

Miscellany 7: Immigration; John E. Mack; Minette Marrin; Rumsfeld on Humiliation vs. Beheading; Bushmen Losing; John Kerry's Sensitive War on Terrorism; Christopher Reeve

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Miscellany: Commentary on Recent Events and Reading

Some Remarks on Immigration

The Immigration Issue Is Heating Up

Ten years ago, I was upset over the issue of immigration, and I wrote about it at some length in my book, *Can America Survive?* I was by no means alone in my alarm over the pace of the immigration invasion, and I cited numerous references on the subject, such as Jean Raspail's *Camp of the Saints*, Peter

Brimelow's *Alien Nation*, and Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr.'s *The Disuniting of America*. I don't write much on the subject any more, because it is too depressing to see how my country is destroying itself by mass immigration. It is destroying the culture that made it great, and it is destroying its natural beauty by intense overcrowding.

About a week ago (October 17, 2004), Cable Network News (CNN) broadcast a special program on US immigration, called *Immigrant Nation, Divided Country*. It was a fascinating feature describing how immigration to the US is now totally out of control. There are now an estimated seven to twenty million illegal aliens in the US. They are flooding all parts of the country. The situation is so bad in Atlanta that the local police are told not to arrest illegal aliens – there are simply too many of them. The federal government is totally complicit in this invasion. At one point in the program, the Under Secretary for Border and Transportation Security of the Department of Homeland Security, Asa Hutchinson, was asked why the illegal aliens were not deported. It was absolutely amazing to hear him respond that it just didn't seem humane to deport an alien family after they had two babies who were US citizens (under our "birthright" policy of granting citizenship to any baby born on US soil, regardless of circumstances).

A few weeks ago, while I was vacationing in England, the *Times* (of London, Thursday, October 7) published an article entitled, "Immigrants threaten British values." As a proportion of population, British legal immigration is comparable to US legal immigration. As in the US, Britain is encouraging immigrants from all kinds of foreign cultures. And, as in the US, massive immigration is significantly modifying and destabilizing British culture.

It is pretty clear that immigration is heating up as a topic of concern, around the world. It is such a shame that it took so long for this to become a big issue. Senator Sam Ervin of North Carolina warned, prior to the passage of the Immigration Act of 1965, that massive immigration from foreign cultures would destroy our culture. After forty years of mass immigration, and the explosion of the population from 185 million to 293 million (most of it from recent immigrants and their progeny), we see how very right he was. America is not at all the same country that it was in 1965.

The Population Explosion

Since 1950, when I was a boy in grammar school and starting to remember population figures, the population of the US has almost doubled, from 151,330,000 to 293,600,000. The population of Canada, where I was born, has more than doubled, from 13,713,000 to 32,000,000. The population of Florida, to where we moved from Canada in 1953, has increased from 2,771,000 (in 1950) to 17,300,000 – an increase of over 600 percent!

When I was in the seventh grade in Canada, in 1953, I can remember my teacher telling the class, incredulously, that the population of India was 400 million. My teacher could hardly believe a country so overpopulated as to have a population of four hundred million. But the US population will reach 400 million by 2050, if current trends continue (which they won't, but that's another story).

The population of India was 369,880,000 in 1950 and 1,014,000,000 in 2000 – more than double. The population of China was 562,580,000 in 1950 and 1,261,832,000 in 2000 – more than double. World population has increased from 2,555,982,000 to 6,396,000,000 – also more than double. It

continues to explode at the incredible rate of 1.18 percent per year (about 75 million people per year).

Where will it all end (the population explosion, that is)? Well, it will end soon, as soon as global oil production peaks, and the world is no longer able to produce massive amounts of food from industrial agriculture and cheap, plentiful energy from petroleum. It will end by the human population's dropping precipitously. Eventually, the population in all places of Earth will drop to the level that can be supported by solar energy. Using solar energy, the cropland of the US (about 188 million hectares) can support at most about 190 million people (i.e., about one person per hectare) – substantially fewer if you want to preserve the environment (streams, rivers, lakes, wildlife, forests, species diversity). That was the population of the US in about 1964. One year later, 1965, was the year that the US passed the Immigration Act of 1965, opening the floodgates for immigrants around the world. Why would the US deliberately move from a position of being (barely) able to support its population on agriculture from solar energy to one where it cannot possibly do so? Ah, the wisdom of our glorious democratically elected leaders!

A strong nation is a group of people having a lot in common, such as language, religion, race, culture, heritage, and geography. (Also, it is sufficiently large that it has all of the natural resources to be self-sufficient, and support itself indefinitely on a sustainable basis without damaging its environment.) The more homogeneous the group is with respect to these characteristics, the stronger the nation it can form. The more heterogeneous, the weaker the bonds holding it together. In World War II, many countries, such as the US, Canada, Britain, France, Germany, Australia and many others were highly homogeneous with respect to these characteristics (Canada was somewhat of an exception, with its British part and its French part, but somehow it managed to keep from falling apart). After a half-century of immigration

from all sorts of foreign cultures, many of these countries are now highly balkanized. As long as the world had lots of cheap commercial energy (from oil), industrial nations could afford to flood their countries with immigrants. As soon as global oil production peaks, many people will starve to death, and these countries will fragment. There will be much killing, and it will be based, as it always has in hard times, on differences – differences in language, religion, race, ethnicity, national origin, or anything else.

Had there not been so much mass immigration, then when the killing begins as global oil production starts to decline, most of it would have been in the form of wars between countries. Because of mass immigration, however, many countries, such as the US and Canada, will simply self-destruct in civil war, as one ethnic group attacks another.

Who gets killed and who doesn't will depend on the numbers and skills of the various groups. In Fiji, ethnic Asians have flooded the country, and they will prevail over the native Polynesians. In Rwanda, Tutsis have vividly demonstrated their ability to prevail over Hutus. In Cambodia, the Khmer Rouge decimated the country's urban, wealthy and educated. But will America end up Anglo-Saxon, Hispanic, Jewish, Arabic, or Asian? Time will tell.

The Arguments against Immigration

One thing that surprises me very much is the argument over whether immigrants are a drain on the economy. That doesn't matter a whole lot to our leaders, and it doesn't matter a whit to economists. The fact is that each additional immigrant adds (on average) to Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The country's economic activity increases. It doesn't matter to the country leaders that the quality of life for the previous inhabitants is falling, or that the environment is being destroyed, by mass immigration.

All that matters to our leaders is that GDP increases. It doesn't matter to the leaders that high-quality jobs such as software engineering are being outsourced to India and low-paying jobs created in their place. All that matters is economic efficiency, total production, and generation of material wealth for the oligarchs. To our leaders, committed to economic development and the accumulation of wealth, the quality of life and the quality of the environment are irrelevant considerations ("externalities").

Anti-immigration groups who focus their attention on economic argument are wasting their time at best, and being counterproductive at worst. More immigrants means more industrial production *in toto*, and that is all that matters to our leaders. That immigrants are taking your job, destroying your culture, destroying your environment, ruining your neighborhoods and killing your children is not a consideration to those in power. All that matters to them is that the GDP increases, and, with immigration, it does. The people's culture is irrelevant – the people are nothing more than fodder for the "engine" of economic production. Labor is viewed merely as a commodity, in which one culture may readily be substituted for another. Therefore, if your goal is to argue against immigration, forget the economic arguments – however they turn out, they do not support your goal. Focus instead on the cultural and environmental and security issues. Mass immigration weakens and destroys your culture. If you deal with the public and live in an area affected by mass immigration, immigrants will end up taking your job (since you can't speak their language (e.g., Spanish), but they can speak yours (e.g., both Spanish and English)). It is well documented that Hispanic immigrants are involved in far more fatal automobile accidents than natural-born citizens (they like to mix their alcohol and their cars on a Saturday night). If there were not a single immigrant in the country, not a single American would be raped or killed by an immigrant. It's that simple. Ask any mother whose child has been killed by an illegal alien – there are plenty of them.

Anti-immigration groups should stop trying to show that immigrants are an economic burden to the rest of the population. It is difficult to prove either way; the answer is complicated, and varies by type of immigrant, and where, and under what conditions. Anyway, that issue really doesn't matter at all. As I mentioned above, it doesn't matter to our leaders. And it should not matter to the people. What does it matter that your economy is larger, if your culture is gone, your job has been lost to a bilingual immigrant, and you are now working for an alien and have lost control of your cultural destiny? The economic burden of immigrants, where it exists at all, is not substantial (although, for communities that have been overrun by immigrants, the cost of providing free schooling, medical care, legal services, and other free public services can be substantial). Far more importantly, mass immigration is destroying our culture, our quality of life, our security and our environment. It destroys the quality of life for many hard-working Americans, who see a neighborhood house that was intended to hold a family of four now being occupied by fifteen or twenty aliens. It destroys livelihoods, when teachers and salesclerks and policemen are told that they must be bilingual (e.g., know both English and Spanish) to keep their jobs. You know who will soon have all of the teaching jobs in a neighborhood that has "turned" Spanish? The bilingual Hispanics. The native English-speaking people will lose their jobs, their homes, and their quality of life. And, finally, immigration destroys life. For every US citizen who is killed by a drunk alien driver, or murdered by an alien, the surviving family can thank the US' suicidal immigration policies. If there were no immigrants in the country, none of these drunk-driver or other killings by immigrants would have occurred.

America does not "need" immigrants. Immigration could be reduced to zero tomorrow, and it would not be the end of the world. All illegal aliens could be deported tomorrow, and it would

not really matter at all – it would in fact be a step in the direction of national stability. It would, of course, matter to immigration lawyers and to the “coyotes” who earn big bucks by smuggling aliens across the border, and to the families back in Mexico who receive remittances each month from relatives in the US. It would mean a loss of competitiveness for any business that can capitalize on cheap labor. And it would mean a loss of income for all the industries that have become addicted to a one percent population growth rate (homes, cars, appliances, steel, agricultural produce – practically everything). But it would mean a positive step to preserving your culture.

You often hear the argument that immigrants take only the jobs that Americans are unwilling to fill. That may be true, but it is irrelevant. The real issue is whether you wish to preserve your culture, the dominance of your culture in America, and the ownership of your country by your culture. If the country were led by people who cared to preserve their culture, all American jobs would be filled by Americans, period. The choice is between sloth (letting immigrants do the work) or preserving your culture. Which will you choose? Today’s leaders don’t care – they just want the money (increased GDP), regardless of who wins and who loses. They are selling you – your culture and your position in society – down the river, in the name of economic efficiency, free trade, diversity, tolerance, and humanitarianism. You will wake up one day and find that your country is owned by another culture, and it will then be too late.

When you get right down to it, the choice is between more economic activity and loss of culture and security. In our materialistic society, run by oligarchs, guess which one will win?

You hear the argument that immigration increases cultural diversity. But, whether you view that as an advantage or a disadvantage, it can be argued either way. If carried to an

extreme, massive immigration would end up with a homogeneous world, with all countries looking about the same. On the one hand, this is happening to some extent by the complete takeover of the world by western industrialization. On the other hand, many countries are not as suicidal as the United States when it comes to immigration. Most countries, if you call their embassies and ask about immigrating, will laugh in your face – why would they want to pollute their cultures and races, and add to their population, with immigrants?

Cultural diversity – and tolerance and civility – are maintained when we stay in our country, and would-be immigrants stay in theirs, and we occasionally visit each other. We may enjoy foreign cuisine and foreign culture, but satisfaction of that desire alone does not justify massive immigration. The only legitimate purpose for entertaining immigrants is national security: to improve our language skills, learn about foreign cultures and countries, and recruit spies.

A serious downside of mass immigration and massive trade is the spread of disease, such as HIV/AIDS and the spread of alien plant and animal species.

As I mentioned, the Department of Homeland Security now turns a blind eye to the millions of illegal aliens in the country. There is now even talk of another general amnesty for aliens. The very Department that is supposed to be responsible for border security has failed totally in keeping illegal aliens out of our country. These are the folks who are supposed to be able to protect us from terrorists?

When the country is flooded by illegal aliens – or even by legal immigrants from any foreign culture – people can no longer be civil. They cannot be civil when they see their neighborhoods destroyed by “packing” of homes like sardine cans. They cannot

be civil when the density of immigrants becomes so great that Spanish is required as a job skill, and they lose their jobs to immigrants. They cannot be civil when their friends and relatives are killed by drunken immigrant drivers or criminal aliens.

In order for a society to be civil, it must be stable – stable demographically, stable economically, stable ethnically. A society can be civil when the proportion of aliens is small – on the order of one percent. It is difficult to be civil when the proportion of aliens is ten percent. It cannot possibly be civil when the proportion reaches thirty, or forty or fifty percent, as in many places in the United States, and as in the United States as a whole. At these levels, the immigrants have invaded in force and are taking over your country and your culture. It is difficult to be civil to people who are taking your life away. With its policies of mass immigration from all cultures, the US government is destabilizing US society. It is the responsibility of a country's leaders to maintain the integrity and stability of the country. America's leaders have let it down. Britain's leaders have let it down. France's leaders have let it down. Our leaders have failed us. They have betrayed us. They have sacrificed US culture in exchange for financial gain. They have destabilized the county so much that it is breaking apart. With cultural and economic instability, people are no longer civil. Addicted to economic growth, our leaders have sacrificed their cultures and the social stability of their nations. As things start to fall apart, the people will clearly see their betrayal by their leaders. The countries having mass immigration and massive overpopulation will fall first and fall hardest.

The Bible admonishes people to be civil to aliens. Jesus entreats us to love one another, and treat our neighbors as ourselves. But this is possible only if the proportion of aliens is very low. If there are very few aliens in a country, it is easy and a pleasure to be very cordial to them. If they are flooding your country in a

massive invasion and threatening your way of life, this is impossible. Their large numbers are destroying your culture and environment, and pushing you out of the way – in what was your own country! It is not inconsistent to love immigrants as individuals, and despise mass immigration. The government makes it impossible for the individual to express love to aliens, when they are taking his job, destroying his neighborhood by packing of houses, and slaughtering his children by road accidents caused by irresponsible driving.

The government, in its greed to expand the economy, has opened the borders to mass immigration. It now refuses to enforce its own immigration laws. It refuses to take effective action to close the borders to illegal immigrants, to arrest illegal aliens, to arrest employers who use them, and to deport them. We are now seeing the fruits of our insane immigration policy. And now that we have doubled our population mainly by immigration, it will be impossible to take effective action to stop this process. In a democratic society, the immigrants and their progeny who have arrived since 1965 are now in control of much of the country. They are now in control – you are not. If you think that complaining to your government for help, or even to enforce its own immigration laws, you are fooling yourself. The immigrants are now occupying the country by the millions, and the government is not going to do a thing about it. The only way that you will ever take back your country is by force. But if you take action such as Thomas Jefferson suggested – watering the tree of liberty with the blood of patriots – your government will put you in prison or execute you.

The Return of Slavery

One thing that immigrants and migration proponents don't talk about much is that today's immigrants are tomorrow's slaves – or tomorrow's masters. Either they will be your slaves, or you will be

theirs, depending on who evolves as the dominant social group. Slavery did not exist prior in the primitive hunter-gatherer societies that existed prior to the advent of agriculture and civilization. Slavery is an ever-present component of agriculture and civilization, under solar energy. Very few people can live well in an solar-energy agricultural society – there are always a few wealthy, powerful leaders, and a vast majority of very poor people. As soon as agriculture was introduced, the human population immediately expanded to a much higher level than could be supported by hunting and gathering. Wherever agriculture and civilization spread, the natural environment was destroyed, and people could no longer “live off the land,” as hunter-gatherers. This suited the leaders of civilization just fine. People were no longer free. There was nowhere to go, if you wanted to escape the grinding poverty of agricultural civilization. Agriculture enabled the development of large civilizations, which operated everywhere by subjecting the vast majority of the population to forced labor as subjects or slaves. There was no alternative, since most of the natural environment near civilization had been destroyed, and any hunter-gatherer tribes near civilizations were subjugated or exterminated.

Because making a living by the sweat of one’s brow in agriculture is hard work, cultures around the world turned to slavery to run it. Whenever slaves were obtained by conquest, they were put to work in the fields (or in the few other jobs of an agricultural society). Slavery did not disappear until it became economically uncompetitive, within the past 200 years, well into the age of fossil fuels and industrial technology.

As the petroleum age draws to an end, the planet will return to a system that runs on the recurrent annual budget of current solar energy. In order for the biosphere to survive, and the mass species extinction to stop, it is not possible for large human numbers and industrial activity to continue. Eventually, a rational

planetary management system will be established. That system, eventually, will not include global agriculture. Instead, most of the planet will return to nature. In most parts of the planet that are occupied by people, the people will be hunter-gatherers or herders, but not agriculturalists (since agriculture invariably leads to agricultural surplus, massive human numbers and large civilizations, and is too damaging to the biosphere).

If the return to a natural biosphere happens quickly (e.g., a minimal-regret population (consisting of a single high-technology nation of five million and a globally distributed low-technology population of five million hunter-gatherers) is established under a synarchic planetary management authority), then agriculture will quickly disappear (be abolished by the planetary management authority), and there will be no return to slavery. If the transition to a rational planetary management system occurs slowly, however, then the world will transit from a high-energy industrial agriculture system with no slavery to a solar-energy, low-technology agricultural system, inevitably with slavery.

Some people scoff at the idea that we will return to slavery as an organized social system. They often argue, incredibly, that slavery is “uncivilized,” or “immoral.” Recall that slavery and serfdom were just abolished worldwide less than two centuries ago, and that slavery still continues in some parts of the world that are agricultural and remote from civilization. Slavery was established as an essential component of solar (nonindustrial) agriculture, as soon as civilization (enabled by agriculture) arose. Slavery was not abolished for moral reasons – our forebears were far more moral than we, and many moral philosophers wrestled with the issue of slavery. It was abolished because it was no longer economically profitable, once the massive energy of fossil fuels was tapped. Agriculture and civilization go hand in hand, and under a solar-energy regime, agriculture *a/ways* leads to brutal subjugation – either of the country’s own “free” citizens, or

of serfs (bound to the land), or of slaves (bound to human masters). (The only examples of “pastoral” agriculture are in cases of very small, isolated societies (too small to support a society larger than a band or small tribe), or in cases of a windfall surplus of land (such as German farmers in North America after the depopulation of Indians and prior to the population explosion of the nineteenth century).)

My Dream

When I lived in Canada and in the US in the 1940s and 1950s, the culture of most Canadian and American small towns (like Kingston, Ontario, or Newark, Delaware, or Spartanburg, South Carolina) was very homogeneous. If there were ethnic minorities in any sizable numbers, they stayed in their own part of town. Loitering was forbidden. These towns were very safe. As small children, we could walk downtown alone without fear. We never worried about locking our house or cars. We were safe and secure. Now, things are a disaster. And that disaster has been brought about by mass immigration.

When I was growing up in Canada, I was never directly affected by immigration, and never thought about it. My ancestors had immigrated from England and Scotland in the 1700s, and I knew little about them. Some of them were United Empire Loyalists – residents of New England who wanted no part of the American Revolution, and moved to Canada when it began.

When I was a small boy, I had a recurrent dream about a wealthy retired gentleman feeding pigeons in the park. Each day, the man would come to the park with a bag of peanuts, and sit on a park bench. He would throw the peanuts to the pigeons. Over time the pigeons grew in number. Eventually, there was a large flock of them, and, each day, they became more and more aggressive toward the man. One day, he did not have enough peanuts to

satisfy them. They attacked him viciously, eating his eyes and flesh, until he lay bleeding and dying on the ground in front of his bench, with the pigeons milling over him.

This was a very long time ago, and I may be forgetting the events somewhat, but, as I recall, I had the dream so often that I asked my father to interpret it for me. He told me that in his view, the man represented the United States. The man's feeding the pigeons represents the generosity of the United States to foreigners – both those overseas and those in the country. The man's demise represents the fact that America's generosity will end up destroying it. America will be overwhelmed and consumed by the very immigrants that it so generously fed. It will be destroyed by its foolish, extreme altruism.

What Can Be Done?

Can anything be done about immigration, to stem the tide, to reverse the deleterious effects that it has had on our culture, on our ability to function as a nation, and on our environment? Let's explore a few alternatives.

What about zero immigration? Well that might have made a difference in 1965, but it is now entirely too late. The country's population has already soared to a massive level because of uncontrolled immigration. Immigrants and their progeny are now in control of much of the country. Even if a zero-immigration law were passed, the damage is already done. And such a law would never pass, anyway. The oligarchs would complain that we need immigrants to do jobs that Americans refuse to do. (Universities now complain that there are no Americans to teach advanced mathematics and statistics courses – that we absolutely have to allow Chinese to immigrate to do this. Our technical graduate schools are now flooded with aliens – our culture is no longer educating its own to be able to do what is required to maintain

itself.) The oligarchs would complain that we would lose even more jobs to overseas outsourcing, and worsen our balance of trade, if we cannot make use of low-cost immigrant labor. The economists would argue that it is economically “efficient” to allow free flow of labor, just as any other commodity, across our borders. And the millions of immigrants already here would complain that it is not fair to eliminate birthright citizenship, to prohibit reunification of families, to deny refugees the opportunity to better themselves, and to deny asylum to the persecuted.

What about “reverse” immigration – not the sending of native Americans to other countries (since, unlike us, they won’t accept them), but the repatriation of everyone who migrated to the country since 1965, and all of their offspring? That’s a complete nonstarter. You can’t go home again. Pandora’s box was opened a long time ago, and there is no going back. The country’s demographic and cultural composition has changed, permanently.

Through massive immigration, it is the immigrants who now control much of the country. And before long, with three million more of them flooding to our shores every year, they will be the majority, and control all of it. Kiss your country goodbye. It is gone forever. You were not even willing to take the easy path of passing laws to keep immigrants out, and save the country that had been yours for your culture and children. You will certainly not be willing to fight and die for it – mainly because the culture and country that you once prized no longer exists. You gave your country away, and you no longer deserve it.

It Is Now Too Late

What can be done about immigration? In my view, nothing. It is now entirely too late. America is now an unsafe, violent, socially fragmented country. Its borders are totally porous. Each day,

millions of tons of material cross our borders. We are now completely addicted to free trade. Law and order has collapsed: the government is no longer enforcing its own immigration laws.

America's policies of porous borders, mass immigration, and massive international trade have destroyed it. As a society, it is paralyzed and moribund. At this point it is like the dinosaur that, after having been mortally wounded, requires many minutes before his brain realizes that he is dead. All that keeps it going now is the massive momentum of its incredible economic engine. As the petroleum age draws to an end, it is like a jumbo jet flying at 37,000 feet and running out of fuel.

America is now a dysfunctional society that no longer possesses the basic requisites for nationhood (a common language, religion, culture, etc.). America was blind to the need to maintain a strong culture in order to maintain a strong nation. The white, Anglo-Saxon Protestant majority that once dominated the country is no longer powerful. As a democracy with many large minorities, its political process has been paralyzed by the tyranny of the minority. As its leaders try to pander to every minority to get elected, it is now impossible for them to lead effectively. Just as Plato wrote over two thousand years ago, it has exhibited the fatal flaw of a democracy – its inability to select good leaders.

Every once in a while, I remember my next-door neighbor in Botswana. He was a retired-military Canadian aircraft mechanic. I'll never forget his telling me of a recent experience in which he was returning to Canada from abroad, and was greeted by a turbaned Sikh who exclaimed, as he entered the airport waiting room after passing through immigration, "Vahlkom to my kawhntree!" My friend was stunned. When he left, a few months earlier, he had thought it was *his* country. No more. Sorry, pal, but you have now lost your country. The immigrants from 1950 and their progeny now outnumber the natives. Vancouver is now

referred to as North America's Asian capital. Editorials decry the fact that Canada has lost its essential British character, and that there is no longer a Canadian people. Britain – take notice! What has happened to Canada will soon be happening to you. America – you don't need to take notice at all. What has happened in Canada has *already* happened to you, also. The only way that you will ever relive the culture that you threw away is through old films, books and memories.

In the CNN program that I mentioned, it was heart-rending to see Mr. D. A. King trying to wage a one-man battle against the immigration tide in Atlanta. Illegal aliens were loitering on corners. A mass demonstration of illegal aliens was demanding drivers' licenses. At various times, the cameraman showed Mr. King addressing the aliens, admonishing them to go back home. It showed him telephoning the police and the Immigration and Naturalization Service to come to arrest the illegal aliens. They totally ignored him, telling them that they had more important things to do. It was ironic, but one of the excuses is that they are too busy dealing with "national security" to waste their time arresting illegal aliens. What is Mr. King to do? The government is totally ignoring the problem, and blatantly refusing to enforce the law. But if Mr. King uses physical force to repel these invaders, it is he that will be arrested and put in jail or executed.

When a government is no longer responsive to the basic needs of its citizens to protect their vital interests, such as their culture, their jobs, and their security, it has abrogated its right to exist. Neither Mr. Bush nor Mr. Kerry, the presidential candidates in the 2004 US election, would address the immigration issue in the campaign. They are both in favor of more immigration (that makes perfect sense, since they are both candidates of the oligarchy, and will do anything to promote economic development and industrial production). They are both busy pandering for immigrant votes. From their words and actions, it is clear that

they care more about immigrants than the natives. Our country is now in the death grip of the “tyranny of the minority” – the ability of almost any sizable minority to swing the election.

It is not just the death of the 1950s America that I mourn. No culture is ever static – every culture changes some every day. It was a good culture, in the sense that it had many desirable features (including strength, honesty, security, altruism, dynamism, freedom). To some extent, it still possesses many of these qualities, albeit substantially weakened in many cases. It is not so regrettable that it has changed, since change is inevitable. What is regrettable is that it has so weakened itself as a nation that it can no longer govern itself. It cannot enforce its own laws on immigration. It is so addicted to massive international trade that it cannot possibly close its borders. It now contains so many large ethnic minorities that a candidate for public office cannot possibly take a stand on anything except the lowest common denominator, for fear of losing the election. He cannot stand on issues; all he can offer to the electorate is his personality. There is no longer a large majority that is of a common culture. What is sad is that it was once a strong nation that stood for many things admirable, and that nation is dead.

If in one day, 180 million immigrants had suddenly swarmed across the borders and invaded the US, we would have surely repelled the invasion, or, at least, responded to it. But because it has happened over fifty years, no one did anything about it. It is just like the frog and the pot of water. If you drop a frog into a pot of hot water, he will immediately jump out. But if you put the frog in a pot of cool water and slowly heat it, he will sit there and die. America has acted like the frog. It sat there, letting its population grow by one percent a year through immigration, until it is now destroyed. Its culture is destroyed and its environment is destroyed. America, despite its incredible wealth, intellectual capacity, and creativity, has acted like a frog. The rest of the

world was waiting to overrun it, and it has now done so. America acted like a frog, and it has died like a frog.

It may be argued that, being so dependent on so much oil, America was always doomed to an early death, as Hubbert's Peak was crossed. As I argued in *Can America Survive?*, that is probably true. As an industrial nation, it will quickly perish as the petroleum age draws to a close. But the cultural America – the spiritual America – *could have lived on*, no matter what happened to the physical, economic, industrial America. And for that aspect of America, there is still hope. The New Age movement was spawned in America. New Age environmentalists and sociologists and spiritualists like Thom Hartmann and Daniel Quinn come more from America than from any other country. As the curtain closes on industrial America, which sacrificed its culture and its environment to Mammon and destroyed itself by mass immigration, let us look forward to a New Dawn in which its fundamental Christian principles, goodness, and ideals continue.

John E. Mack

A few weeks ago my wife and I spent a delightful vacation with some friends at their homes in England and Spain. We had met this couple while living in Botswana, where he was a professor of psychology. They showed us the English countryside and towns around their home in West Sussex. Their home is near the shore; it is one of those delightful typically English homes with thatch roof and a "Tudor" look. We visited Stonehenge, Salisbury Cathedral (the largest cathedral in England), and several other historic places. In Spain, we stayed at their villa in Denia, high on a hill overlooking the Costa Blanca.

My friends had purchased a *Sunday Times* newspaper. My wife enjoys perusing the newspaper, and she points out articles that she thinks I would be interested in. One of the articles that she

showed to me was entitled, "The aliens are always with us." It was an article by Bryan Appleyard about the death of Harvard professor John E. Mack, who achieved fame for a number of reasons, including his Pulitzer-Prize winning biography of T. E. Lawrence ("Lawrence of Arabia") and for his 1994 book, *Abduction: Human Encounters with Aliens*.

A link to the *Times* article is

http://www.johnemackinstitute.org/center/center_news.asp?id=231 . The article follows:

The London Times article on John Mack

The Sunday Times, Sunday, October 03, 2004

The aliens are always with us

A Harvard professor killed in London last week had been vilified for his belief in the 'third realm'. His theories may not be as mad as some think says Bryan Appleyard

John Mack, professor of psychiatry at Harvard, died after being hit by a car in north London last week. I learnt of the death via an e-mail from the Psychology of the Paranormal Network, an academic group that studies aberrant "anomalous" phenomena - subjects such as telepathy, ghosts, clairvoyance and alien encounters and abductions.

I was shocked, mainly because I knew the man and liked him, but also because of the banality of his death. Such a bizarre, anguished and exotic life had surely earned a stranger conclusion than an encounter with an alleged drunk in Totteridge.

I met him last year. I had called his office in Boston to arrange a telephone interview, but it turned out he was passing through

London and would meet me here. One morning he came round to my flat. He was a very slender, very dark man wearing a flapping raincoat and carrying a large suitcase, both of which seemed to be causing him problems. The permanent expression on his lean, lined face was simultaneously one of distraction and intensity.

He was struck, he said, by the coincidence of my phone call and his visit to London. It seemed significant. We then embarked on a three-hour conversation about the fabric of reality and the way we have deceived ourselves about the true nature of the world. He spoke very slowly and very quietly.

In 1990 Mack had met another acquaintance of mine, Budd Hopkins. Hopkins, a New York artist, had in 1964 seen an unidentified flying object over Cape Cod. He then discovered many people had seen UFOs. In the mid-1970s he also began to come across people who claimed to have encountered and been abducted by aliens.

Using hypnotic regression, he retrieved what appeared to be memories of, among other things, surgery conducted by these aliens on their human victims. Hopkins had become convinced of the reality of these memories and, when he met Mack, he invited him to meet some of the abductees.

Mack met them and also came to believe in their accounts. In 1994 he published a book, *Abduction: Human Encounters with Aliens*. It caused a media firestorm. A Harvard professor had announced that these tales of alien abduction were true. On Oprah Winfrey and Larry King, Mack said it was all true.

The Harvard authorities were appalled. They attempted to get rid of Mack. But on what grounds? The belief that aliens had visited Earth could hardly be grounds for dismissal. If it were, then 5m Americans were wholly unemployable. That is one estimate of the

number who might have suffered alien abduction. If all who had encountered aliens or seen UFOs were regarded as unfit for work, then half the nation - including three or possibly four presidents - could not hold down a job.

And so the university pursued a charge of "therapeutic incompetence". Mack was, after all, a psychiatrist and it could be deemed irresponsible to encourage patients to believe in alien abduction. But Mack had hired a tough lawyer. Gradually he changed the issue into one of academic freedom.

Mack won and held on to his job - though he was to be marginalised by the university. He pursued his own interests via the John E Mack Institute. The website – <http://www.johnemackinstitute.org> -- describes its goals.

"Our Research, Clinical, and Educational initiatives examine the nature of reality and experience while providing a safe environment for healing discoveries. Our aim is to apply this emerging knowledge to pressing psychological, spiritual and cultural issues."

Mack continued to write about his meetings with abductees and also to endure bitter criticism and abuse from full time UFO sceptics like the writer Philip J Klass. At one meeting in Seattle in 1994, soon after the publication of his book, Mack was ambushed by both Klass and a woman named Donna Bassett. Bassett had been one of his abductee patients but, she told the meeting, she had lied.

"I faked it," she said. "Women have been doing it for centuries."

Mack, she claimed, just told abductees what they wanted to hear. Klass, who was in the audience, waded into the row, accusing Mack of making "false innuendoes". He had said that the Bassett

incident had been fixed by Klass.

"I'm not convinced one way or the other," he said, "whether she did in fact hoax or whether she has in fact had these experiences herself. I don't know."

Mack went on to become the foremost villain of the sceptics and the saint of the believers. Through him flowed the multiple crises of modernity and secularity. Is this all there is? Is what we are being told about the nature of the world true? Or have we lost some deep, ancient wisdom that now only surfaces as aberrant and ridiculed phenomena such as alien abduction?

"Other cultures have always known that there were other realities," he told the Seattle conference, "other beings, other dimensions. There is a world of other dimensions, of other realities that can cross over into our world."

Long before aliens came into his life, Mack had always believed something like this. He had first made his name with a Pulitzer prize-winning biography of TE Lawrence - Lawrence of Arabia - but his primary work was at the Harvard Medical School. He was always a dissident. He campaigned against the arms race in the Seventies and was a leading figure in International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War which collectively won the Nobel peace prize in 1985. He also conducted a series of interviews with people involved in nuclear decision-making, including President Jimmy Carter, which led him to conclude that it was "a whole boys' club . . . You couldn't question what you were doing, that would be emasculating".

But the direction of his psychiatric work was much more controversial. He became involved with EST - Erhard Seminars Training - which he described to me as "a technology for blowing your mind, basically". He also took up Stanislav Grof's holotropic

breathwork that uses rapid breathing to enter an altered state of consciousness.

"I travelled into past lives, emotions and events. I realised the psyche could travel. It was not limited to the brain and the body. Spirituality, rather than being an embarrassing high-mindedness, which is what it is in secular culture, became very tangible."

He was obsessed with the idea that the contemporary scientific account of the world was simply wrong. Alien abduction came as yet further evidence.

Why, he wondered, do we not believe the tales of abductees? In other cultures - and in our own in the past - people routinely accepted encounters with spirits. The default human belief condition is that there is another world in close proximity to ours and the two routinely interact. We are the weirdos in denying what everybody else takes to be a self-evident truth.

But Mack's belief in abductions was subtly and importantly different from that of people like Budd Hopkins. Hopkins is a "nuts and bolts" believer. He thinks the aliens are as solid as you and me and they intend to take over the world. Mack, in contrast, became a "third realmer".

The first realm is that of the mind, the second that of the world, but there is a third realm to which modernity denies us access. And it is there that the aliens live. Sony used to advertise its PlayStation computer game console by saying it was "the third place", a direct reference to this idea, which implied that playing computer games created a new reality outside the mind and outside the world.

What exactly this means is hard to imagine, rather like trying to picture a four-dimensional cube. But it is clear what it implies: that

modern man wears blinkers, he has been denied - or he denies himself - access to the true nature of the world. The scientific imagination has concealed from us the teeming reality of the third realm.

Of course, it would be easy to dismiss all this, to say that Mack was crazy and his followers gullible. Nobody has provided any physical evidence of the abduction phenomenon. All we have is thousands of accounts, many of them retrieved, dubiously, under hypnosis. I have been hypnotised myself and I saw a flying saucer, a vision that seemed like a memory. But I am sure I have never seen any such thing. Hypnotism generates new visions more persuasively than it retrieves old ones.

To say that, however, is to say very little. Whether these things are "true" or "real" is, in fact, a trivial matter. The important issue is the fact that they are seen, felt, endured, suffered and celebrated by millions. This points to deep truths about the way we apprehend the world. John Mack was troubled by something that troubles us all - maybe not aliens, exactly, but a discontinuity, an absence, a lack.

After our talk I took him to Paddington station. He struggled still with his raincoat and his case. He was a man who did not fit in the world and now he has left it. I shall miss his strange, troubled presence.

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Minette Marrin Writes an Interesting Column

Minette Marrin is a regular columnist for the Sunday Times. Here are two examples of her interesting pieces. Copies of other articles of hers may be found at

<http://www.minnettemarrin.com/minnettemarrin/> .

The Sunday Times, Sunday, October 03, 2004

Keeping 'miracle' babies alive is a disaster for all

Seven or eight years ago I found myself in a small, homely ward in a hospital for people with learning disabilities in Holland. The air was full of the noise of pain.

The middle-aged patients in this ward were severely disabled: they could not see or talk or sit up or move much, but they were lying on beds or in special chairs. They all appeared to be in great distress.

Most of them were crying out intermittently and sometimes writhing, as if in pain; one or two were restrained with special tapes and straps to stop them harming themselves. Although they were all being tenderly cared for by wonderful nurses, with plenty of personal attention and attempts to comfort and stimulate them, they were absolutely wretched.

The person showing me around the hospital told me that they had almost all been badly damaged at birth — victims of the poor obstetrics of the past.

I commented that good modern obstetrics presumably means there will now be many fewer young patients with such terrible disabilities. My guide shook her head. The numbers are more than made up these days, she told me, by extremely premature babies from neonatal intensive care, who survive — but only at a high cost. In other words, not despite but because of its dazzling progress, modern medicine is still producing damaged babies.

I was shocked but not exactly surprised. Because I have always had a personal interest in disability and the pain it causes to all

concerned, I have always felt instinctively wary of the high-tech neonatal intensive care units.

I believe that it is probably a mistake to work so hard to keep premature babies alive, when they try so hard to die and when the likelihood is so high that they will be damaged if they survive, perhaps seriously.

These high-tech wards have always looked too much like laboratories, where nurses and doctors are in effect — whatever their motives — doing painful human experiments to make medical discoveries.

The sad case of Charlotte Wyatt in the High Court last week took me straight back to that ward in Holland. It cannot be right to strive to keep alive babies who will be condemned to a life of such wretchedness.

Charlotte is, it seems, such a baby.

She was born three months prematurely, five inches long and weighing only a pound. Now 11 months old, she is deaf, blind and unresponsive and has no feelings other than continuing pain, according to her doctors. She regularly shows signs of distress. She is sedated and fed through a tube 21 hours a day and needs constant oxygen.

Charlotte has stopped breathing three times and has severe and permanent problems with her brain, heart, lungs and kidneys. Intermittently she is stabbed with needles. She will never be able to leave hospital. For as long as she lives she will be severely disabled.

Charlotte's doctors do not wish to resuscitate her, should she stop breathing again. Her parents, who are Christians, wish them to do everything possible to keep her alive.

Her doctors therefore went to the High Court last week, seeking permission not to put Charlotte on a ventilator the next time she develops breathing difficulties.

Her parents went there to challenge them. This looks like a classic painful dilemma and it has certainly hit the headlines. However, for once I do not think that it should be so difficult for the court to decide what is right. It is the wider implications that are difficult.

Under current law, parents have the power to decide what medical treatment their child receives. But they cannot insist on treatment that doctors think is inappropriate or causes more suffering than good to the child.

In this case the doctors' arguments appear to be overwhelming and some of the parents' arguments appear weak: they have reportedly said that "the hospital are trying to get us to pull the plug" and this would mean "killing our daughter". That is incorrect.

The paediatrician has said: "I have no wish to stop treating Charlotte. The only thing I feel strongly about is that it's not in her best interests to escalate her treatment to such that she requires ventilation." That is far from pulling the plug or killing.

This case seems to be as close as it ever gets to black and white.

What remains a grey area, however, is the question of neonatal care and the constant resuscitation of premature or damaged babies. I wonder whether many people's attitudes might change if they were aware of the risks.

I also wonder whether so many parents would long so desperately for their babies to be kept alive at all costs if they knew what the personal costs really were. In my experience, this has so far been unthinkable and unmentionable. And I wonder how it happened that this poor baby was, despite her terrible disabilities, medically forced to survive to 11 months.

Why was it ever considered in her best interests to do everything possible to keep her alive? I find it truly shocking. Before all this neonatal high-tech existed, such babies would have died at birth. And for most of human history, God has apparently put up with that.

I am not suggesting that nature knows best. Mother Nature can be extremely cruel. But there are times when medicine, which is supposed to relieve suffering, can be even more cruel. There are fates worse than death.

Two weeks ago, by coincidence, Panorama broadcast a sobering programme about extremely premature babies. It discussed the biggest study ever conducted worldwide, which followed babies born in Britain in 1995 at less than 26 weeks' gestation — three months prematurely, like Charlotte.

I could not help crying when I saw the tape. The rate of disability is horrifying. Of the 811 babies given intensive neonatal care in the study, only 300 went home; of those, only three children were without any disability at all. One per cent.

A quarter of the children have severe disabilities, such as cerebral palsy, blindness, deafness or grave developmental problems. Eighty per cent now have some physical or mental disability, or both, and 40% have moderate to severe learning disabilities (formerly called mental handicaps) as against 1% in the general

population (a “moderate learning disability” is a euphemistic term for a serious lifelong handicap).

The suffering of some of their families is indescribable, to say nothing of the astonishing cost of the care.

This programme confirmed all my worst suspicions about what was done to these “miracle” babies. It is experimentation; a doctor in the film admitted that in 1995 they really did not have a clue about disability rates at all. Yet they proceeded with these horrifying, intrusive, painful treatments with their unknown but terrible outcomes. It was only recently that they agreed that these babies feel pain.

As one of the doctors now says, those babies who have survived with severe disabilities represent a medical, social and economic disaster. It is also, and more importantly, a personal and family disaster.

In Holland doctors no longer treat such extremely premature babies. British doctors should follow their example.

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The Sunday Times, Sunday, September 26, 2004

Adultery is a European right for the seriously married

Adulterers all over greater Europe, but especially in Turkey, have been holding their breath in anxious apprehension; for quite some time it has looked as though the Turkish government, in its self-styled reform of the penal code, would make adultery a criminal offence.

Not only would this have been bad news for Turkish adulterers; it would also have been rather alarming for European Union adulterers, who faced the prospect of having, in Turkey, a new EU member which did not respect the inalienable human right, at least in Europe, to extramarital sex.

After all, Europe is the cradle of adultery, or at least of the cult of adultery; it was the southern European troubadours with their lascivious lute-playing and erotic poetry, directed at other men's wives, who invented romantic love. Indeed originally romantic love was adultery: marriage was quite different and not romantic at all.

Things may have changed a bit since then, but even so, one's cultural heritage is one's cultural heritage, and one doesn't want it undermined by a critical mass of newcomers who don't like it. And if a country like Turkey, with its enormous population, not to mention its rather firm police force, were to become part of the new Europe, adultery might come under serious threat.

However, we can all breathe again. On Thursday the Turkish prime minister told the European commission that he would drop this inflammatory proposal, mindful no doubt of the fact, which had previously somehow escaped him, that anyone who attacks our universal human right to sexual satisfaction has absolutely no chance whatsoever of joining the European party.

One can imagine how it happened: his people may have been misled by the Ten Commandments, for example. Fortunately wiser councils have prevailed.

The Turks are not entirely alone in their condemnation of adultery. There are quite a lot of Europeans who disapprove of it, too. Melanie Phillips, my predecessor in this space, wrote a long and passionate piece last week arguing that adultery undermines society by breaking up families. She would certainly not support

making it a criminal offence, but she does argue for public and private disapproval.

My own view is rather more traditional. I believe that it is divorce, not adultery, that breaks up families and society. Blaming adultery is simply to misdirect the finger of accusation.

Adultery need not lead to divorce. Adultery need not break up marriages. On the contrary, adultery traditionally has been a buttress against divorce, and could perfectly well continue to be so if people re-examined their undisciplined thoughts and feelings about it.

Adultery is the civilised way of dealing with the tragic fault line of marriage — desire. Marriage in the West usually begins with sexual desire, but while marriage is expected to last for decades, sexual desire certainly does not, whatever anyone's expectations might be.

There may be some lucky couples whose marriage is conducted in a long rosy glow of undying desire, but my own rather amateur surveys and reading of novels suggest that for most people sexual desire for someone lasts anywhere from a few hours to about two years. After that, with any luck, love will have deepened in other ways.

Yet even so, evolution has played a very nasty trick on us: Eros is like a delinquent child; desire is totally anarchic, it defies married love and, and as George Bernard Shaw famously discovered when he questioned a lady of nearly 90 at dinner, it doesn't seem to fade with time.

Love and marriage, according to the Fifties song, go together like a horse and carriage. If so, marriage is like shackling the precious

carriage of children, family and home to a half-blind half-crazed racehorse, which is certain to career off course.

The traditional solution to this glaringly obvious problem was, failing extreme social repression or possibly the stoning of adulterers, to find a discreet way of gratifying sexual desires privately without upsetting the carriage.

It's true that this solution was more often available to men, and to the rich — adultery tends to prosper with separate addresses and separate bathrooms. But when divorce was impossible, or very much frowned upon, adultery was less frowned on, and in a way less risky, because it did not usually lead to divorce.

The difficulty today is that divorce has become socially acceptable. Indeed, people often speak of it as something of a duty; for instance, if a man's friends discover that his wife has been having a torrid affair they will urge him to divorce her at once, for that reason alone, even though it will break up his home and distress and impoverish his children, and he might not, truly, mind very much.

Besides, on the principle that all sexual passion fades, she would probably get tired of the boyfriend quite soon anyway. As someone said of sailors, they tend to come home with the tide.

That is only true, however, in a cultural climate where adultery is tolerated. In ours it is considered insulting, humiliating and totally unacceptable. Indeed a spouse who has been cheated on is despised much more than the cheat, because of the slur on his or her sexuality. That is largely because our culture is so absurdly sexualised.

Sex and sexual gratification are everywhere around us, in everything we see and hear. This gives us a hugely inflated idea

of what is due to us sexually, and of how much our identity is based on our sexuality, our sexismo.

Not many things are new in any era of history, but I truly believe this is one. Sex has somehow replaced honour in our sense of ourselves. That has proved to be bad, and possibly fatal, for marriage.

Banning adultery, à la Turque, or stigmatising it as Melanie Phillips recommends, is not the solution. The solution lies in rediscovering the social importance of adultery, but only under certain conditions. There are, or ought to be, rules for adultery.

The first and last one is discretion, to avoid humiliating anyone or threatening the family. Never admit. Never tell. Never hint. The temptation to boast about sex must at all costs be resisted; it is not a very high cost, after all, for the privilege of giving in to sexual temptation.

The second rule, therefore, is to avoid asking too many questions. Turning a blind eye is a central virtue in marriage.

The third is loyalty to the marriage, and very public loyalty. Jeremy Irons, skirting round this delicate subject in an interview last week, said in describing modern marriage that “a modern couple give each other the freedom to flirt with new beginnings elsewhere”. How wrong that is.

Adultery isn't about new beginnings — that's homewrecking. Serious adultery is for the seriously married, at least in Europe.

The Sunday Times, Sunday, September 26, 2004

Spain's Water Problem

It is interesting how reading about something does not make nearly the impression that "being there" does. On September 2, Yahoo carried the following article about a chronic water shortage in Spain. Every year, Spain needs more water to service its growing economy, particularly in the areas of agriculture and tourism. Here is the text of the article:

MADRID (Reuters) - The world's fast-growing thirst for water can only be met by purifying sea water as rivers and reservoirs become unable to meet demand, Spain said on Thursday unveiling a major program to fight its own chronic shortages.

Spain's Socialist government, elected in March, has ditched plans to reroute the country's longest river to irrigate its parched southeast, saying it would harm fragile wetlands in the north, cost too much and not provide enough water anyway.

Under new proposals, a variety of smaller schemes to improve existing infrastructure and build desalination plants would provide 1,063 cubic hectometers of water -- or just under three percent of Spain's consumption -- much of it for agriculture and tourism along the Mediterranean coast.

"Sea water, experts tell us, is the water of the future for humanity because continental fresh water will increasingly suffer from problems of scarcity, pollution and supply," Narbona told a news conference, saying Spain aimed to be at the vanguard of desalination techniques.

Spain, which suffers annual water shortages, has been using the technology for 30 years and has 700 such plants -- making it the world's fifth highest consumer.

The new program will cost an estimated 3.8 billion euros. Spain's proposals received a warm welcome from EU Environment

Commissioner Margot Wallstrom and Madrid hopes the European Union (news - web sites) will cover up to 1.26 billion euros of its cost.

The first water under the new scheme is expected to flow in 2005, the minister said. To accompany the plan, the government will launch a campaign to educate Spaniards on the importance of conserving water.

It will also attempt to classify more accurately how water is used in Spain, one of Europe's most arid countries where summer demand is swelled by millions of tourists who pack its sweltering coastal resorts.

Under the new scheme, water will be priced according to its intended use: farmers will face the lowest charges, with industry paying a little more and tourist facilities and golf courses paying the most.

The government hopes the energy-intensive desalination plants could be powered, at least in part, by renewable energy. After consultation with the private sector, Narbona said this could require additional research which could be funded by the government. [End of article.]

As I mentioned earlier, I recently visited Spain, staying in my friends' villa on the Costa Blanca, Spain's eastern Mediterranean coast. The amount of construction going on there is incredible. Massive developments are covering the hills along the coast as you drive north from Alicante to Valencia, to places such as Benidorm, Altea and Denia. These homes are being sold to foreigners from all over Europe (such as my friends). The amount of economic activity associated with these homes is very large – not just the construction labor, materials and equipment (bricks, tiles, windows, kitchen appliances), but activity that continues long

after construction ends, such as security guards, road maintenance, restaurants, stores of all kinds, and other tourist facilities. My wife and I were there at a time of year that was well past the summer peak period, but the amount of tourist activity was still staggering. The beaches were not overly crowded, but the traffic in the small towns and villages was hard to believe.

Spain's reaction to its long-standing water crisis is typical of the response of the modern world to any environmental problem. Ignore the fundamental reason for the problem, and look for some additional economic development that will mask the symptoms (temporarily – at least until the next generation comes along). In the case of Spain's water problem, the problem demonstrates clearly that Spain has far too many people and is engaging in far too much industrial activity for its natural environment to support. The rational solution would be smaller families, zero immigration, and decreased economic activity (industry, agriculture, tourism). But is this what Spain is doing, or even attempting to do, or even contemplating doing? Of course not. The plan is for more and more tourists, foreign investment, agriculture, and industrial activity – and more water.

Humiliation vs. Beheading

Detroit Free Press, May 13, 2004, <http://www.freep.com>

Article at

http://www.freep.com/voices/letters/eberg13_20040513.htm

On TV a few days ago, I caught a “glimpse” of Donald Rumsfeld on TV. I wasn't really paying attention, but I thought that he had just made a remark to the effect that the humiliation of prisoners at Abu Ghraib prison did not compare to beheading. I did a quick search of the Internet, and failed to confirm this remark. I did, however, come across comments by other on this subject. On its

“Letters to the Editor” page for May 13, 2004, the Detroit Free Press displayed the following.

There is a big difference between humiliation and beheading, and I'm afraid the American public and media just won't get it. When the world outcry is worse over, for lack of a better term, fraternity pranks gone wrong than over burned American bodies hanging from a bridge, something is amiss.

Maybe the problem with our military is that we are too humane?

What our troops did in abusing those prisoners was wrong, but we also can't expect to be Mr. Nice Guys and ultimately win the war against terrorism.

The fighting is nasty now, and it will likely get nastier. The bottom-line question is this: Do we have the stomach to prevail?
Tim Martin, Ann Arbor.

Contrast the photos

First, take the photo of an Iraqi prisoner with panties on his head and contrast that with an American being beheaded! Next, let's see the picture of a male prisoner being held on a leash by a female soldier and contrast it with four U.S. planes hijacked by terrorists and flown into buildings causing the death of thousands!

Can the media really twist this story so blatantly as to erode the common sense of the average person? They will if we let them.

Now's the time for all independent-minded Americans to hold fast to logic and not get swept-up in the "blame America first" mentality sweeping the press at this time. Deal with the issue at hand, as the president is doing, and continue to believe in

ourselves. Let's not let the actions of a few deter us in doing the right thing. Tania Konopada, Birmingham.

Reality of the enemy

Here you have it, folks, the reality of the situation and the enemy in Iraq. The media should take note of the abuse that has been a way of life for a long time in Iraq and the battle that will continue.

Our media are the biggest problem we have, with them trying to make a case for Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld to resign. How ridiculous can that be? Members of Congress should think about this situation, look at reality and consider the aftershock of the beheading of Nick Berg. Did this balance the scales?

Let's face it, this started with 9/11. Thomas Heikkinen, Jackson.

Tepid Muslim response

The mishandling of Iraqi prisoners at the Abu Ghraib prison is intolerable, but these prisoners, while humiliated, will go on with their lives. Our government is taking steps to punish the guilty and has repeatedly apologized to the Muslim world.

That episode pales in comparison to the beheading of an American prisoner and to the burning alive of four other Americans recently. I am appalled the Muslim world has offered very few apologies for these barbaric acts. It is especially appalling that some of the Muslims who are American citizens offer only token condolences. Bob Allan, Rochester Hills.

Deadly double standard

I don't get it. Insurgents drag innocent Americans out of vehicles and burn their bodies. They kidnap innocent civilians and kill

them. They behead a 26-year-old civilian who went there to help, and the politicians want to crucify our own military personnel for "humiliating" the Iraqi prisoners. Tell the people in Washington to get their heads out of the sand. Chuck Lieberman, Farmington Hills.

Who'll apologize now?

I'm so glad we made an apology. Those photos may have been wrong, but at least all the prisoners are alive. Haven't those people done enough to us? It's time to stop wanting everyone to be our friends.

Who is going to apologize to this country, especially the Berg family? Martha Barron, Southgate.

Cycle of torture

When will we acknowledge that violence breeds violence; torture breeds torture, as testified to by the beheading of an American out of revenge for the torture of the Iraqis?

The Detroit Free Press is to be commended for the May 11 editorial supporting the closing of what was called the School of the Americas ("Torture U.: Congress should shut former School of the Americas"). At this school, soldiers learn torture techniques and how to circumvent due process laws.

If we as a country don't stop teaching our soldiers how to torture, how can we expect other countries to stop torturing? We began this preemptive war and we should be the first to stop it by taking the lead in breaking the cycle of violence. We have lost our moral credibility throughout the world; let's not lose it with our children. We need to ask for the help of the United Nations before it is too late. Sr. Maureen Sinnott, Allen Park.

Cold-blooded consistency

The beheading of an American citizen clearly demonstrates the continual war and civil crimes committed by Islamic fascists of the Middle East. It also clearly demonstrates the culpability of the countries these groups work out of, because the governments in charge are doing nothing of substance to eradicate these monsters.

If the political ostriches in the United States and the world desire to believe the insanity – the convoluted thinking of these people -- that this is in retaliation for the Iraqi prisoners of war who were abused, they may choose to do so. The fact is that the Islamic fascists of this region have been committing this type of cold-blooded murder for decades. Ken Walendzik, Pontiac.

Media share blame

I don't think that the American was beheaded in Iraq because of the scandal in the prisons. It was because the inflammatory photos became public. This justifies General Richard Myers' attempts to prevent the broadcast of those photos.

The national news media are complicit in this young man's death. Max Effort, St. Clair Shores.

Pull out now

I have a hard time believing that this is just an isolated incident or that our enemies have treated American prisoners humanely and with respect. American POWs have suffered far worse than any of the Iraqi prisoners in the sexual abuse scandal have, yet the United States is the only one feeling any heat over it.

I say we cut our losses and bring all of our troops home now. Or, better yet, pull them all out of Iraq and send them to the Afghanistan-Pakistan border and search for that real weapon of mass destruction, Osama bin Laden. Sean Jennings, Detroit.

A step back to Dark Ages

How can civilized people ever take some Middle Eastern countries seriously as parts of the world community when a code of conduct too primitive to comprehend prevails?

I can understand the insult and anger Iraqis must feel at the humiliation of their citizens, but to retaliate in this bloodthirsty and horrifying way is simply unfathomable and sheds a dangerous light on Iraq and the Muslim world as a whole. It throws their culture back to the Dark Ages, in world view. Debra Wells, Windsor.

Bushmen Losing Out

The Sunday Times of Zambia carried the following article on September 26, 2004.

African hunter-gatherers bring land fight to US (Washington, Saturday)

African hunter-gatherers whom the Botswana government has ousted from their traditional lands brought their cause to Washington yesterday, seeking support in a battle they say revolves around diamond wealth.

Bushman elder Roy Sesana, wearing a headdress of beads and antelope horns, told a news conference the Botswana government had forced his people from their territory in the

Central Kalahari Game Reserve because it wanted to make the land available for diamond mining.

“I was told this by three ministers. They told me we have to move because we cannot stay where there are mines,” Sesana said through an interpreter. “I said, ‘The diamonds are the remains of our ancestors.’”

An official of the Botswana Embassy in Washington, John Moreti, who was in the audience, took issue with Sesana. “There are certainly no plans to do a diamond mine in the area,” he said.

“My question is, how many Basarwa (Bushmen) does Roy represent? I think he represents 1 percent.”

“I represent all the Bushmen,” Sesana replied.

The Gaborone government has relocated about 2,500 Bushmen over the past 18 months from the desert game reserve, which is about the size of Switzerland, into resettlement camps where it says they can be better integrated into mainstream society.

The Bushmen area descended from the earliest inhabitants of southern Africa but have been driven from most of their original territory by black pastoral tribes – like the present rulers of Botswana – and white settlers.

Sesana said his people were not interested in the cattle and corn porridge the government provided in the new settlements.

“Our ancestors are buried in the game reserve. ... In the resettlement areas, if you get sick you don’t know with whom you can communicate. That’s why our death rate is so high,” he said.

He said losing their traditional way of life had exposed his people to alcoholism and AIDS. "Our kids have been taught bad ideas," he said.

Sesana is touring the United States with a group of fellow Bushmen to raise money for a court case they have brought in Gaborone to fight their eviction from the game reserve.

They have met members of Congress in Washington and are due to visit the United Nations next week. – Reuters.

Cheney Slams Kerry's 'Sensitive' War Plea

By Judy Keen (Contributing: Martin Kasindorf), USA TODAY, August 12, 2004.

Vice President Cheney mocked Sen. John Kerry's promise that he would lead a "more sensitive" war on terrorism Thursday.

"America has been in too many wars for any of our wishes, but not a one of them was won by being sensitive," Cheney, picking up the traditional running-mate role of leading attacks, said while campaigning in Dayton, Ohio.

"President Lincoln and General Grant did not wage sensitive warfare, nor did President Roosevelt, nor Generals Eisenhower and MacArthur," Cheney said.

"A 'sensitive war' will not destroy the evil men who killed 3,000 Americans," he said. "The men who beheaded Daniel Pearl and Paul Johnson will not be impressed by our sensitivity."

Last week, Kerry, speaking at a convention of minority journalists, said, "I believe I can fight a more effective, more thoughtful, more strategic, more proactive, more sensitive war on terror that

reaches out to other nations and brings them to our side and lives up to American values in history."

Cheney said, "As our opponents see it, the problem isn't the thugs and murderers that we face, but our attitude. Well, the American people know better. ... Those who threaten us and kill innocents around the world do not need to be treated more sensitively. They need to be destroyed."

Kerry, asked by reporters in California to respond to Cheney's remarks, said, "It's sad that they can only be negative. They have nothing to say about the future vision of America."

Phil Singer, a spokesman for Kerry's campaign, said the Democratic nominee's word had been taken out of context. He also noted that Bush once said America should be "sensitive about expressing our power and influence."

Ten senior military officials issued a statement saying, "George Bush and Dick Cheney have chosen to take their campaign to the gutter. We call on President Bush and Vice President Cheney to stop the irresponsible personal attacks and tell us where they want to take the country." The group was led by retired admiral William Crowe, who was chairman of the joint chiefs of staff under presidents Reagan and George H.W. Bush. In June, Crowe signed a statement criticizing Bush's Iraq policy.

Retired general Wesley Clark, who ran against Kerry for the Democratic presidential nomination, issued a statement saying, "Today, Dick Cheney took the lowest road in politics — it was a cheap shot unworthy of the office of vice president."

Tobacco Companies' Troubles

It is really amazing how much legal effort goes into trying to prove that the big US tobacco companies lied or withheld evidence about the dangers of smoking. Another trial has begun, in which the Justice Department has levied racketeering charges against nine tobacco firms. See http://www.journalnow.com/servlet/Satellite?pagename=WSJ%2FMGArticle%2FWSJ_BasicArticle&c=MGArticle&cid=1031778092057 for an Associated Press article on this (“Companies hid dangers of smoking, lawyers say,” The Associated Press, September 22, 2004, dateline Washington).

As a kid, growing up in the 1940s and 1950s, it was common knowledge that smoking was bad for your health. Everyone knew this. Ask any eight-year-old kid in 1948 (or 1938 or 1928, for that matter). His mother had told him, his father had told him, his aunt and uncle and grandparents had told him, and his older siblings and friends had told him. It was common knowledge. As with many things, however, there was not a direct causal link between smoking and death, or between smoking and disease. If you gave a dog a large dose of arsenic, strychnine or cyanide, the dog would die. This was fact. Anybody could observe it. Everybody knew it (I can still remember my mother describing the agonizing death of their dog when someone poisoned it with strychnine). The problem with smoking is that you are taking low doses, and the results are not certain. Some people get emphysema, some get lung cancer, some get asthma, some get “smoker’s cough,” and some get nothing at all, except maybe bad breath, foul-smelling clothes and car, and stained fingernails (like my ninth grade substitute Latin teacher).

In 1964, the US Surgeon General’s Office published the famous report, *Smoking and Health*. This report didn’t really change things at all. All the report contained was statistical information about the difference in the likelihood of death between smokers and nonsmokers. Since the studies were not based on

randomized assignment of subjects to the smoking and nonsmoking groups, they didn't prove much of anything at all. They didn't even provide valid estimates of the change in risk if you decided to start smoking, or decided to quit. It is a well known fact that correlation is not causation. All the studies did was to suggest a "statistical link" between smoking and ill health, which everyone already knew anyway. Proving a "causal link" would have to involve other types of arguments, such as biophysical ones. The arguments in *Smoking and Health* were based on statistical inference, not on logical deduction. In effect, they are just so much anecdotal evidence. They don't provide any more convincing evidence to an average person than his observations that people who smoke cough a lot, and tend to die of cancer. This was obvious to eight-year-old children in 1948.

But the government and the ambulance-chasing lawyers continue to cry "foul," that the tobacco companies withheld evidence, and lied about or hid the dangers of smoking. But how can you withhold something that everyone knows – that smoking is bad for your health? And, since no one, not even the government, has ever been able to establish a direct, certain, causal relationship between smoking and death, how can anyone be accused of "lying" about this? All people can logically do is render their opinions about whether they believe that smoking is harmful or not. And *everybody* knows it is! And *everybody* knew it was!

The situation is analogous to working in a coal mine, or driving a car, or flying in an airplane, or swimming, or committing adultery. You know you are incurring additional risk, and you are willing to do it, for whatever reason. No one has to *prove* a causal link between swimming and drowning. It is common sense. If you engage in swimming, the chance that you may drown is increased. If you don't engage in swimming, you won't drown from swimming, and the likelihood of your drowning at all is probably decreased. (I won't get into the argument here that if you participate in

swimming, then you are more likely to be a good swimmer, and therefore less likely to drown if you are in a water accident.) The commonsense view is that if you don't swim, you probably won't drown. Or, more correctly, you won't drown *from swimming* – you might, of course, drown when your car falls off a bridge, or when your cruise ship is attacked by terrorists and sinks. With smoking, it is similar – you may never smoke a day in your life, and still contract emphysema or lung cancer – you just won't die *from smoking*. All that smoking does (or, more correctly, since we can't prove a causal link between smoking and death for a particular individual, *appears to do, or does for a population*) is change your risk of contracting diseases that you might contract anyway.

The problem in dealing with activities or products that change the risk of an outcome is that the effects of the activity are defined in terms of the parameters of a probability distribution defined over a *population* of individuals. The risk of dying from a disease promoted by smoking is a characteristic of a population, not of an individual. It is measured by comparing the characteristics of a population that engages in the risky activity with a population that does not. The results may be described actuarially, but not in terms of the survival or death of a single individual.

The US government has become obsessed with actions that discriminate against individuals, yet it is very inconsistent in its positions. Sometimes it forbids discrimination, and sometimes it demands it. A few years ago, firms were told that they could no longer pay smaller retirement annuities to females than males, although the expected remaining lifetime of a female at age 65 is substantially greater than the expected remaining lifetime of a male aged 65. Firms were basing their pension plans on “defined benefits”: everyone would receive a retirement annuity such that the expected payout would be the same. From an actuarial (scientific) viewpoint, retiring females should receive less per year

than retiring males, since the females' expected remaining lifetime is longer. If females were to be paid the same amount per year, then their expected lifetime benefit would be greater than for men. But the government argued that a *particular* female might in fact die before a *particular* male, and so, to be "fair" each year, males and females must receive exactly the same annual payment. This, of course, is blatant discrimination against the males as a group, since they, over time, on average, will receive substantially less retirement benefits than females, as a group.

The government wants it both ways. With respect to smoking, the government cries "foul" when a company sells a product that decreases (or appears to decrease) the expected lifetime of its users (e.g., smokers), although it cannot prove anything about the effects on a particular individual. But for pensions, it was (when it required defined-benefit plans to pay the same annuities to women as to men) quite satisfied to see males paid, on average (i.e., as a group), far less than females in their retirement benefits.

(As a result of the government's action, companies quickly switched the basis of their pension plans from "defined benefits" to "defined contribution," meaning that each individual would receive, upon retirement, a lump-sum payment of what that individual (or the company) contributed to the plan (plus accumulated interest or market-value adjustments). Under this scheme, men and women would receive the same total benefit upon retirement (assuming the same salaries and years worked). This arrangement, of course, means that women, as a group, will now receive much less per year than men (since they live longer), when they accept their retirement savings into an annuity (as many people do). The irony here is that's what companies used to do anyway, under the old "defined benefits" plans!)

There are other examples of government inconsistency in dealing with or using discrimination. In the US, "racial profiling" is no

longer legal. Racial profiling is the practice of basing certain law enforcement practices on race. But if, as a group, a certain identifiable group of people (whites, blacks, Arabs – whatever) is more likely to commit certain crimes, scientific methodologies (Bayes' rule, search theory) show that racial profiling is *exactly* the best thing to do, if you wish to be effective in finding criminals (or stopping crimes, such as terrorist acts). It is prejudicial and discriminatory, but it is also scientifically correct (most efficient). But the government argues that a *particular* individual of a high-crime group may not be engaging in the illicit activity, and so the practice is unfair *to that individual*, and so it is not allowed. Once again, although the government is quite willing to punish tobacco firms because of average mortality differences between smokers and nonsmokers, it is totally opposed to treating any identifiable group differently based on group characteristics in many social and legal areas (not just in law enforcement, but in many other areas, such as housing market practices and bank loans).

The government, to a large degree, can do anything it pleases. So why does it blatantly lie about things such as racial profiling, arguing (in the law itself – you can read this in print!) that racial profiling is ineffective and inefficient, and doesn't make sense from a rational viewpoint, when the reverse is true! Why can't it simply be honest, and say that it is outlawing racial profiling *despite* the fact that it is a very useful investigative tool, because it doesn't like for a larger proportion of blacks to be arrested for crimes that blacks are more likely to commit, or because it doesn't like for larger numbers of Arabs to be interrogated at airports, even though a much larger proportion of the Arab population is engaged in terrorist activities, and the proportion of terrorists who are Arabs is much larger than the proportion of any other nationality or ethnic group. Be honest. Admit that the banning of racial profiling is in fact inefficient and prejudicial to law-abiding citizens (as a group). Admit that the banning of actuarially based

annuities under defined-benefits plans is prejudicial to men (as a group).

In this regard, it is interesting to note a fundamental difference between the African concept of justice and the US concept of justice. In Africa (where I have lived a number of years), motivation is not very relevant in deciding the penalty for a wrongful action. If you deliberately shoot a man's cow because you don't like it or him (e.g., because it is eating your flowers), or you accidentally kill it with your truck because the man let it roam free and it was on the highway at night, the course of "justice" is exactly the same – you have to reimburse the man for causing the death of the cow (about \$60 in Zambia). Your motive in this case is irrelevant. If the US government would like to be a little more consistent, it might try the African approach. If it demonstrates (e.g., by using statistical inference) that smokers incur so many billion dollars more of public health care services each year than nonsmokers, and it wishes to hold tobacco companies responsible for this (even though they are not forcing anyone to smoke), then just *do* that (after passing a law to that effect, of course), and admit explicitly that that is what it is doing. The underhanded approach of trying to demonstrate that tobacco companies "knew" that smoking was dangerous and "hid" this fact (that everyone knew) from the public, in the hope of taking the money from them as a penalty for this alleged "crime," is disgusting. It's a great moneymaker for the lawyers, but it is a morally bankrupt (even a child could see the deception) and very inefficient approach (since trials cost a lot of money; since "proving" things in tobacco trials is very difficult; and since the lawyers will keep a large portion of the settlement as their salaries or "fees").

Christopher Reeve

All the world knows, it seems, of the passing of Christopher Reeve on October 10, at age 52, nine years after his horse-riding accident in 1995. It has been said that God does not give us more than we can bear, and that he answers all prayers. How do you explain the incredible irony of the man who in our time was synonymous with Superman being paralyzed from the neck down and struggling for the rest of his life even to breathe? We cannot know, but his prayers must have been for a complete recovery or for an early death, and he was granted neither.

My favorite movie starring Christopher Reeve is *Somewhere in Time*. That is one of my favorite movies of all time (with a great musical theme), and yet I have never seen it mentioned in any of the write-ups about Reeve. I suppose that this must tell something about my taste in movies – not mainstream.

In its obituary in its October 16, 2004, issue, *The Economist* wrote, “Meanwhile his own progress, though astonishing to doctors, remained stubbornly far from his own hopes. It was true that he could travel, write books, direct films and even star in one: a re-make of Alfred Hitchcock’s “Rear Window” in which, for maximum effect, he insisted on cutting his breathing tube for a scene in which the hero began to choke to death. He was still a star, doing work he loved. But his body recovered with agonizing slowness. By 2003, he could brace the biceps of his right arm and breathe for hours on his own. A year later, though, he had given up the bicycle and treadmill on which his legs had been tricked, with electric shocks, into a semblance of working. He admitted to starting each day by weeping in frustration.”

Christopher Reeve was an incredible person. He is an inspiration to all of us. It is difficult to find words to express the degree of admiration that I have for him.

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