

Money, Money, Money & Other Matters

Money has no morality, but that doesn't mean it should be dispensed by those who share that failing. That is particularly the case when it's the people's money, our tax dollars, which are being dispensed.

For instance, since going on a murderous rampage at Fort Hood, Muslim jihadist Major Nidal Hasan has collected \$278,000 in salary from the Army. Meanwhile, because his crime was designated "workplace violence," his surviving victims have been denied various benefits, including Purple Hearts, which would have increased their disability pensions.

More recently, Lois Lerner, the IRS bureaucrat who took the 5th during her congressional hearing, although she insisted she did nothing wrong and told no lies, was placed on administrative leave, a euphemism for a paid vacation.

But compared to what we dole out to other nations, most of whom openly despise us, that's chump change. We give \$316 million annually to Mexico. Ostensibly, it's to help them wage war on drugs. And we can all see how well that's going. If it were up to me, I'd make them build a wall on their northern border before giving them another peso.

As for the latest attempt at what congressional schnooks like to call comprehensive immigration reform, why should we want to create a pathway to citizenship for what they insist are 11 million illegal aliens, and what I'm betting is at least twice that many? They snuck in. If someone sneaks into your house, does he get to stay there just because he's managed to hide out in your cellar or your attic?

I realize that a certain segment of the population known as nitwits will accuse me of being a racist. But first they have

to explain how it is racist to resent the Mexicanization of America, but not racist to promote such a policy at the expense of those patiently waiting their turn in Europe, Asia and Africa.

In somewhat related news, in Patterson, New Jersey, the Palestinian flag was raised over city hall after Mayor Jeffery Jones proclaimed May 19th as Palestinian American Day. I'm waiting for Gov. Christie to weigh in on this, but I'm not prepared to wait too long.

Along similar lines, I'm wondering what right we have to force-feed the jihadists at Gitmo. If they wish to starve themselves, how is it our business to interfere? For all I know, it could be an integral part of their glorious religion, along with suicide-bombs, honor killings and clitorectomies.

I would also be interested in discovering why we, who are about 17 trillion dollars in debt, insist on coming up with \$531 million for Tanzania; \$580 million for Ethiopia; \$625 million for both Nigeria and Kenya; \$676 million for Jordan; \$1.5 billion for Egypt; \$1.7 billion for Iraq; \$2.1 billion for Pakistan; and \$2.3 billion for Afghanistan.

I'd also like to know just exactly when did we adopt Africa and the Middle East. Where was I when the announcement went out? If only I'd known, I'd have sent a card and a couple of baby blankets.

The nation that receives the most money from us is Israel. But at least that's three billion dollars going to an ally, a democracy with whom we share values, traditions and, perhaps most important of all, sworn enemies.

Assuming my ears weren't playing tricks on me, Obama recently declared that, for all intents and purposes, the war on terrorism was over. Inasmuch as jihadists were still killing people in London, Boston, Iraq and Afghanistan, the last time I looked, I guess he was acknowledging that, under his

leadership, they won and we lost. For a minute or so, I was really depressed. But then I realized the schmuck never tells the truth, and I was greatly relieved.

While on the subject of money, I would like to know why there should be corporate taxes. It's not just that ours happen to be the highest in the world, which explains why major entities like Apple and G.E. don't bring their foreign profits back to the U.S. to be used for expansion and dividends; it's that corporate taxes serve as a tremendous drag on an economy that's lacked traction for years now.

It's one thing to tax the earnings of corporate executives and their employees and shareholders, but what purpose is served through taxing a corporation as if it were an individual?

Another tax that should be eliminated is the death or, for those who have a superstitious reluctance to say that word, estate tax. The money that is left by the deceased has already been taxed when he earned it and again when he got a return on his investments. For the tax collector to swoop in like a vulture just because the person has died smacks of grave robbing.

Finally, under the heading of it's not what you know, but who you're related to that counts in Washington: ABC reporter Claire Shipman is married to Press Secretary Jay Carney; CNN President Virginia Mosely is married to Hillary Clinton's former Deputy Secretary Tom Nides; CBS President David Rhodes is the brother of Ben Rhodes, a top Obama advisor and the fellow who helped edit the Benghazi talking points; and ABC President Ben Sherwood is the brother of Obama's special advisor Elizabeth Sherwood-Randall.

I swear there's more inbreeding among these left-wing elitists than you'll find in the backwoods of Tennessee. It's a wonder their kids don't all have 12 toes and suffer from hemophilia.

Advice from Baba Wawa? I Don't Think So

☒ Anyone who's read my articles knows that I'd rather stick knitting needles in my ears than watch an entire episode of "The View." The idea of watching a bunch of cackling women sitting around a table spewing their mostly idiotic views is more than I can take. If I watch a segment every few months, it's because it provides me fodder for my articles.

A recent discussion with guest, Matt Dowd, is one such segment. "He spent his time lecturing the Republican Party, repeating an assertion that the GOP represents "Mad Men" and not "Modern Family" America. In response, Barbara Walters, chimed in that [the Republicans] were "behind in their social views."

First of all, I have absolutely no use for Barbara Walters. I've never understood why this woman has a job. I don't care what glass ceilings she broke through or whether she was the first of anything. I can't stand the woman. Her appearances on The O'Reilly Factor are almost unwatchable except to confirm my belief of her insincerity. Every pore in her body reeks of phoniness and superiority. My take on her interaction with Bill O'Reilly is that she sees him as a Neanderthal.

The only good thing I have to say about Miss Walters is that she was the inspiration for Gilda Radner's hysterically funny Baba Wawa impersonation on Saturday Night Live decades ago.

So, when I hear her talk about Republicans and her reference to "their platform" being "behind in their social views" (specifically referring to comments made by two candidates

about rape), I channel Jeff Dunham's ventriloquist dummy, Walter, and say, "shut the hell up."

I'm going to take social and moral direction from Miss Walters? A woman who admits to her scandalous affair with a married Senator – Edward Brooke – back in the 1970s. At the time, she was already twice-divorced and a "rising star" (God knows why) in television news and co-host of the "Today" show. (My husband says she may have skills which cannot be described here.)

She ended the affair not because of the immoral aspect of it, but, according to what I read, because she wondered if they could ever be married and whether such a liaison would destroy her career.

So, this woman who chooses to have an affair with a married man is going to tell me, a conservative Republican woman, what my "social views" should be? I don't think so.

Would she expect me to adopt the liberal view that a baby is just a blob of cells that can be killed when it's inconvenient? I don't think so.

Would she expect me to adopt the liberal view concerning global warming junk science so that the government can spend billions more of my tax dollars on green energy fiascos? I don't think so.

Would she expect me to adopt the liberal view concerning homosexuals getting married? I don't think so.

Would she expect me to adopt the liberal view regarding the legalization of marijuana because somehow they think millions of dollars will flow into the government coffers? I don't think so.

Miss Walters can have whatever "social views" she wants and she can believe all she wants that I'm behind the times.

Clearly evident from the recent elections, there are enough people who follow her “social views” of how America should be. I just won’t be one of them.

I don’t get it, but if you do, God bless you.

Global Warming and Morality

☒ In a recent interview, former Vice President Al Gore compared global warming skepticism to racism. He explained that his generation began to win the Civil Rights movement by questioning their elders on the morality of discriminating against people whose skin color was different. Seeing many similarities between the two cultural debates, Gore believes that society should use morality to marginalize global warming skepticism the same way it used morality to marginalize racism.

Now while I think it’s over the top to use such an analogy, I’ll at least give Mr. Gore some credit for not literally accusing global warming skeptics of being racists. In today’s political environment, that sort of thing has sadly become common from the left. However, in the wake of his profanity-laced-tirade against the same opponents a few weeks ago, it’s clear that Al Gore has found himself in the desperate, unanticipated position of having to fight for his own relevance.

Oh how the mighty have fallen.

Just a few short years ago, Al was the king of the world. He won the Nobel Peace Prize for his environmental activism, an Oscar for his documentary “An Inconvenient Truth”, an Emmy for his “Current TV” news channel, and Tony Award for his

critically acclaimed Broadway musical "Dancing for Carbon Credits". I might be wrong about that last one, but you get my point. In addition to having the respect of world leaders and unlimited media adoration, he was racking up millions and millions of dollars in speaking fees. He had successfully transitioned from a politician to a celebrity. Life couldn't have been better.

But suddenly, he and his crusade were on the receiving end of an unexpected double-whammy. The world was hit with an economic crisis that re-prioritized international concern away from climate change and toward fiscal stability. Soon after, the Climategate scandal hit. Hacked emails revealed that leading climate change scientists had been actively suppressing their critics while manipulating climate data that was proving their own predictions wrong. The U.S. media largely didn't pick up on Climategate (big surprise), but the British media certainly did and the climate change movement was tremendously hurt by the exposure.

Gore seemed to go into sabbatical with his global influence soon reduced to reading environmental poetry to a fawning, emotional Harry Smith on CBS's "Early Show". By the way, if any of you haven't watched that video on YouTube, you're missing out on a classic.

I certainly don't feel sorry for Mr. Gore, as I think his arrogance and condescension toward opposing views and opposing data has clouded what could very well be a legitimate issue. I don't subscribe to the alarmist tactics that he has used to promote his environmental prophecies. However, I also don't feel comfortable discounting the evidence that man-made pollution is having a dangerous affect on our atmosphere.

What I can say without any hesitation is that the differing opinions in the global warming debate have nothing to do with morality. There is no moral edge between believers and skeptics. However, Al Gore himself may be an exception. If

skeptics of man-made global warming are immoral (as Gore believes), what does that make the spokesman of the movement who leaves a larger carbon footprint in any given year than the average person does in a lifetime?

Personalize the question: If you were absolutely convinced that the lifestyle of many humans was causing catastrophic damage to the planet, what would you do? Would you change your own lifestyle to keep from contributing to the problem, or would you live a lifestyle that exacerbates the problem while you lecture others on the problem (making millions of dollars in the process)? Isn't that the real moral argument here?

To use his own metaphor of racism, which I do only in the spirit of irony: Isn't Al Gore like a segregationist who preaches racial diversity to others?

At the Precipice

✘ When I heard Robert Duvall speaking with Mike Huckabee last year about his film, "Get Low", I knew it was my kind of movie. It's the story of a man who wants to throw his own "funeral party" while he's alive and have people come and tell stories about him and is loosely based on a true story that took place in Roane County, Tennessee in 1938.

Sounds a bit quirky but the movie is anything but. Mr. Duvall plays the main character, reclusive Felix Bush, who has lived the life of a hermit for the past 40 years on the outskirts of town. He's taunted by children who throw rocks at his windows, rumors have been spread about him and he's feared by the town folk. As the movie unfolds, we realize that it's Felix who has a very dark secret, well hidden from everyone but his friend and minister, Charlie Jackson, who has to be

coaxed by Felix into attending the “funeral party” to insure his story is told if he, Felix, is unable to unload the heavy burden himself.

Eventually, Felix’s secret is uncovered. He slowly and painfully reveals to the hundreds of town folk who have assembled that, 40 years before, he fell in love with a married woman who planned to leave her husband and start a new life and family with him. A tragedy results. **Spoiler alert:** Move on to the next paragraph if you plan to watch the movie.) When she doesn’t arrive at their pre-arranged meeting place, Felix goes to her home, confronts her husband, who sets fire to the lower floor of the house. Felix rushes upstairs to find his love on the floor having been beaten by her husband. The husband, who was able to make it up the stairs, attacks Felix who cannot recall if he leaped from the window or was pushed. In either event, he is emotionally destroyed because, ultimately, he was unable to save the woman he loved.

He details his shame in having even looked at the woman, who, in his words, allowed him to feel love the only time in his life. He admits that had he not done so, the tragedy would not have occurred. The guilt he felt over the past 40 years was palpable and his public confession was excruciating to watch. (Mr. Duvall’s performance was superb but overlooked at this year’s Academy Awards.)

I commend Mr. Duvall for having executively produced this film and bringing to the screen a story about old-fashioned ideas like shame, guilt, remorse, forgiveness and, finally, redemption.

As I watched the credits of “Get Low” roll, I thought about people similarly situated today. Do the characters in these modern-day real-life dramas feel anything – remorse, guilt, shame, humiliation? Do they ever seek forgiveness or redemption?

The latest in this long list of public offenders is, of course, Arnold Schwarzenegger, who just this week publicly admitted to having fathered a child with a member of his household ten years ago. After serving as Governor of California and leaving office in January, he finally told his wife. He now asks the press and public to respect his wife and children. How come he didn't?

There was a time in America when any type of scandal would have and did destroy the careers of celebrities and politicians because the public was not as forgiving as today.

Celebrities and public officials like Woody Allen, Paris Hilton, Barney Frank, Roman Polanski, Al Sharpton, Jimmy Swaggart, Eliot Spitzer, John Edwards, Kobe Bryant and Kim Kardashian, all who've done shameful things, breathe a sigh of relief because, in today's America, they can continue to maintain political power or enjoy highly lucrative careers because of society's acceptance of their "indiscretions." We'll see how Arnold's career goes after this.

On the other hand, I often wonder if the average Joe actually feels the kind of regret, dishonor or embarrassment felt by the character, Felix Bush. In the real world, obviously no one is reduced to ashes because of their behavior, but lives and families are affected forever by bad behavior and are often destroyed beyond repair.

While celebrities and public officials often have no sense of shame, I'd like to think that there are those private individuals who do regret their actions and try to make amends. But for those selfish, narcissistic people who couldn't care less about the destruction they leave behind in similar circumstances, life goes on.

On good days, I have to believe there are more people in the former category than in the latter. While seeing the public offenders continue to enjoy profitable careers and acceptance

by the public, the pessimist in me says we've lost the notion of right and wrong, we're circling the bowl and we're going to Hell in a hand basket, but I'm hoping we haven't completely lost our moral sense of direction but merely on the edge of the precipice, still able to take a step back.

Bottom line: I get Felix Bush.