The bill clerk continued with the reading of the Conference Report.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that further reading of the report be dispensed with.

Mr. HARKIN. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The clerk will continue the reading of the report.

The bill clerk continued with the reading of the conference report.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that further reading of the bill be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. HARKIN. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa has objected.

The clerk will continue reading.

The bill clerk continued with the reading of the conference report.

Mr. LOTT. I ask unanimous consent that further reading be dispensed with, with the understanding that we have reached a unanimous-consent agreement we will enter into momentarily.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The text of the conference report is printed in the House proceedings of the RECORD of September 26, 1996.)

Mr. LOTT. After discussions with the distinguished Democratic leader and the Senator from Massachusetts, I believe we have an agreement here that would be in the best interest of all concerned in how we dispose of this legislation.

I ask unanimous consent that the motion to proceed be agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LOTT. The conference report is now before the Senate.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. LOTT. I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate the conference report to accompany H.R. 3539, The Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization bill.

Trent Lott, Don Nickles, Strom Thurmond, Jon Kyl, Judd Gregg, Slade Gorton, Paul D. Coverdell, Frank H. Murkowski, Craig Thomas, Harry Reid, Wendell Ford, Conrad Burns, Kay Bailey Hutchison, John Breaux, Tom Daschle, Arlen Specter.

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT AGREEMENT

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the vote occur on cloture at 10 a.m. on Thursday, October 3, that there be 1 hour for debate to be equally divided between the two leaders prior to the cloture vote, a mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived; I further ask unanimous consent that on Tuesday, October 1, there be 3 hours of debate, equally divided between the two leaders, on the conference report and 3 hours equally divided in the same fashion on Wednesday, October 2, both days for debate only.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I thank all who have been involved in working out this agreement. I think it is in the best interest of the Senate. It is a fair way to deal with this important legislation that involves airport infrastructure and safety. This way, we will have ample time to have debate on Tuesday and Wednesday. We will get a vote on cloture on Thursday, and then we will be able to work toward a final vote, also on Thursday. So I thank the Senator.

Mr. STEVENS. If the leader will yield, I want to commend all Senators for this action and thank the leader for his determination, and the Democratic leader also for being patient and finding a way to bring this matter to a close.

Under the circumstances—and I have discussed this with the Parliamentarian—this means that we will vote before the week is out on the FAA bill. For that reason, I do withdraw all the objections that I filed to the matters pending. We have been waiting for some action to indicate we will vote on this bill this week.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, if I can, I will outline the closing script so all will be familiar with it.

When the Senate completes it business today, it will stand in adjournment until the hour of 9:30 a.m., October 1, and there will then be a period for the transaction of morning business not to extend beyond the hour of 12:30, with Senators permitted to speak therein for not more than 5 minutes each.

We will recess from 12:30 until 2:15 for the weekly party caucuses to meet. We will have the time agreed to, 90 minutes on each side, and the same will occur on Wednesday. We will go to votes on Thursday.

Mr. DASCHLE. If the majority leader will yield, I announce to our colleagues, just so there is no confusion, the Democratic caucus will not be meeting. It will just be the Republican caucus.

Mr. LOTT. Just before I yield the floor, I would like to make it official that we will have no further votes tonight. There could be votes on other issues tomorrow or the next day. We are still working very actively on the parks legislation. Perhaps there could be a vote on that on Tuesday or Wednesday.

Other than that, we don't anticipate any other votes. We need to make sure the Members are aware that there is that one possibility, at least.

At this point, I yield the floor.

Mr. KENNEDY addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, we will look forward to further debate on this measure on tomorrow and Wednesday, prior to a vote on Thursday. But I just want to reiterate for the record what I stated and what I think represents the feeling of all those that are opposed to this special provision in the legislation.

We were quite prepared to move toward an amendment on the continuing resolution, to offer the FAA bill without this amendment and go into a 10-minute time limitation. I am convinced it would have passed. So I hope we are not going to hear a lot of statements on the floor that those that now are opposed to this particular proposal are not in favor of the FAA conference report. We very clearly were. We have indicated—those of us on our side—to our minority leader that we were prepared to offer an amendment and to move that amendment on the shortest possible time. And we would have concluded both the continuing resolution and this measure here and, hopefully, might have even finished up the parks legislation, so the Senate would have been out tonight.

The burden for the delay is not on those of us who have spotted this special interest legislation. It is on those who want to continue it in the legislation. That is why there is going to be continued debate on Wednesday and Thursday on the substance of that particular legislation. I look forward to that matter. I think it is extremely important that we understand the record completely, since we were not given an opportunity earlier in the evening during the various parliamentary situations, to understand that all of us who are opposed to this special interest legislation are committed toward the FAA conference report and were prepared to take action for that during the course of the afternoon, or even tomorrow or the next day, if it goes on through without that special provision.

The burden lies on those who want to retain that measure. I am going to reject, and I do reject the suggestion that somehow those that want to continue that special provision in here are more concerned about safety in the airports than those of us who are not. That legislation could pass tonight if they want to strike that provision. We could move toward an implementation on it.

So I hope we will have an opportunity to debate the real merits of the legislation. I look forward to that. During the measure, we will point out what happened on the 1995 conference between the House and the Senate, when the Senate report now reveals that it was the Senate conferees that advanced the position to eliminate this language. We heard a great deal earlier in the day about where did this idea come from. Well, we find out, in reading the report now, that it was advanced by our Senate conferees, and the final report was signed by the Senate conferees for the elimination of

that proposal. That is where it originated. But we will have more of an opportunity to go through what we are really talking about.

What we are talking about are workers and workers' rights. We are talking about those workers who were effective in terms of winning local elections by more than 60 percent of the vote in 1991 and the continued effort to frustrate workers who have played by the rules, followed the law, and now are having a legislative end-run over their legitimate interests and being added in the last hour.

So, Mr. President, this issue is not going to go away. We will have a chance to call the roll on Thursday. But before that, we will be able to make the case in terms of workers' rights and what is happening to those families, by this action, and circumventing litigation which is now currently pending, where those of us who have followed that believe that those workers' rights will be sustained. Nonetheless, we are faced with circumventing their very, very legitimate rights and issues, and I just feel that we will have a good opportunity to get through that on tomorrow and the next day.

So I look forward to that debate. I thank the leadership for working out at least this process, which will give some opportunity to focus on the substance of this particular measure and won't get lost or be buried under parliamentary maneuvers, which effectively have, today at least, eliminated the chance to have a full expression and discussion and debate on this measure.

I yield the floor.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I would like to thank both leaders—both the Democratic leader as well as Senator LOTT—for working out this arrangement with the assistance of many, including the Senator from Kentucky, Senator FORD, as well as others who have made this agreement possible.

I must say we have come a very long way in the last few hours when we were faced with what is clearly a filibuster. There is no doubt about it. We were not allowed to enter into time agreements. We were not allowed to move forward. There were quorum calls entered into. The Record is clear as to what was transpiring here.

The fact is that people all over America who are concerned about airline safety, who are concerned about projects that are under way that need additional funding, new projects needing funding, nearly 9 billion dollars' worth—said enough, enough, enough. Move forward with this. We have enough problems with airline safety. We need the provisions that are in this bill to make the airlines safer and the people who use the airlines safe.

It is clear what was going on before. The Senator from Massachusetts clearly wanted to block this conference report from being enacted by the U.S. Senate unless that provision that he found objectionable be removed, even though safety would have been clearly in some jeopardy as well as further funding.

I do not mean to take on the Senator from Massachusetts on this issue. But I do think it is important to clarify the record. It is also important, Mr. President, to clarify the record as to what happened in conference. It was an open conference. It was not a closed conference. The conferees from both sides were there—both Republican and Democrat. There were open and honest exchanges that were held. The amendment that the Senator from Massachusetts finds so onerous, Mr. President, was proposed by one of the Democrat conferees from his side of the aisle—not from this side of the aisle. It was voted in favor of by both of the Democrat Senators from that side of the aisle who supported it.

So it was unanimous in the Senate. No objection was raised by any conferee.

I understand that the Senator from Massachusetts is a strong advocate of labor, and he has clearly his mission and his philosophy. I respect that even though I may not agree with him. But to portray this as some sort of behind-the-scenes, backdoor attempt by those on this side of the aisle to do something in the way of subterfuge simply flies in the face of what actually happened.

I want to repeat, the amendment was proposed by a conferee from that side of the aisle—not this side. It was voted on unanimously by all Senate conferees. Because, Mr. President, it is clear—was clear to the conferees and is clear now—that this was a mistake in legislation that needed to be repaired. That was the view of all of the conferees and all of us who have been involved in this issue for a very, very long period of time.

Mr. President, I am not going to go through—we will have time tomorrow and the next day; the hour is late—all of the vitally needed security measures that are part of this bill. I mean, they are vital. We adopted many of those that were recommended by the Vice President's commission because we felt we couldn't wait until next year. Some of these things have to be enacted as soon as possible. We are talking about a grave threat to the very lives of men and women who fly on airlines.

If we had done what was taking place in a parliamentary fashion as short a time ago as a few minutes ago while the bill was demanded to be read, then clearly we wouldn't have been able to move forward.

I am not going to go through the nearly $9 billion worth of projects that are vitally needed. I will not talk about all of those in the State of Massachusetts, or, frankly, those in the State of Iowa.

When I asked that further reading of the bill be suspended, the Senator from Iowa on three different occasions objected—objected. He must have objected to the $1.8 million that is going to be made available for Des Moines International, and the $1.4 million for Cedar Rapids Municipal for the sake of a cause that has to do with organized labor—organized labor, which is in an unprecedented fashion pouring money in to defeat Republicans in the upcoming election. I understand why the Senator from Iowa would do that. I understand why the Senator from Massachusetts would do it.

But I beg the Senator from Massachusetts, please, please don't portray what has just transpired as anything but what it was—an attempt to block passage of the conference on the part of the Senator from Massachusetts and the declared, avowed intention of the majority leader to finish this bill for the good of the United States of America and get a final vote on the conference report.

Mr. KENNEDY. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. MCCAIN. I am happy to yield to the Senator from Massachusetts for a question.

Mr. KENNEDY. Will the Senator yield so we can call up a clean bill that is at the desk right now and pass it tonight without that provision so that we can attend to all of those provisions that the Senator from Arizona mentions? We can call that right up tonight and pass it. Why don't we go ahead and do that? Or is the Senator from Arizona so strongly committed to this antiworker provision that he would deny those safety provisions from being adopted in the Senate and from being adopted tonight?

Mr. MCCAIN. Is the Senator finished?

Mr. KENNEDY. Yes.

Mr. MCCAIN. In response, I say to the Senator from Massachusetts—I am sure he was here on the floor when we entered into a unanimous-consent agreement, the unanimous-consent agreement which could have been objected to in just the last few minutes by the Senator from Massachusetts if he had chosen to, if he had wanted to get a clean bill. I suggest that he could have objected, and then said, let us have a clean bill. Instead, the Senator from Massachusetts sat silent while the unanimous-consent agreement was propounded. While the Senator from Iowa was—and who probably wants to ask another question about how he is beholding to organized labor, as well as the Senator from Massachusetts is, to the point where they would block passage of a conference bill that has to do with airline safety and the funding of nearly $9 billion worth of projects for the American people.

I would be glad to respond to any question the Senator from Iowa has.

Mr. HARKIN. I thank the Senator for yielding. I just ask the question. Will the Senator then sit silent while I propound a unanimous-consent request to bring up the bill?

Mr. MCCAIN. I would be glad to. My colleagues may object, however, because they know we just entered into a

unanimous consent agreement which, if the Senator from Iowa or the Senator from Massachusetts wanted differently, they could have objected to.

Mr. HARKIN. The point is we did bring up a clean bill, and, obviously, there is an objection on that side.

Mr. COATS. Would the Senator from Arizona yield?

Mr. MCCAIN. Yes, for a question.

Mr. COATS. I say to the Senator from Arizona, we have just been put through about 5 hours worth of procedural gimmickry by the Senator from Massachusetts and the Senator from Iowa when the House has already adjourned, when the Nation's business in this Congress has been finished. Because the Senator from Massachusetts, as some, apparently, gift to organized labor, is not happy with one of the small provisions in a bill that provides airport safety and critical airport funding says, ''I don't care what the rest of the Senate thinks, I do not care what the House of Representatives thinks,'' 435 people have finished their business in the House of Representatives and gone back home to their districts, and 100 Senators would like to complete their business—we thought we had at 6 o'clock, when a motion to table was overwhelmingly supported against the provision offered by the Senator from Massachusetts.

Do you remember what that vote was? That is my question. What was the vote on the motion to table?

Mr. MCCAIN. Ninety-seven to two, I believe.

Mr. COATS. Ninety-seven to two. So clearly both Republicans and Democrats, with the exception of the two Senators —maybe there were three; I guess the Senator from Wisconsin was involved in this also—said, ''No; we are going to hold onto the last procedural gimmick that we can possibly hold onto,'' and make the entire U.S. Senate not only stay in business until 11 o'clock this evening but come back tomorrow to debate only this issue, come back Wednesday to debate only this issue, come back Thursday so that we can have a procedural vote finally to force the Senator from Massachusetts, the Senator from Iowa and the Senator from Wisconsin to give up and yield to the overwhelming will of the U.S. Senate.

Is that the understanding of the Senator from Arizona of what is going on here?

Mr. MCCAIN. That is my understanding.

Also, as you know, the House did vote on this very issue. There was a majority vote in the other body that approved of this legislation with the provision that the Senator from Massachusetts found objectionable.

I am sorry the Senator from Massachusetts and the Senator from Iowa have left the floor. So I will refrain from belaboring them further because I think it would be unfair to do so.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. MCCAIN. I yield to the Senator from Texas as for a question.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. I would like to ask the Senator from Arizona, besides the fact that we are going to have to come back and debate this for 2 more days, if there isn't another point; that is, what happens tomorrow? Tomorrow is October 1.

I wonder how many States have airports with runways being built that might have to stop that construction. I wonder if there are air traffic control systems that are being improved that will not have the money tomorrow because we did not vote on this bill. I wonder if the Senator from Arizona knows there are some real issues that are going to be determined because there is not funding tomorrow for airport safety and terrorism and other very important airport issues that we have been talking about, as the Senator from Arizona knows, for months and months and months here trying to make sure that we fight terrorism, that we allow Americans to fly in safety and tomorrow, October 1, is the first day of the fiscal year.

I just wondered if the Senator from Arizona would like to discuss what we are going to miss tomorrow and the next day while we play games on the Senate floor.

Mr. MCCAIN. I thank the Senator from Texas for raising that question because I think it is a very good one. We are talking about Tuesday, Wednesday, and a final vote on Thursday. We are talking about 3 days here. I intend to find out, between now and when we commence debate again tomorrow, how many projects, indeed, will have to be terminated for 3 days, how many projects will not be able to be started because for some reason we are dragging out the inevitable.

We all know there will be an overwhelming vote, probably end up with a voice vote once we vote cloture, I would imagine. And also as important is that we need to move forward as quickly as possible on these antiterrorism measures. In all due respect, I remember being belabored and beaten up because I did not support an increase in the minimum wage, that somehow I was cruel and inhumane to working men and women in America.

That is an allegation that may be true or not, depending on your philosophy, but I do not see how you can be concerned about the safety of people who are flying in the airlines if you are going to delay for no good reason the antiterrorism measures that we need to get to work on immediately. I fear and so do other people—certainly the Vice President's commission, certainly the task force that the Senator from Texas was a key and important member of in recommending the antiterrorism measures which are included in this bill—that there should be delay in moving forward with them as quickly as possible.

Look, again, I feel rather badly because the Senator from Massachusetts is not in the Chamber, nor is the Senator from Iowa, to respond. So I want to be very careful, and perhaps we will be able to reinitiate this debate and discussion tomorrow or the next day or the next day. But there was some very harsh rhetoric used about this side of the aisle when we were debating the minimum wage bill about insensitive, uncaring, and those kinds of things. Some of it I really regretted hearing and I thought it lowered the level of the debate and discourse in the Senate.

I have to say I cannot think of any good reason why we should not vote tomorrow, vote cloture on this bill tomorrow and move forward, why we should drag it out for 3 days and not have these projects, many of which the Senator from Texas referred to and which, by the way, I will get a list of and have read and included in the RECORD tomorrow. Why we do not move forward with those escapes me.

I want to point out one thing again for the RECORD. The Senator from Texas was involved in a task force convened immediately after the TWA tragedy and made some very in-depth studies and came up with some recommendations, which, by the way, I am very happy to say, the Vice President's task force came up with almost identically. I am very grateful for her efforts because if it had not been for that, some of these provisions would not be in this legislation which is so important. So we owe a great debt to the Senator from Texas.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. BROWN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado is recognized.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I rise not to prolong our proceedings; they have gone on far too long, but I wanted to express my thanks to the Senator from Arizona for his willingness to consider the problems with Denver's sixth runway. Denver is not only the newest major airport in the Nation but the biggest and perhaps one of the biggest in the world. It does need a sixth runway. I support the sixth runway. It is integral, I think, not only for operations in severe weather but integral for international flights out of the airport.

Mr. President, I have had a concern as the sixth runway has gone forward, and that is the record of Denver of not accepting the lowest bid when they contract out for projects. It strikes me we all have a responsibility, including within our States and districts, to make sure the public money is not wasted.

In requesting the GAO audit of the practices that led to the huge cost overruns at the Denver airport, we discovered, as reported by the GAO, that there were a significant number of contracts which were let for construction at the airport that were not given to the lowest qualified bidder.

Here, Mr. President, let me emphasize these are screened and deemed qualified, and there were a large number, significant number of contracts, I

should say, that were not given to the lowest bidder who was qualified.

I had asked the GAO to determine how much money that cost the taxpayers, how much difference there was between the lowest bid and the higher bid that the airport in Denver accepted, and they were unable to come up with that. The information was simply not available as to how much money the taxpayers had lost because they had not taken the lowest qualified bid.

I give that background because my concern about the sixth runway is that that practice may be repeated on the sixth runway construction grants, and I think we would be remiss if we gave money for construction to that project which did not insist on either the lowest bid or, if they choose not to take the lowest bid—and there may be circumstances that justify that—at least they would disclose the amount of money that the bid they accepted exceeded the lowest bid.

Frankly, I believe disclosing that would be a strong incentive for officials who get Federal money to look for the best bargain for the taxpayer.

Here is what has happened. The amendment I offered—it was adopted on this floor—that required disclosure when you do not take the lowest bid of the major contracts was lost in conference. The House would not go along with it. I asked the City of Denver to give me a letter committing to disclose the amount of money of the bid that they accepted for the sixth runway exceeds the lowest bid, and they have declined to do so.

Mr. President, I cannot in good conscience ask this Congress to send money for the sixth runway in Denver without at least a disclosure by the city of how much money they leave on the table or how much money it cost the taxpayers.

So I am sad tonight. The Senator from Arizona listened to our concern. He was willing to help out Denver to try to work with us. He bent over backwards to try to be helpful, to look for avenues where this could be corrected and the sixth runway could go ahead, but I was not able to bring to the Senator from Arizona or this body a commitment from Denver that said they will disclose the facts when they get the lowest bid.

Mr. President, in light of that, unfortunately, the sixth runway is lost for this year. As I leave this body, I know it will be considered again next year. But, Mr. President, I hope future Congresses do not hand out money for someone who is not going to take the lowest bid, or at least disclose how much over that lowest bid they took.

Mr. President, I might point out that what happens in some of these cases is that the contractor who gets the bid, when he has not been the lowest bidder, then gets hit up for paying contributions from the politicians who ran for office who were involved in letting the bids. I think it is crystal clear to everyone what is involved here. You turn down the lowest bidder, you give the contract to someone who did not deserve it, at least in terms of the bidding process, and then you go and ask that contractor for money. I think there is not any doubt in anybody's mind who understands this situation what is going on there.

I do not think we ought to let it happen. I do not think we ought to hand out money without at least insisting that it be disclosed. I appreciate the efforts of the Senator from Arizona. I appreciate the efforts of the Senator from South Dakota, to work on this.

I am sad that we have not been able to go ahead with the sixth runway. But, Mr. President, this is an issue we should not ignore.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Colorado. I want to tell him that I had no idea that it was not a matter of public record when taxpayers' dollars are being used, as to what the bids were and who made the low bid and who made the high bid and what, in fact, was the entire process of ascertaining and awarding these bids. They should be open to public scrutiny. For the life of me, I cannot understand any rationale, when it is taxpayers' dollars being used, why this procedure and process should be hidden from public view.

I want to assure the Senator from Colorado that I view it, not only as something that I would want to do, it is something that I feel obligated to do, and that is to follow up on this issue next year. I do not know all the details of this matter in regards to Denver International Airport but let me tell the Senator from Colorado, as he knows as well as I do, when processes like this are kept from public view, it lends itself to procedures and results which are not always in the public's interest. That is why we demand open disclosure of bidding in the Federal process. Frankly, it should not happen anywhere without an open and complete accounting to the taxpayers for the taxpayers' dollars uses.

If they are using private money, if someone donates the money to the airport and says use this however you want to—fine. If they do not want to describe how it is being used or who gets the bid, that is fine also.

But, as long as it is taxpayers dollars—and correct me if I am wrong, some $4 billion has gone into the construction of Denver International Airport, I would ask the Senator from Colorado? Then I think, obviously, the best value for the dollar should be gained, not only for the people of Colorado, but for taxpayers all over America.

So, I again thank my dear, dear friend from Colorado. Frankly, I view him as our conscience. I am not sure what we are going to do without him. Everyone is replaceable around here, but he is one that I think is far harder to replace than most. I appreciate, again, his commitment on this effort.

Mr. President, before going through closing down the Senate, I want to again thank my friend from South Dakota, Senator PRESSLER, the chairman of the Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee, which I will do again at the end of this process on Thursday. And I hope it is earlier.

Senator PRESSLER has been committed to this process. He has been actively involved. His leadership in the conference, his leadership as we went through this two year-long process, was absolutely critical and vital. I am grateful for his leadership and his example of conscientiousness, that he sets for all of us.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period for morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

DEMOCRATIC TRENDS IN ASIA

Mr. PELL. Mr. President, as the 20th century draws to a close, we all find ourselves musing and marveling over the changes history has brought the world in this millennium. Human ingenuity has brought astounding advances in technology and in medicine. Society has also faced revolutionary changes and our forbearers who welcomed the year 1900 would little recognize the lives their descendants lead today. In politics, the 20th century brought new ways of thinking about the social contract between citizens and their government. Some, like fascism and communism, were dangerous and ultimately discredited failures. But democracy, the great experiment our Founding Fathers created on the shores of the New World, has not just endured but spread around the world. It has been my great delight to watch democracy begin to spread in Asia.

Some would argue that it is not natural that democracy would grow in Asia. Some Asian leaders and intellectuals have actively resisted the idea that democracy be a political option for the region. They have argued that Asian values—loosely Confucian, authoritarian, and family- or group-focused rather than individually-focused—are inconsistent with democracy. These leaders further argue that the stunning economic success of the East Asian ''Tigers'' is specifically due to their more closed political systems and to their emphasis on social stability at the expense of individual voice and choice. Moreover, these same leaders will point to legitimate problems in many Western societies—such as drug abuse, homelessness, violent crimes, to name a few—are the direct result of an overly permissive society that emphasizes individual freedom over social stability. But I believe that these cultural arguments distort reality and are