



Real Generals Of Kabul

BY KATHLEEN PARKER

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NEW ORLEANS — It is tempting, oh so tempting, to unleash the snark as the script unfolds: Real Housewives of Tampa. Or is it Real Generals of Kabul?

But recent events are too sad for snark. With so much at stake, schadenfreude has taken a vacation. Here is what we know:

Retired Gen. David Petraeus abruptly quit his job as CIA chief when it became clear that his long-running affair with his biographer, Paula Broadwell, would become public.

The investigation that turned up incriminating emails between Broadwell and Petraeus was spurred by Broadwell's allegedly harassing emails to another woman, Jill Kelley in Tampa, whom Broadwell apparently viewed as a threat to her liaison.

A PowerPoint laser and a map would be helpful at this point. Next we learn that Kelley has had a lengthy, "potentially inappropriate" email exchange — between 20,000 and 30,000 pages (!!!) — with another four-star general, John Allen, the Marine who replaced Petraeus as the top commander in Afghanistan last year.

Meanwhile, the FBI investigator who was looking into Kelley's complaints about harassing emails allegedly sent shirtless photos of himself to Kelley. If true, at least we can be grateful it was only his torso. The agent, who had not been identified at this writing, is now under investigation by the Office of Professional Responsibility, the internal-affairs arm of the FBI.

Oy. This is good soap opera, but bad everything else — and so sad for our country. What is wrong with these men? I know, I know. It takes two to tango. But when you're head of the Central Intelligence Agency — or lead Americans in war — your tango matters more than her tango.

That's all the snark I can muster. Otherwise, this seems like so much tabloid lather.

Is it really a national security matter that Petraeus apparently fell in love with someone not his wife? Maybe. If his paramour is a spy or a blabbermouth. Already, there are signals that Broadwell was talking out of school during an Oct. 26 speech in Denver, where she suggested that the attacks on a U.S. diplomatic compound in Benghazi, Libya, were an attempt to free Libyan militants being held there by the CIA.

That would be a news item, wouldn't it? The CIA de-



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nies it, given that President Obama ended CIA authority to detain prisoners, while critics wonder whether Broadwell might have had access to classified information.

This mess reads like a spy thriller with all the requisite components — sex, clandestine communications, high-ranking generals and the CIA, beautiful women, including the fittest cadet (Broadwell) at West Point. What a bonanza for the campaign weary. But what a horror for our self-respect and our standing in the world. How does one wage war against terrorists and peddle the Great American Experiment when we are so obviously flawed and out of control?

The end of this story may be less scintillating than it now appears. Perhaps it is nothing but a simple love story that got found out. But before we know what happened — and whether there is any legitimate concern about security breaches — we'll hear plenty of spin from both sides of the political divide.

It is some consolation that the chair of the Senate intelligence committee calling for an investigation is a Democrat, Dianne Feinstein. This isn't a Republican political attack on the president, in other words. Feinstein called "unacceptable" the blocking of a report detailing a trip Petraeus made to Benghazi weeks before his resignation.

The suspense will torture the insatiable, but matters so potentially grave — and so destructive in both personal and public ways — demand restraint on the part of media. As more facts surface, others will be proven false. As rumors circulate, and tidbits of information are blown out of proportion, we should be wary of issuing judgments.

"Wartel" was the word Franz Kafka had over his bed. "Wait." I can't guess why he had it over his bed. Perhaps this is where he worked. Studio apartment? Walker Percy, the writer, took this word as his own and hung it over his desk. I have copied them both and added a similar sign above my desk.

We can't wait for the news because it's the journalist's job to uncover it. But we can and should wait for judgment. Let the investigations proceed. Let the facts be verified. Let these people survive the humiliations they are certain to suffer.

We are better than the mob — until we become one.

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Point Of View

Public Space And Playing Nice

BY FATHER JOSEPH FORCELLE

Almost everyone we know has a pet peeve; something that gets under our skin and irritates us beyond description.

Several of these fall into the category I'll call Abusing Public Space. That's right. People get more than mildly upset because other humans occupying this planet sometimes become oblivious to the fact that public space is shared space. The entire planet is shared space.

I've put together a brief list of examples to help raise our awareness of the fact that we share this earth with each other, like it or not. We need to play nice with each other. Being in ministry, I've seen thousands of ways people abuse public space; even churches. Some people even leave maintenance jobs after one too many messes or instances of abuse by the public.

Here are but a few samples of how some people don't play nice:

- Making and/or leaving a mess for someone else to clean up — People dumping trash along roadways, in parking lots, theaters, malls or restrooms; tracking mud or slush into a public building, making no attempt to minimize the damages; leaving unconsumed food or beverages on tables in libraries, cafeterias and even park benches; tossing used disposable diapers where they can be stepped on; taking the dog for a walk and not picking up you-know-what; leaving urinals/toilets un-flushed.
 - Offensive behaviors — Language, gestures, noise levels, electronics (cell phones, boom boxes, cameras, computers, iPods); illegal substances & alcohol abuse; rudeness; inappropriate public affection (that's more than just making out); parking & traffic violations; urinating in public; vomiting and passing out so someone else has to clean it up; letting children run unsupervised to trash public spaces.
 - Vandalism & theft — Taking street or traffic signs for room decorations; defacing public displays; stealing the Baby Jesus from a nativity display; graffiti; shoplifting.
 - Mistreatment of caretakers/maintenance crews/service personnel — treating another person like a slave or a servant without dignity or value, expecting them to clean up our mess like it's owed to us as their superiors; talking about their job like it's the lowest on the job scale (Does anyone even remember the NYC garbage strike of the 1970s?)
 - Misuse and/or waste of energy resources — electricity, water, heat, AC; cranking the thermostat because we're more worried about looking sexy than saving energy
- As I talked with friends about writing this column,



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many people immediately began telling stories of some nasty things they'd experienced. Tales included things like stepping in a used diaper in a parking lot; getting hit by a wet wad of some human waste product while out biking; going to a favorite study table to find it covered with the uneaten food and packaging of someone else's lunch; seeing a bored student shredding paper and throwing it on the floor as the janitor sweeps to "give her something to do"; all of the many examples of cleaning up after a buddy who's had a few too many; or seeing a toddler trash a cake at a wedding reception because his parents weren't vigilant. Then there are the stories to be told by the janitors, grounds crews, waitresses, store managers and repair people too numerous to mention.

Like I said, this is a pet peeve for many people. I only wonder if it gets to us enough to do something about it.

What can we do about it? Here are a few suggestions.

- Be aware of our own attitudes and behaviors — Set a positive example. Attitudes promoting abuse to watch out for: "I'm entitled", "They're paid to clean up," "This place has a lot of money," "It's not my job/responsibility," "It's someone else's problem" and "I didn't make the mess."
 - Intervene when appropriate and safe — Some people take such offense at having their behavior (or their child's) called into question that physical violence may be their response
 - Raise awareness — Promote the common good, not just individual needs, desires or rights
 - Even if you didn't make the mess, help clean it up — Napkins and garbage bags are usually plentiful, especially in a mall food court
 - Treat public service personnel with respect and dignity — Anyone who's ever worked such a job knows what it's like to be treated as insignificant. The janitor is unimportant until the toilet backs up or we can't find the light bulbs
 - Think long term and ecologically — What kind of world do we want for people generations from now?
- Now it's your turn. What is your personal worst case scenario of abuse of public space you personally witnessed and/or experienced? How have you seen others try to improve things? What are you doing to improve the situation? This is your invitation to join the revolution promoting good manners.

Forcelle is pastor for St. Leo Catholic Church, Tyn-dall, and St. Vincent Catholic Church, Springfield.

THE PRESS & DAKOTAN

THE DAKOTAS' OLDEST NEWSPAPER | FOUNDED 1861
Yankton Media, Inc., 319 Walnut St., Yankton, SD 57078

OPINION | OTHER THOUGHTS

Petraeus Affair And The Access To Info

THE DAILY SENTINEL, Grand Junction, Colo. (Nov. 12): Gen. David Petraeus is a highly respected and well-liked military-leader-turned-CIA-chief who allowed his home and his professional reputation to be jeopardized for the sake of an illicit sexual liaison.

Well, there are no prudes here. We realize Petraeus is neither the first person in a position of power to put his personal life and career at risk due to lust, nor will he be the last. In most cases, the damage caused by such relationships is to that individual and those closest to the person.

What makes Petraeus' indiscretion so disturbing is that he was in a unique position as CIA chief to know — and possibly reveal to a lover or a lover-turned-blackmailer — information that could compromise the security of the United States. ...

Sure enough, when the FBI gained access to personal items of Paula Broadwell — Petraeus' paramour — it discovered classified documents on her computer, according to *The Wall Street Journal*.

FBI officials later determined that Broadwell hadn't obtained the classified documents from Petraeus.

However, given the fact that Broadwell was working on another research project, with Petraeus' assistance, related to the involvement of the Army's 101st Airborne Division in Afghanistan, and that she allegedly displayed a vindictive streak in harassing another young woman who is a friend of Petraeus, it's no great leap to believe she could have pushed the CIA chief for classified information on Afghanistan if their relationship had continued ...

TODAY IN HISTORY

By The Associated Press

Today is Thursday, Nov. 15, the 320th day of 2012. There are 46 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On Nov. 15, 1942, the naval Battle of Guadalcanal ended during World War II with a decisive U.S. victory over Japanese forces.

On this date: In 1777, the Second Continental Congress approved the Articles of Confederation.

In 1806, explorer Zebulon Pike sighted the mountaintop now known as Pikes Peak in present-day Colorado.

In 1889, Brazil was proclaimed a republic as its emperor, Dom Pedro II, was overthrown.

In 1935, the Commonwealth of the Philippines was established as its new president, Manuel L. Quezon, took office.

In 1937, the House and Senate chambers of the U.S. Capitol were air-conditioned for the first time.

In 1939, President Franklin D. Roosevelt laid the cornerstone of the Jefferson Memorial in Washington, D.C.

In 1948, William Lyon Mackenzie King retired as prime minister of Canada after 21 years; he was succeeded by Louis St. Laurent.

In 1958, actor Tyrone Power, 44, died in Madrid, Spain, while filming "Solomon and Sheba." (Power's part was recast with Yul Brynner.)

In 1961, former Argentine President Juan Peron, living in exile in Spain, married his third wife, Isabel.

In 1966, the flight of Gemini 12 ended successfully as astronauts James A. Lovell and Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin Jr. splashed down safely in the Atlantic.

In 1969, a quarter of a million protesters staged a peaceful demonstration in Washington against the Vietnam War.

In 1979, the British government publicly identified Sir Anthony Blunt as the "fourth man" of a Soviet spy ring.

In 1982, funeral services were held in Moscow's Red Square for the late Soviet President Leonid I. Brezhnev.

In 1985, Britain and Ireland signed an accord giving Dublin an official consultative role in governing Northern Ireland.

In 1987, 28 of 82 people aboard a Continental Airlines DC-9, including the pilot and co-pilot, were killed when the jetliner crashed seconds after taking off from Denver's Stapleton International Airport.

In 2001, President George W. Bush and Russian President Vladimir Putin failed to resolve their dispute over U.S. missile shield plans but pledged to fight terrorism and deepen U.S.-Russian ties at their summit, which began at the White House before shifting to Bush's Texas ranch, came to a close.

Ten years ago: Palestinian militants raked Israeli troops and settlers with gunfire in a West Bank ambush, killing 12 Israelis in Hebron. Hu Jintao replaced Jiang

Zemin as China's Communist Party leader.

Five years ago: During a feisty Democratic debate in Las Vegas, Hillary Rodham Clinton accused her closest rivals, Barack Obama and John Edwards, of slinging mud "right out of the Republican playbook" and sharply criticized their records. Cyclone Sidr struck Bangladesh, killing more than 3,200 people and leaving millions homeless. Baseball player Barry Bonds was indicted for perjury and obstruction of justice, charged with lying when he told a federal grand jury that he did not knowingly use performance-enhancing drugs. (Bonds was later convicted on the obstruction of justice count; his lawyers are appealing.) Actress Lindsay Lohan completed her jail sentence for drunken driving in a swift 84 minutes.

One year ago: Hundreds of police officers in riot gear raided the Occupy Wall Street encampment in New York City in the pre-dawn darkness, evicting hundreds of protesters and then demolishing the tent city. The U.S. Postal Service said it had lost \$5.1 billion in the fiscal year ending Sept. 30, 2011. The state of Ohio executed Reginald Brooks, who had shot his three sons as they slept, shortly after his wife filed for divorce. Justin Verlander of the Detroit Tigers breezed to the AL Cy Young Award in a unanimous vote. Karl Slover, 93, one of the last surviving actors who played Munchkins in the 1939 classic film "the Wizard of Oz," died in Dublin, Ga.

Today's Birthdays: Judge Joseph Wapner is 93. Statesman Howard H. Baker Jr. is 87. Actor Ed Asner is 83. Actor John Kerr is 81. Singer Petula Clark is 80. Comedian Jack Burns is 79. Actress Joanna Barnes is 78. Actor Yaphet Kotto is 73. Actor Sam Waterston is 72. Classical conductor Daniel Barenboim is 70. Pop singer Frida (ABBA) is 67. Actor Bob Gunton is 67. Former New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson is 65. Director-actor James Widdoes is 59. Rock singer-producer Mitch Easter is 58. Fox News reporter John Roberts is 56. Former "Jay Leno Show" bandleader Kevin Eubanks is 55. Comedian Judy Gold is 50. Actress Rachel True is 46. Rapper E-40 is 45. Country singer Jack Ingram is 42. Actor Jay Harrington is 41. Actor Jonny Lee Miller is 40. Actress Sydney Tamiia Poitier is 39. Christian rock musician David Carr (Third Day) is 38. Rock singer-musician Chad Kroeger is 38. Rock musician Jesse Sandoval is 38. Actress Virginie Ledoyen is 36. Actor Sean Murray (TV: "NCIS") is 35. Pop singer Ace Young (TV: "American Idol") is 32. Golfer Lorena Ochoa is 31. Actress Shailene Woodley is 21. Actress-dancer Emma Dumont (TV: "Bunheads") is 18.

Thought for Today: "News reports don't change the world. Only facts change it, and those have already happened when we get the news." — Friedrich Durrenmatt, Swiss author and playwright (1921-1990).

FROM THE BIBLE

Reuben said to them, "Shed no blood; throw him into this pit here in the wilderness, but do not lay a hand on him." Genesis 37:22. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis

YOUR LETTERS

Cleaning Up

Ken Jiricek, Yankton

I have read and appreciate the YHS student response and the responses on Yankton.net to my original letter published in the *Press & Dakotan* (Oct. 2) regarding the trash at the Yankton High School parking lot. I have also noticed a marked difference in the amount of trash left on the parking lot. I have also heard from members of the YHS community that this is an item being seriously considered among the students and staff. Congratulations to the YHS administration and students.

Regarding some of the comments about the trash in the community at large, I agree: trash is everywhere. U.S. citizens produce more trash per capita than any other nation on the planet. In part this is due to the "god" that is worshipped in this culture: convenience. I believe it also speaks to a larger disconnect between us as humans and our planet.

From everything I have learned and observed about the earth in rela-

tionship to our activities, we, as a species, generally have a deleterious impact. This is the deeper issue than the appearance of the trash. Why is the trash there in the first place? What does it say about me as a temporary tenant on the earth if I trash it?

Debate is the bedrock of western civilization — free speech and thought, an absolute necessity. However, wedded to these freedoms are responsibilities. I was delighted to see the students step up to the plate and assume responsibility. To assume a place in a global community is to be aware of the global consequences we create, small to large. Now the challenge is to move from a sense of obligation to a sense of stewardship. As Diogenes the Greek philosopher stated, "I am a citizen of the world." So do we remain parochial or global in our thoughts and actions? What are the environmental ethical issues raised by our activities?

I hope all this "trash talk" is a springboard for more YHS debate without rancor.

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Published Daily Monday-Saturday

Periodicals postage paid at Yankton, South Dakota, under the act of March 3, 1979.

Weekly Dakotian established June 6, 1861. Yankton Daily Press and Dakotian established April 26, 1875.

Postmaster: Send address changes to Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan, 319 Walnut, Yankton, SD 57078.

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