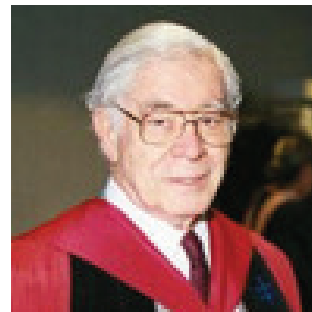


## Changing Demographics and the Middle East

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Since I am neither a prophet nor the son of a prophet, to paraphrase the Bible, I cannot tell the future. However, I can discuss what I believe to be long range and irreversible demographic trends in the Middle East and suggest some possible outcomes. I begin our discussion of US policy not with the United States but with Europe.

On November 10, 2006, Dame Eliza Manningham Buller, Director General of MI5, Britain's intelligence agency responsible for internal security, took the highly unusual step of going public in a speech at the University of London's Queen Mary College. She revealed that her agency is actively monitoring 1,600 people in 200 cells believed to be plotting terrorist acts in Britain and overseas. She declared that more and more people are moving from passive sympathy to active terrorism and that a growing number of people are plotting to kill others and inflict damage on the British economy. The conspirators, she said, are motivated "by

a sense of grievance and injustice driven by their interpretation of the history of the West and the Muslim world."<sup>1</sup>

Furthermore, Dame Eliza declared that if public opinion polls conducted in the UK since July 2005 are accurate, over 100,000 British citizens consider that the July 5th suicide-bomber attacks in London were justified. She also stated that she is neither a politician nor a pundit and that she has no political "axe to grind." She stressed the fact that she almost never goes public, as would be the case with any head of an intelligence agency in Britain, but she felt compelled to do so because of the urgency of what she believed Britain and the other nations of Western Europe were facing. She described the terrorist propaganda machine as sophisticated, noting that footage of attacks in Iraq are posted on the internet within thirty minutes of their occurrence, facilitated by skilled teams that edit the video, translate the audio into many languages, and package the material for a global au-

### **Biography**

*Dr. Richard L. Rubenstein is President Emeritus of the University of Bridgeport. A Distinguished Professor of Religion at the University and a Life Member of the Board of Trustees, Dr. Rubenstein also serves as Director of the University's Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies. An internationally recognized historian of religion whose writings lie at the root of Holocaust writings, his works have been the subject of more than a dozen doctoral dissertations. One of his books entitled "The Cunning of History" was recently translated into French. Professor Rubenstein's writings have also been cited as a key inspiration for the Academy Award winning film Sophie's Choice. Prior to assuming his role as President of the University of Bridgeport, Dr. Rubenstein served as Distinguished Professor of Religion at Florida State University. Recently Florida State University created the Richard L. Rubenstein Chair for Religious Studies in his honor.*

dience. She said the struggle against such threats would last at least a generation and that the problem cannot be solved by MI5 alone. Other services “have to address the causes, counter the radicalization and assist in the rehabilitation of those affected.”<sup>2</sup>

I would, however, suggest that no effort to solve this problem will work in spite of the fact that the majority of British Muslims do not look with favor on terrorism. The fundamental reason is demographics. The reality of the situation has been graphically and concisely described by Canadian writer Mark Steyn who noted that “the salient feature of Europe, Canada, Japan and Russia is that they’re running out of babies.”<sup>3</sup> “What’s happening in the developing world,” Steyn continued, “is one of the fastest demographic evolutions in history.”<sup>4</sup> I would rather have called it one of the fastest demographic devolutions in history and it has gotten to the point where the trend is irreversible.

Demographers say that if a nation gets to the point where its fertility rate per couple is below 2, it is faced with an irreversibly declining population, if it depends solely upon its indigenous population for population growth or stability. The replacement fertility rate needed for a society to reproduce itself without change is 2.1 per couple. In the United Kingdom, the fertility rate was 1.68 in 2001. Even though it increased to 1.8 in 2006, it is still below the requisite 2.1, and we do not know the extent to which that rate includes British citizens of Muslim background.

Greece has the highest fertility rate, 1.3, of any predominantly Christian nation of the Mediterranean region. In Ireland, the rate is 1.87. In New Zealand it is 1.79, Australia, 1.76, Canada, 1.5, Russia and Italy are at 1.2. Spain is at 1.1, and Germany and Austria, 1.3. At some future point, German may cease to be Germany’s majority language.

The most important demographic fact about Europe from the end of World War II to the present is that Europe has ceased to be an *exporter of people* and has become a *net importer of people* on a monumental scale. Moreover, even if Europe were to cease to be an importer of people today, the internal immigration of non-indigenous peoples will continue. What we see is an irreversible long-term trend.

Permit me to suggest some of the dimensions of the trend. Finding fault or blaming one group or another is beside the point. What is at issue is the civilization Western civilization has itself created.

If one looks at a graph showing population increase from ancient times to 1740, we see a slight, gradual population increase in that period. Nevertheless, population remained essentially stable over time although there were demographic crises like the Black Death. Starting in 1740, things began to change. In 1740, there were between 120 and 140 million people in Europe, including European Russia. By 1913, there were 468 million people in Europe and about 250 million people of European origin living outside of the European continent. Today, it is estimated that there are about 728 million

people in Europe, but that population is expected to decline to 623 million in 2050. The population of the United States has recently surpassed 300 million and is estimated to grow partly through immigration to 400 million by 2050.

The population explosion that began in the middle of the 18th century was utterly unprecedented and had monumental social and political consequences. Both the explosion of the European population and its incipient decline can be seen as one of the most important social consequences of what can be called the revolution of rationality, that is, the triumph of an attitude of value-neutral calculated rationality as the predominant mode of problem-solving in practical affairs. Put simply it means getting whatever job one wants done with the most economical expenditure of means.

The German sociologist, Max Weber, to whom we owe some of the most brilliant analyses of modernity, has observed that such rationality involves “the methodical attainment of a definitely given and practical end by means of an increasingly precise calculation of adequate means.” Let me give you one example of such practical rationality. I am healthy. I am 82 years old. Two years ago, I had a problem with the aortic valve of my heart. Thanks to medical practical rationality, I had a valve replacement. Otherwise I would not be here today. An enormous amount of scientific rationality and medical technology went into that valve replacement. Moreover, I recently had my quarterly exam and my doctor said that the numbers were perfect, low cholesterol, low blood

pressure. It was not simply because I try to be well disciplined, but because of the kind of medicines that are available to keep me healthy. That has long-term consequences not just for one person but for the entire population. People live and are productive much longer.

One of the most important consequences of the triumph of practical or instrumental rationality has been that man’s ability to produce a surplus of both food and manufactured goods was vastly enhanced. In the long run, so too was man’s ability to produce a surplus of people. There was a surplus of goods, a surplus of wealth, and a surplus of people that continues in our time. Nevertheless, there is great irony in this human achievement for *by producing such a surplus, men take the first step toward making themselves superfluous*. The rational division of labor rests upon humanity’s ability to produce a surplus. The division of labor also enlarges that capacity, making it possible for ever fewer people to produce an ever greater output of goods and services.

I am going to take a detour for a moment and discuss some insights of the German philosopher Georg Friedrich Hegel in the year 1803. Hegel, whom I consider one of the greatest philosophers who ever lived, understood the connection between surplus goods and surplus people. You will find this in a number of his works: including the *Realphilosophie* from his Jena period and his *Rechtsphilosophie*. Among the excellent books on this subject is Hegel’s *Theory of the Modern State* by Shlomo Avineri.<sup>5</sup> Hegel, writing in 1803, about the evolving worldwide division of

labor—about which Adam Smith had already written—that was beginning to make it possible for factories in England to supply cheap manufactured goods to people in Asia, Hegel observes, “it thus happens that a far away operation often affects a whole class of people who have hitherto satisfied their needs through their own craftsmanship, all of a sudden the cheap manufacturer of cheap goods limits their works, makes it redundant and useless.”<sup>6</sup>

We see the same thing happening now. Most of our computers are now made in China not the United States, because the distant manufacturer of goods, China, is disrupting the manufacturer of goods in this country. The same phenomenon described by Hegel is still going on but in reverse. If one were thinking in terms of revenge, one might say that the present development is a form of monumental economic revenge that cannot be stopped.

Hegel saw that cheap manufacturing of goods, in this case European goods, would destroy the native craft industries of the lands to which they were exported, thereby rendering the native craftsman superfluous. He also saw that, as modern industry and commerce developed, they were bound to have a destabilizing effect, not only in the target country but also in the country of origin. This was also understood by Marx, Engels and other philosophers of the 19th century.

In 1803 Hegel wrote that it was inherent in the nature of what he called “civil society” (*bürgerliche Gesellschaft*), what we would

today identify as modern bourgeois society or modern capitalist society, to over-produce both goods and people. He foresaw that this would lead to the growth of a class of economic outcasts and an underclass within the heart of a society. He described this in a passage that has an amazingly contemporary ring:

When the standard of living of a large mass of people falls below a subsistence level, a level regulated automatically as the one necessary for a member of society, and when there is a consequent loss of a sense of right and wrong [because without work you have no investment in your own community] of honesty and self-respect which makes a man insist on maintaining himself by his own work...<sup>7</sup>

The result is what Hegel called a “rabble of paupers” and what Marx referred to as the “*Lumpen proletariat*.”

Among the problems faced by all modern societies is the growth of certain populations that have no investment in society because society has no investment in them. Lets us consider, for example, the case of drug dealing in the United States. Undoubtedly, many people become drug dealers who do not see other opportunities for gainful employment, and, perhaps more importantly, because they see such an endeavor as a way to accumulate things they think they are entitled to. They see drug dealing not as a means of achieving social status but as a means of acquiring the accoutrements of status. They are smart, think they can beat the

odds and use their brains to operate outside the limits of society.

Leo von Caprivi, Chancellor of Germany in 1891 and successor to Bismarck, observed that “Germany must export goods or people.”<sup>8</sup> Caprivi understood that, if Germany kept its population employed, it would not have a social problem. If it could not keep its population employed, it would have to export a large number of its people, and export them Germany did. The largest single white ethnic group in the United States is of German descent. It was the habit of many German towns to say, “We will give you a one-way passage to the United States. Just don’t you dare come back.”

Something similar happened in Australia. Australia was a penal colony. Initially, those sent to Australia were told that, if they returned to Britain, they could be sentenced to death. That was how Australia was started. The export of people began very, very early and it has continued.

Elsewhere in his writings, Hegel observed that as labor’s productivity increased, a point would be reached at which more goods would be produced than could be consumed. That is the contradiction between production and consumption that Marxists talk about. This would force factory owners to cut back on the number of people that they employed. As the number of unemployed grew, society would be faced with a problem for which Hegel saw no solution, save emigration. Hegel was dubious about welfare assistance for the unemployed with or without

a work requirement. He saw this as at best a temporary solution. Without a work requirement, public assistance was likely to intensify the poor’s sense of dependence and lack of self-respect. On the other hand, if the unemployed were compelled to produce goods for a saturated market, that would only aggravate the problem that made them unemployed to begin with.

Hegel also saw that this overproduction of goods would push hitherto relatively stable societies beyond their territorial limits and drive them to found colonies. It was thought that, to solve the problems of population growth and unemployment, large-scale colonization projects would need to be undertaken. This movement started in the 18th century and continued into the 19th century.

The nineteenth century witnessed the rise of European imperialism. I cannot go into an analysis of imperialism here. Imperialism sought to create spheres of influence and control outside of the mother country. Within those spheres, extra risks were taken by entrepreneurs and capitalists in order to find useful employment of their money and to have territories to export both their surplus goods and their surplus people.

The risks of imperialism could not be controlled directly by the home country but could be overseen by the home country’s agents. There was always a conflict between the nation as a defined community with a common inheritance and usually a common faith and imperialism that created distant territories in which the

bounds of community and faith were broken.

The Western world has made two fundamentally contradictory choices. It has opted for both anti-natalism and for a social welfare state that makes the care and sustenance of both the aged and the infirm a public responsibility. Unfortunately, in the long run, one cannot have both an anti-natalist society and a social welfare society. In Europe the price has been most obvious: an aging population and a diminution of the people needed to provide the economic base for their support. Our current social welfare problems cannot be solved by continuing to borrow money from China. Yet, that, in essence, is what we are doing and, sooner or later, it will have catastrophic effects. No society can have it both ways.

When a society extends life without providing the labor force that can generate the wealth necessary to meet the needs of the elderly and the infirm, it can solve the problem by increasing the public debt, in the short run. In the long run, such policies lead to public bankruptcy and social chaos and that is happening right now. I remember when I thought that \$3500 was a lot of money to pay for a luxury car. Today, I am now willing to pay \$40,000 for my modest, entry-level, luxury car. Money has been devalued because we are not able to pay for what we are getting without enormous borrowing and the borrowing keeps growing.

There are many reasons that Europe opted for massive Muslim immigration. According to reliable United States De-

partment of State reports, there are more than 23 million Muslims in Western Europe. Europe needs a labor force to provide the resources for the social welfare state that its own indigenous labor force cannot provide. There are other reasons such as oil, but the lack of the needed workforce is the fundamental reason. The same problem exists in the United States, to an extent, but the United States has available a very large predominantly Christian immigrant source to meet such needs, I refer of course to our Hispanic immigrants. Europe has no such force available. It has had to turn to its Muslim neighbors and to former colonies which are also largely Muslim. Those countries have now experienced the same population surplus caused by modernity that centuries ago Europe began to experience itself.

The European decision to permit large-scale Muslim immigration was fostered by what Max Weber has described as “religiously unmusical” public officials. Why do I employ Weber’s term.? In the previous section, I suggested that the *revolution of rationality* was one of the most consequential of all revolutions, an important aspect of which was the conviction that religion is a private matter of individual choice. Basically, the governing officials of France, England, Germany, Holland and Belgium decided that Muslims could be permitted to immigrate into their respective countries, confident that, as the immigrants became acculturated to their superior culture of free choice and individualism, they would become loyal Britons, Norwegians, Danes,

Frenchmen, etc.” They never asked Muslims whether they regarded their civilization as inferior to the West. And, it is quite clear that Muslims did not regard their own civilization as inferior.

Take the case of suicide bombers. Osama bin Laden has declared, “We will win. The Americans love life; we love death.”<sup>9</sup> There is something that few people are prepared to face. In effect, the suicide bomber is saying:

My individuality is less important than my community. I am willing to give up my life for my group because my individuality and my individual freedom is not my ultimate ambition. If that means that I must sacrifice my life, so be it.

There was a time when Jews and Christians preferred martyrdom to conversion. Today, Muslims are far more likely to sacrifice themselves for their faith. To say that they do so because they are terrorists is fundamentally to misread what is going on. What the Muslims understand is that religion is not a private matter, something their hosts do not fully understand.

Data on Muslim identity in Europe show that Muslims born in Europe are less disposed to integrate than were their immigrant parents. This trend can be explained in one word: alienation. Whatever their experiences as British, Dutch, or French citizens, they do not feel truly British, French, Dutch or German. Take for example the Danish cartoon controversy. There are over 100,000 Muslims in Denmark. Certainly, if the first genera-

tion has not learned to speak the Danish language fluently, the second generation has. Can you in your wildest imagination see young Muslims able to say, “I am a Dane, I identify with the Viking Christian heritage of Denmark”? It is ridiculous. Not only that. The Danes do not want Muslims to take such a position. The Danish way of multi-culturalism is: “You stay on your side of the fence. I’ll stay on mine.”

We may have a different solution in America. I can say that I am American and Jewish at the same time and mean it. To be an American does not necessarily mean to be a white Anglo-Saxon Protestant. It can mean being a black Protestant. It can mean being a Hispanic. It can mean being a Roman Catholic of various sorts. Ethnic identity and nationality are not identical in the United States. One of the things that may save the United States from Europe’s fate is the predominance of our churches. The church provides for the ethnic community in such a way that it can function as a mediating institution for the larger national identity.

Europeans do not have anything like that. In England there is the Church of England with its history. In Germany and Scandinavia, there are the Lutheran Churches. These are not welcoming institutions for Muslims. When Muslims are confronted with this situation, they come to their own conclusions about their place in their new societies. Oliver Roy, a French student of the world of Islam has observed that second generation Muslims from Algeria do not have any nostalgia for Algeria. Where then do they find

their identity? They find it in the *umma*, the global nation of Islam.<sup>10</sup> The radicals insist that the *umma* is not only divinely legitimated but that it is destined to rule the world. In their eyes, this aspiration is not vicious; it is simply an extension of their idea of religion. And, these are people who have an identity they are willing to die for.

Most European Muslims are not radicals, but, as the Muslim population of Europe increases, there will be a critical mass of Muslims for whom radical Islam is the only coherent religio-political philosophy. For example, in Lebanon in 2006 most Lebanese did not want war with Israel. Nevertheless, they had no choice when Hezbollah decided on war. If there is a critical mass of people in Europe sympathetic to radical Islam, they will create conflict situations with the Christian population, not today, but the day after tomorrow as their number grows.

How shall we understand this? Basically, the European situation has been described by a brilliant commentator by the name of Bat Ye'or. "Europe," she says "has become Eurabia." Instead of a Europe that is truly an ally of the United States, the United States will soon be faced with an increasingly hostile Eurabia. That trend is already quite visible. If the United States is faced with a hostile Eurabia and as the number of Muslims grow in Europe- I am not talking about American Muslims who may perhaps be different- the situation in Israel will only get worse.

I cannot foresee whether the U.S. policy toward Israel will follow the Eurabian model, but I would hazard a guess that those who favor the rhetoric of an unsustainable social welfare state—and they have now taken over Congress and will probably take over the Presidency—will tend towards an increasingly hostile attitude toward Israel. Moreover, the Jews themselves will be hopelessly divided between elite liberals for whom Israel will end up being expendable, provided it can be done subtly and in the name of democracy, and those who understand that the end of Israel will have utterly devastating effects on Judaism itself.

There are a very significant group of non-Jews that favor a policy sympathetic to Israel, especially as Europe becomes more Eurabian. They are the Evangelicals and those parts of the American public who understand that a Europe with a critical mass of Muslims will have policies inimical to the United States itself.

Finally, I strongly doubt that after Auschwitz Israel will be a passive bystander waiting to be manipulated by the rest of the world. David Ben Gurion, the first and arguably the greatest Prime Minister Israel ever had, understood population trends. He understood that the Muslims far outnumbered the Israelis and would continue to do so. Therefore, he sought an equalizer which he found in nuclear weapons. The equalizer might not work but it is the only chance an outnumbered Israel might have.

Iran will get its nuclear weapons, with the Europeans, the Russians, and perhaps the Americans calculating that the worst the



Iranians can do with their nukes is take out Israel. In reality, countries like Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Jordan have much to fear. They do not want an Iranian dominated, Shi'ite hegemony in the Middle East.

In any event, I believe that the minute Iran goes *really* nuclear and, perhaps before, Israel is likely seriously to contemplate using its nuclear weapons either to defend itself or to go down in an apocalyptic finale such as the world has never seen before. I do not believe Israel will wait passively until Iran chooses its moment to strike.

That is, what I believe, the demographics of the situation represent.

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