

Graffiti for intellectuals



SIMON SAYS

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By Si Frumkin

SUICIDE, PROSTITUTION AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

Early in 2007, the International Red Cross demanded that Guantanamo prisoners be provided bed sheets that could be placed on the entrances to their cells to prevent their rights to privacy being violated by the guards. On June 10, three prisoners committed suicide by using the sheets to hang themselves.

The almost universal reaction to the suicides was outrage at the U.S. Self-righteous commentators and media editorials accused the Administration of perpetuating its tradition of torture and human rights violations. News reports were full of hints at conspiracies by the prison authorities, involvement of other prisoners in the deaths and a lack of appropriate supervision that might have to prevent the suicides. There were also scholarly reminders that the Koran considered suicide a deadly sin and that, therefore, the suicides could not have taken place at all and must have been staged; this, of course, conveniently ignored the existence of Moslem suicide bombers who in addition to committing suicide were also guilty of yet another mortal sin: the murder of innocents.

Walter White, an international lawyer who specializes in human rights, told the BBC the Guantanamo camp was likely to be considered a "great stain" on the human rights record of the US and a group of international lawyers announced that the dead inmates had been "driven by despair".



The camp commandant, Rear-Admiral Harris, disagreed saying that there have been dozens of suicide attempts since the camp was set up four years ago - but none successful until now and that he did not believe the men had killed themselves out of despair.

"They have no regard for life, either ours or their own. I believe this was not an act of desperation, but an act of asymmetrical warfare waged

against us," he said.

President Bush expressed "serious concern" at the deaths and stressed that it was important to treat the bodies humanely and with cultural sensitivity. UK Prime Minister Tony Blair described the suicide as a "sad incident".

In short – outrage, criticism and sadness from just about everywhere.

I kept waiting for someone to say "Right on! I am glad that they are dead!" but, as far as I know, no one did. So let me say it now: "I am glad they killed themselves. I hope they will have set an example for many others to follow. Furthermore, I hope that we will stop trying to prevent them from killing themselves as we seem to be doing – I think that in the spirit of the Roe vs. Wade decision as well as the universal respect for human rights that support the right to privacy and the right to control one's body, the decision to stop living should be left to the individual. And if the individual in question is probably a murdering thug who will continue murdering if released – well, so much the better."

I feel the same way about the prisoners who go on hunger strikes and are force-fed to keep them alive. Why violate their right to control their lives – usually through painful and unpleasant procedures? Why not let them go to meet the 72 black-eyed virgins?

In its 1973 decision in *Roe*, the Supreme Court recognized that a woman's right to decide whether to continue her pregnancy was protected under the constitutional provisions of *individual autonomy and privacy*. *Roe* placed women's reproductive choice alongside other fundamental rights, such as freedom of speech and freedom of religion, by conferring the highest degree



of constitutional protection -- "strict scrutiny"-- to choice.

I wonder why in a society as litigious as ours there hasn't been a movement for the right to *individual autonomy and privacy* to include not only abortion but also the right to suicide.

I also wonder why this right is not applicable to prostitution – a decision to use one's body sexually, for remuneration. Currently private sex for money, between consenting individuals, is a crime, but well-paid sex between consenting individuals that is filmed and taped for exhibition on DVDs and in movie theaters is a road to fame and fortune for the participants. Why?

And why is it that racial profiling by law enforcement is not acceptable and to be condemned, while racial profiling by businesses, universities and government contract and hiring policies, as in affirmative action, are lawful, beneficial and admirable?

I can only hope that somewhere there will be attorneys who are willing to take up the fight for a more encompassing definition of the right of an individual to control his or her own body. But since the cause would be very politically incorrect and more than likely there would be no money in it, I will not hold my breath waiting for this to happen anytime soon.

Meanwhile, I can only hope that the 2 Saudis and 1 Yemeni who decided to exercise their human rights by offering themselves will soon be joined by many of their colleagues. ☆



During the “Eat This” segment of their docu-comedy series BS, Penn Jillette beat Teller in a round of their “Greatest Person in History” card game. Penn needed just one card: Norman Borlaug.

This Iowa farm boy and University of Minnesota agriculture graduate lived Thomas Edison’s maxim to the fullest. “Invention,” Edison once remarked, “is 1% inspiration and 99% perspiration.” Dr. Borlaug did most of his 99% in the sweltering fields of Africa, India, Mexico and Pakistan.

At 94, and despite having cancer, the “Father of the Green Revolution” is still “an Energizer Bunny,” his daughter Jeanie says. He serves as a consultant, attends occasional conferences, and graciously let my daughter interview him for a high school paper.

Decades ago, while neo-Malthusians were predicting mass famine, Borlaug used Rockefeller Foundation grants to unlock hidden (recessive) genes and crossbreed different wheat strains, to create new “dwarf” varieties that were resistant to destructive “rust” fungi. The shorter plants were also sturdier, put less energy into growing leaves and stalks, and thus had higher yields.

He also taught modern farming methods to Third World farmers and persuaded governments to lift price controls and permit the use of chemical fertilizers, thereby generating unprecedented harvests. Mexico became self-sufficient in wheat by 1960, India and Pakistan soon did likewise, and Borlaug next helped China, Indonesia, the Philippines and other countries achieve great success with wheat, corn and rice.

When the Nobel committee awarded him the 1970 Peace Prize, it said his work had saved a billion lives. Borlaug simply observed that “you can’t build a peaceful world on empty stomachs and human misery.” He later won the Presidential Medal of Freedom and Congressional Gold Medal.

In 1985, he began working with former President Jimmy Carter to bring a Green Revolution to Sub-Saharan Africa, emphasizing intensive modern farming methods with new hybrid and biotech seeds on existing fields, to reduce the need to slash and burn wildlife habitat, as soil nutrients are exhausted.

Unfortunately, their progress may be undermined by former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan and his misleadingly named Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa. Annan says biotech crops are unsafe, untested, and likely to enslave poor farmers to mega-corporations and expensive seeds. He wants to battle Africa’s chronic poverty and malnutrition with “traditional seeds” and methods.

Dr. Borlaug fears that would be a devastating failure. As he said during a 2005 biotechnology conference, sponsored by the Congress of Racial Equality at the United Nations, he sees no way the world can feed its hungry population without genetically

engineered (GE) crops, especially if it relies more on biofuels.

He has little patience for “well-fed utopians who live on Cloud Nine but come into the Third World to cause all kinds of negative impacts,” by scaring people and blocking the use of biotechnology. These callous activists even persuaded Zambia to let people starve, rather than let them eat biotech corn donated by the USA. They also oppose insecticides to combat malaria – and fossil fuels, hydroelectric dams and nuclear power to generate abundant, reliable, affordable electricity for poor nations.

“Our planet has 6.5 billion people, says Borlaug. “By all means, use manure. You can’t let it sit around. But if we use only organic fertilizers and methods on existing farmland, we can only feed 4 billion. I don’t see 2.5 billion people volunteering to disappear.” To feed everyone with organic and traditional farming, we would have to plow millions of acres of forests and other wildlife habitat. If, instead, we continue to use commercial fertilizer and hybrids, and have strong public support for both biotech and traditional research, “the Earth can provide sufficient food for 10 billion people.”

Producing 7 billion gallons of ethanol in 2007 required corn grown on an area the size of Indiana – plus vast amounts of water, insecticides, fertilizers and petroleum. It also helped send World Food Program operating costs up 40% since June 2007, forcing the WFP to ration food aid, and millions to go to bed hungry. That is unsustainable – morally, economically and ecologically.

Biotech crops have higher yields; provide enhanced nutrition; are more resistant to insects, fungi and disease; and require less water and insecticides. New varieties are being developed that grow better in drought and flood conditions, and even supply vaccines and anti-diarrhea nutrients (as in Ventria Bioscience’s GE-rice-based oral rehydration solution). Ongoing research will ensure that genes that once protected crop plants will be replaced by new ones, as plant pathogens continue mutating.

Genetically engineered crops are more stringently regulated and tested than any others – unnecessarily so, say many scientists. Americans have eaten well over a trillion servings of food containing genetically

engineered ingredients, without a single instance of harm to people or habitats, according to biotech specialist Henry Miller – whereas organic spinach sickened and killed a number of people in 2007.

Biotechnology actually frees poor farmers from the shackles of Nature’s destructive forces. They pay more for seeds, but less for insecticides and water, get higher yields and make more money. South African farmers who’ve switched to GE crops attest to this.

Elizabeth Ajele: “The old plants would be destroyed by insects, but not the new biotech plants. With the profits I get from the new Bt maize (corn), I can grow onions, spinach and tomatoes, and sell them for extra money to buy fertilizer. We were struggling to keep hunger out of our house. Now the future looks good. If someone came and said we should stop using the new maize, I would cry.”

Richard Sithole: “With the old maize, I got 100 bags from my 15 hectares. With Bt maize I get 1,000.”

Thandi Myeni: “The new Bt cotton means I only spray two times, instead of six. At the end of the day, we know the crop won’t be destroyed and we will have a harvest and money.”

Bethuel Gumede: “By planting the new Bt cotton on my six hectares [15 acres], I was able to build a house and give it a solar panel. I also bought a TV and fridge. My wife can buy healthy food and we can afford to send the kids to school.”

Farmers in Brazil, China, India, the Philippines and other countries share similar stories.

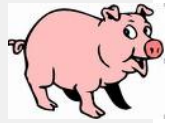
His accomplishments have made Norman Borlaug a household name in parts of Africa, though not in America. That’s partly because he did most of his work overseas. But it also reflects the fact that his favorable views on chemical fertilizers and biotechnology put him at odds with many environmentalists, who don’t appreciate his perspectives on these issues.

Leon Hesser’s fascinating and inspiring account of Dr. Borlaug’s life and successes may bring him the fame he deserves. “The Man Who Fed the World” does what I’ve always loved about biographies: it shows how one person can change the world. Now out in paperback, the book will ensure that Norman Borlaug’s incredible legacy will live on – as will the billion-plus people whose lives he saved.

Paul Driessen is the author of [Eco-Imperialism: Green Power - Black Death](#).



The practice of political correctness may soon be tallying another casualty: the pig. Increasingly, as America and the rest of the Western world continue accommodating Muslim religious demands, pork food products are being singled out for removal from dining tables and pig-related trinkets banished from the desks of office workers.



If this continues, good ol' American food, such as barbeque replete with hot dogs and ribs and the typical American breakfast of eggs, bacon and sausage, might be seen as the equivalent of political poison. Could outright censorship of pig depictions in drawings, pig references in literary works and pig portrayals in movies be far behind? Could the well-known, cartoon figure Porky Pig become a cultural embarrassment of our unenlightened past as we fear to utter the "P" word?

Though the notion may seem more appropriate for a comedy routine, an increasing number of pig-related incidents, accommodations and Muslim demands in recent years points to an uncertain future for our porcine friend and its place in our economy, culture and our culinary traditions.

In October of 2005, the United Kingdom, clearly further along on the road to dhimmitude due to its proportionally large and more radical Muslim population, banned piggybanks as promotional gifts from its banks. At about the same time, government social welfare offices called for the removal of all pig paraphernalia, including pig calendars, toys and accessories from employee desks. These new regulations were ostensibly implemented so as not to offend Muslim patrons.

Meanwhile, in the United States in 2007, several school districts removed pork products from their cafeteria offerings. Dearborn, Mich., schools banned pork completely to avoid the possibility that Muslims students might unknowingly eat it. The district later added special halal foods to its menu to cater to the demands of its Muslim population. An elementary school in San Diego that offers Arabic, single-gender classes and Muslim-only organized prayer, no longer offers pork to any of its students. And in Oak Lawn, Ill., where the administration is debating elimination of Christmas holiday celebrations, pork has already been banished from the school lunchroom.

Orthodox Jews, who follow kosher laws that prohibit the consumption of pork, have never demanded such special considerations for their chosen dietary habits nor have Jews feared accidental pork ingestion. They privately moderate their consumption according to their religious observances and often consume food prepared at home according to prescribed regulations.

Contrast this to how Muslims and their dietary habits are treated. In April 2007, a 13-year-old middle school prankster was suspended and his behavior labeled a hate crime for placing a bag with a ham steak on the lunch table of a group of Muslim students.

That same month, Muslims started a Facebook group, "Fight Against Pork in Frito-Lay Products." The more than 1,800 participants sought to pressure the company to remove pork enzymes from its cheese seasonings.

Last year, Somali Muslim employees at a St. Louis Park, Minn. Target store refused to handle pork products, citing religious reasons. Target made special allowances for Muslim employees, who now scrutinize customer purchases and can call for assistance when a pork product appears at their check stand. Presumably, the Muslim employees knew they would be encountering bacon and pepperoni pizza when they signed on for their jobs and have no problem collecting a salary paid out of profits from pork sales.

In 2007, the Year of the Pig, an imam in Taipei complained after receiving a greeting card from Taiwan's foreign minister depicting celebrating pigs. When "Year of the Pig" postal stamps were issued, the Taiwanese government cautioned citizens about using them on letters and parcels to Muslim friends or to Muslim countries. That year, China banned pig images and the mention of pigs in television advertisement to avoid offending the country's Muslims.

This year, the popular story, *The Three Little Pigs*, was banned in a primary school in the United Kingdom as the school's administration thought references to pigs might offend Muslim pupils. Another school removed all books containing stories about pigs, including the talking pig 'Babe' from classrooms following complaints from Muslim parents. In 2007, a UK church school production of *The Three Little Pigs* was renamed *The Three Little Puppies* to maintain multi-cultural sensitivities. Ironically, the pig is mentioned often in the Koran as a derogatory reference to Jews.

In further accommodation to Muslims, Fortis Bank in the Netherlands and Belgium dropped its pig mascot. Knorbert the pig was eliminated after seven years with a statement from a bank spokesperson that "Knorbert does not meet the requirements that the multicultural society imposes on us."

A recent BBC report described how pork butchers are gradually being put out of business as Turkey adopts a more fundamentalist Muslim character. Pork slaughterhouses are being closed in record numbers to accommodate *shariah* law countrywide.

In 2004, a Muslim-owned investment company, Arcapita (formerly Capital Crescent Investments) acquired the 1,200-unit Church's Chicken chain. In 2005, Arcapita, with a net income of \$70.5 million and assets worth \$1.2 billion (2004), enjoined a franchisee from sell-

ing pork products. In correspondence with the franchisee, the corporate owners cited violation of *shariah* law as the reason for prohibiting the sale of bacon, ham and sausages. The restaurant owners were thereby forced to surrender to corporate demands and operate under *shariah* law.

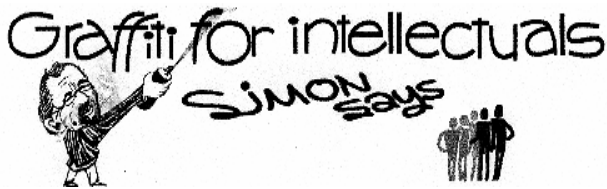
Where will this end? Will "Animal Farm" be banned at our high schools and university campuses? Will the words "pork barrel spending" and "porcker" be eliminated from the vernacular? Will Piggly Wiggly supermarkets be forced to change its name and re-brand its products? This could all be quite amusing if the implications weren't so grave.

The pig is an icon of American culture, a culinary tradition and an important component of our economy. While high grain prices and competition from Chinese imports are recognized as the two greatest threats to the industry, hog producers could be overlooking a larger threat to their livelihood looming on the horizon.

Pork production is a vital part of the U.S. economy, producing more than 22 billion pounds of meat annually, contributing almost \$40 billion to the GNP and employing more than 500,000 workers in pork-industry related jobs. In addition, important pork co-products include heart valves, skin grafts for burn victims, gelatin, plywood, glue, cosmetics and plastics. At 28% of total world production, the U.S. is the second largest pork producer after China, which produces close to 50% of the world total. Pork ranks third in U.S. meat production behind beef and chicken and average yearly per capita consumption is about 50 pounds.

If the momentum to alter America's dining habits and cultural traditions to suit Muslim religious habits continues, American liberty, freedom and culture could actually be threatened. Laughable though it may seem on the surface, Arab petrodollar profits have the heft to use an economic, backdoor approach to implement *shariah* law in the United States against the will of the public. As Arab Muslims continue to heavily invest in our economy, they will continue to force submission to *shariah* law and undermine our democracy, individual rights and religious freedom. We must be vigilant and aware of this threat and act against it vigorously and immediately.

Janet Levy is the founder of ESG Consulting, an organization that offers project management, fundraising, promotion, event organizing and planning services for conservative political causes and issues related to terrorism and national security.



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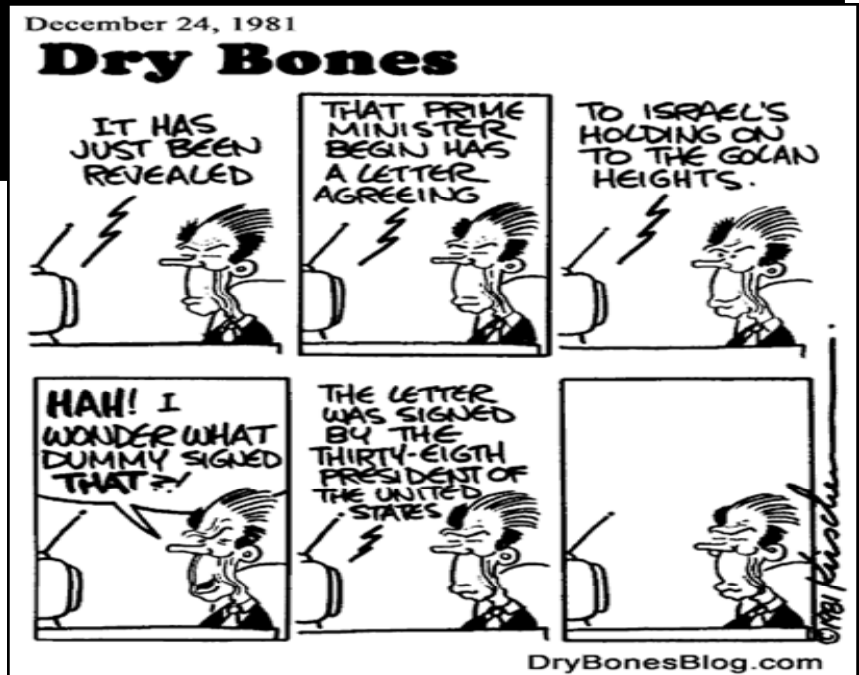
GOLAN HEIGHTS— A TANGIBLE BENEFIT FROM U.S. PRESIDENT

WITH ALL THE TALK ABOUT ISRAEL GIVING THE Golan Heights back to Syria "in exchange for peace there is a fascinating discovery in the Dry Bones archives of cartoons about the Golan and about Israeli "concessions for peace".

Here is a fact that everyone appears to have forgotten: Following the 1973 Egyptian Yom Kippur War surprise attack on Israel, the Israelis pushed the Egyptian invading force out of Sinai.

In the ensuing "search for peace", America put heavy pressure on Israel to withdraw from the Egyptian oil fields in Sinai.

What the foreign ministry of Israel, the U. S. State Department in 2008, and apparently President Ronald Reagan in 1981, forgot was that Israel had received something tangible from the Americans in return for the unilateral withdrawal from the oil fields:



"The tangible benefit for Israel from its agreement to a unilateral withdrawal from the Egyptian oil fields was a presidential letter from President Ford concerning the vital importance of Israel holding on to the Golan Heights, which Israel had taken from Syria in 1967 following 19 years of Syrian shelling on Israel's northern communities from the towering Golan Heights, and Syria's incessant attacks from the Golan on the Sea of the Galilee – Israel's only fresh water resource, from where Israel's National Water Carrier pumps water to the whole country." -

In the letter, Gerald Ford, 38th President of the U.S. gave an assurance that,

"The U.S. will support the position that an overall settlement with Syria in the framework of a peace agreement must assure Israel's security from attack from the Golan Heights. The U.S. further supports the position that a just and lasting peace, which remains our objective, must be acceptable to both sides. The U.S. has not developed a final position on the borders. Should it do so it will give great weight to Israel's position that any peace agreement with Syria must be predicated on Israel remaining on the Golan Heights."