stop the food police before it's too late. New York

City Mayor Michael Bloomberg and Health Czar Thomas Farley have declared war on sugar, cigarettes, trans fats, calorie counts . . . and now salt. This bureaucratic agenda is not based on sound science, but on political science and alarmism. Sign the petition today and save NYC's incredible and diverse cuisine and protect your right to make your own food choices. Tell Mayor Bloomberg to stop his initiative to reduce sodium and leave health decisions to doctors and patients and food decisions to individuals," announces the group's mission statement. Their petition touts over 900 signatures and over 2000 Facebook Fans.

Constitutionally, the government should support and defend against all bacterial food-borne enemies, foreign and domestic. It should provide nutritional information to promote digestive tranquility. It should not redistribute ingredients. The people have the freedom of salt and the right to keep and bear sugar. Trans fats should be protected from unreasonable search and seizure. Calories should be ordered to form a more perfect personal food selection. We the People should ordain and establish a subsidiarity of sustenance to protect our virtual liberty.

-Kelly Kathryn Llobet is a writer living in Baltimore, a veteran Navy spouse and a proud mother of five.

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