



Reacting And Overreacting

BY MICHAEL SMERCONISH
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When the *Boston Globe* conducted an online discussion of whether the lockdown of the city during the hunt for Dzhokhar Tsarnaev was overkill, one of its columnists, Lawrence Harmon, weighed in: "Friday's lockdown was more than an abundance of caution. It was an overreaction. Hundreds of millions of dollars were lost to the local economy. Yet authorities urged some Dunkin' Donuts stores to remain open for the convenience of officers while ... hundreds of other businesses, large and small, shut down. If Dunkin' Donuts workers could safely venture forth to satisfy Munchkins runs, then people outside of Watertown and abutting communities could have gone to work."

Not everyone agrees, of course, but that sort of argument has often been made by John Mueller, a political science professor at Ohio State University. Mueller asks: What's a greater threat to the United States: terrorism or our reaction to it?

For Mueller, the answer is the latter. While he concedes that we're "safer" than before, he worries that the security gains are not worth the costs. He's addressed the issue in his books "Terror, Security and Money" (2011) and "Overblown" (2006).

He told me that the search for the bombers was essential: "You can't have mass murderers running around, so spending a lot of money on policing this thing is certainly very sensible." But he worried that the incident could lead to overreactions.

"There's a tendency of managing by inbox — you know, there's an underwear bomber on a plane, so therefore we have to spend a lot more money on body scanners or things which mostly don't seem to work," he told me. Mueller is concerned that because the attack took place at a marathon, there will be a rush to increase security in ineffective ways at countless other sporting events.

Mueller argues that government should carry out its constitutional charge to "insure domestic tranquility" while spending money responsibly and wisely: "What you need to do is look at each proposal in a coherent manner to make sure that the money being spent really does reduce risk, does save lives, does help people at a cost that is sensible, and not spend on measures that don't reduce risk or ... do it at extremely high cost, like body scanners."

He is similarly skeptical of air marshals. "They have basically done nothing since 9/11," he said. "They also cost \$1.2 billion (annually). ... That's the entire budget of the Los Angeles police force. ... It's been done in a very expensive manner for some reason, and it doesn't reduce the risk enough to justify its cost."

Mueller cites a Cornell study suggesting that a fear of flying after 9/11 led to increases in long-distance driving that killed more people in car accidents than died on the

hijacked planes that day.

I shared Mueller's thoughts with John Timoney, who ran the police departments in Philadelphia and Miami and is now a consultant to Bahrain. He praised the Boston response and pointed out that our multiple layers of local, state, and federal law enforcement — with more than 17,000 police agencies and 700,000 to 800,000 officers — create impediments.

"On the response to terror events or some other large-scale disaster, there is always criticism for over-response or overkill," he wrote in an e-mail. "And there is some validity to this criticism. But the over-response is often due to the nature/structure of police agencies and other first responders."

"I remember the first World Trade Center bombing in 1993, when we were overwhelmed by the response of fire and ambulance services from places in New Jersey and Connecticut and Long Island. Thousands of ambulances blocked West Street (in Lower Manhattan), making it impossible to get out of the area. Six persons were killed and around 5,000 injured (mostly minor). Of the 5,000, over 4,000 made their own way to hospitals/doctors via subway or cab."

Timoney has run the Boston Marathon several times himself and lived in Cambridge when he was a fellow at Harvard. He noted that though the bombing happened in Boston, the events that followed happened in surrounding jurisdictions.

"It is a series of small communities with their own police forces and ambulances and fire departments," he wrote. "When the manhunt was under way for the bombers, it was naturally going to involve somewhat other surrounding communities. However, when the MIT police officer was killed and another seriously wounded in the chase, you just know that it was going to be a huge response. Critics might argue that someone should have been in charge to coordinate the response right away. Well, that is not going to happen."

Finally, Timoney noted the inherent difficulty of policing a marathon, but he said that a sporting event at a stadium is very different given "points of entry where people and bags can be checked."

How much we spend on such measures is a focus of Mueller's concern. "There's no way to get risk down to zero," he told me. "An American's chance of being killed by a terrorist is about one in 3.5 million per year. ... So the issue is, basically, if the chance of being killed by a terrorist is one in 3.5 million per year, is it worth spending a lot more money to make that even lower?"

I can think of four families that would say yes.

Michael Smerconish writes for The Philadelphia Inquirer. Readers may contact him via www.smerconish.com.

Pierre Report

No Tax Dollars For ALEC Dues!

BY STATE SEN. TOM JONES
 D-District 17 (Viborg)

Do you want your tax dollars to support higher perks, out of state travel, and membership dues for state legislators to a conservative organization funded by corporate special interests?

Sitting on the Senate appropriations committee, I was surprised to see this happen now in South Dakota under the leadership of Republican legislators. Here's what happened:

On the last day of the legislative session, the Republican-controlled legislature hiked its own budget \$5,000 per lawmaker and this month they began to spend the money by voting for more out-of-state travel, including trips to the controversial American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) conventions where conservative lawmakers are handed model legislation written by corporate special interests.

Democrats tried to strike the money for the trips on the final day of the legislative session, arguing that the money could be better spent on schools and health care, and I tried again when the legislature's executive committee expanded the travel policy, but Republicans prevailed at the expense of working taxpayers and students.

Why is this important for taxpayers like you to know? Every dollar Republicans allocated for these ALEC trips, higher salaries, and membership dues is a dollar we took away from taxpayers, students, and veterans.

Just look at an apples to apples comparison: Republican legislators gave each lawmaker \$5,000 more



Jones

per year for staff, travel, and membership dues. They gave South Dakota students less than \$200 more per year. The Republican-controlled Legislature found \$500,000 for themselves but couldn't find \$25,000 to help fund a van to transport war veterans to medical appointments.

The increase in legislative perks and benefits is even harder to understand when you find out your tax dollars are going to ALEC. A conservative group funded by corporate special interests, ALEC writes legislation to reduce public services our communities depend on and increase taxpayer funded giveaways to special interests. So, for every dollar Republicans spend on ALEC, we are taking away not just one dollar from taxpayers, students, and veterans today but inviting model ALEC bills that reduce investments in our kids, seniors, and veterans for generations to come.

Republican legislators should know better. South Dakotans actually had a chance to weigh in at the ballot box on two ALEC-inspired ideas last year with the Republican Legislature's teacher reform bill and Gov. Daugaard's corporate giveaways. Voters rejected both handily.

I am joining all Democratic legislators in rejecting your tax dollars for ALEC dues and any and all opportunities to travel to ALEC conventions. When we can't afford to invest in our students and our property taxes are increasing, we can hardly afford to turn legislators into frequent fliers for ALEC conventions on the taxpayer dime.

near grave sites as the tree roots are actually causing damage to the grave monuments.

The Lakeport Restoration Organization would like to proceed with the elimination of these destructive issues unless there is a lot of opposition from the families of these grave sites. We would also like to hear your comments in approval or disapproval of this action.

We would appreciate any means of help anyone could give us. Comments or questions may be directed to Arthur Kotalik at 605-661-7109 or David Cap at 605-661-3143.

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OPINION | OTHER THOUGHTS

Erasing The Stain Of Guantanamo

LOS ANGELES TIMES (May 1): At his news conference Tuesday, President Obama made a powerful plea for ending the humanitarian and diplomatic disaster created by the continued detention of more than 160 prisoners at Guantanamo Bay, more than 100 of whom are engaged in a hunger strike that necessitated the dispatch of an emergency medical team. The problem is that Obama has contributed to the crisis by acquiescing in congressional obstruction of his promise to close the facility. ...

It has been more than four years since the newly inaugurated president issued an executive order promising "promptly to close detention facilities at Guantanamo." Yet the prison remains open (though its population has dwindled from a high of nearly 800 inmates in 2005). Of those remaining, about half have been cleared for release but continue to be detained because of congressional opposition to their repatriation to Yemen and other countries whose authorities might not be able to prevent them from engaging in terrorism. Congress also has used its authority to prevent Obama from transferring detainees to the U.S. mainland, a factor in the decision to try Khalid Shaikh Mohammed and other alleged 9/11 conspirators before a military commission rather than in civilian courts.

But Congress isn't entirely to blame. ...

Before Obama's news conference, Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) had urged the administration to renew its efforts to transfer from Guantanamo the 86 inmates cleared for release three years ago by an interagency task force. Obama should do so, ideally with congressional cooperation but unilaterally if necessary.

Guantanamo is a stain on this nation's reputation, not because of where it is located but because the men held captive there are languishing in a legal limbo that would be just as hopeless if they were transplanted to American soil. Notwithstanding Obama's comments about the un-American nature of indefinite detention, more than 40 inmates are being held without the prospect of even a military trial. As he "re-engages" with Congress, Obama should also reconsider his own decision to deny those detainees their day in court.

The Cost Of Cheap Clothing

THE KANSAS CITY STAR (April 29): Poorly paid Third-World workers are dying — literally — to produce low-cost clothing that's sold at leading retailers around the United States and the world.

Last Wednesday morning, more than 3,000 people were inside Rana Plaza when some workers saw cracks in the building. But its owner — who is politically well connected — claimed: "There is nothing serious. It will stand for a hundred years." Instead, it soon fell down; police caught the owner Sunday as he tried to flee to India.

Unfortunately, owners of many overseas garment factories are more interested in squeezing extra money out of their operations and less inclined to take worker protection seriously. So the profitable Western retailers that buy all of this low-cost clothing must more aggressively promote employee safety.

The companies should conduct more on-site visits to these factories. They ought to insist on higher levels of worker protection and wages for employees. Retailers should reject buying from factory owners who don't meet stricter safety standards.

Many Bangladesh citizens are outraged by last week's disaster. Rightly so, they expect their government officials to insist on more humane working conditions.

The concerns of these citizens and garment industry workers must be taken seriously, not just in Bangladesh but in corporate boardrooms around the globe.

TODAY IN HISTORY

By The Associated Press

Today is Thursday, May 2, the 122nd day of 2013. There are 243 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On May 2, 1963, the Children's Crusade began in Birmingham, Ala., as more than 1,000 black schoolchildren skipped classes and marched downtown to protest racial segregation; hundreds were arrested. (During another march the following day, authorities unleashed police dogs and fire hoses on the young protesters.)

On this date: In 1519, artist Leonardo da Vinci died at Cloux, France, at age 67.

In 1670, the Hudson's Bay Co. was chartered by England's King Charles II.

In 1863, during the Civil War, Confederate Gen. Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson was accidentally wounded by his own men at Chancellorsville, Va.; he died eight days later.

In 1890, the Oklahoma Territory was organized.

In 1936, "Peter and the Wolf," a symphonic tale for children by Sergei Prokofiev, had its world premiere in Moscow.

In 1945, the Soviet Union announced the fall of Berlin, and the Allies announced the surrender of Nazi troops in Italy and parts of Austria.

In 1952, the era of commercial jet passenger service began as a BOAC de Havilland Comet carrying 36 passengers took off on a multi-stop flight from London to Johannesburg, South Africa.

In 1957, Sen. Joseph R. McCarthy, R-Wis., died at Bethesda Naval Hospital in Maryland.

In 1960, Caryl Chessman, who'd become a best-selling author and cause celebre while on death row for kidnapping, rape and robbery, was executed at San Quentin Prison in California.

In 1972, a fire at the Sunshine silver mine in Kellogg, Idaho, claimed the lives of 91 workers who succumbed to carbon monoxide poisoning. Longtime FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover died in Washington at age 77.

In 1982, the Weather Channel made its debut.

In 2011, Osama bin Laden was killed by elite American forces at his Pakistan compound, then quickly buried at sea after a decade on the run.

Ten years ago: A federal court struck down most of the new campaign finance law (popularly known as "McCain-Feingold"), overturning its ban on the use of large corporate and union contributions by political parties. (However, later in the year, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld key provisions of the act.) India and Pakistan agreed

to hold talks on settling a-half century of disputes that had driven them into three wars.

Five years ago: President George W. Bush sent lawmakers a \$70 billion request to fund U.S. operations in Iraq and Afghanistan into the following spring. Al-Jazeera TV cameraman Sami al-Haj was released from U.S. custody in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and returned home to Sudan after six years of imprisonment. Tropical Cyclone Nargis struck Myanmar, leading to an eventual official death toll of 84,537, with 53,836 listed as missing. Mildred Loving, a black woman whose challenge to Virginia's ban on interracial marriage led to a landmark Supreme Court ruling striking down such laws across the United States, died in Milford, Va., at age 68.

One year ago: Former House speaker Newt Gingrich formally exited the Republican presidential contest. Taliban insurgents attacked a compound housing foreigners in the Afghan capital, killing seven people, hours after President Barack Obama made a surprise visit. Opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi was sworn in to Myanmar's military-backed parliament. Former NFL star Junior Seau was found shot to death at his home in Oceanside, Calif., a suicide. Jered Weaver pitched the second no-hitter in the majors in less than two weeks, completely overmatching Minnesota and leading the Los Angeles Angels to a 9-0 win over the Twins.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Theodore Bikel is 89. Singer Engelbert Humperdinck is 77. Actress and political activist Bianca Jagger is 68. Country singer R.C. Bannon is 68. Singer Lesley Gore is 67. Actor David Suchet is 67. Singer-songwriter Larry Gatlin is 65. Rock singer Lou Gramm (Formerly) is 63. Actress Christine Baranski is 61. Singer Angela Bofill is 59. Movie director Stephen Daldry is 53. Actress Elizabeth Berridge is 51. Country singer Ty Herndon is 51. Actress Mitzi Kapner is 51. Rock musician Todd Sucherman (Styx) is 44. Wrestler-turned-actor Dwayne Johnson (AKA The Rock) is 41. Soccer player David Beckham is 38. Actress Jenna Von Oy is 36. Actress Ellie Kemper is 33. Actor Robert Buckley is 32. Actor Gaius Charles is 30. Pop singer Lily Rose Cooper is 28. Olympic gold medal figure skater Sarah Hughes is 28. Rock musician Jim Almgren (Carolina Liar) is 27. Actress Kay Panabaker is 23.

Thought for Today: "Even a liar tells a hundred truths to one lie; he has to, to make the lie good for anything." — Henry Ward Beecher, American clergyman (1813-1887).

FROM THE BIBLE

Built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the cornerstone. Ephesians 2:20. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis

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YOUR LETTERS

Cemetery Concerns

The Lakeport Church Committee

There has been a considerable concern posed by interested Lakeport Church supporters over the condition of the grave sites and trees on the cemetery. Mowing around the deteriorating cement forms around several of the grave sites as well as the tree roots surfacing around the sites poses a definite problem resulting in unnecessary costs of the mowing and removal of grass, weeds, etc.

There seems to be a need to remove these deteriorating cement forms and to remove some of the trees