

BOB KRONE's QUALITY ESSAYS*

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Inland Empire
Section
The Global Voice of Quality™

"Quality and the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse"

In the 6th Chapter of St. John's Revelation, the last book in the New Testament of the Bible, John sees the signs of his times. He sees the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse. The first horse is white and his rider carried a bow and went forth conquering under a counterfeit religion. The second horse was red and its rider had a great sword to kill and replace peace with war. The third horse was black and its rider spread famine and pestilence. The fourth horse was pale and his rider was death followed by Hades.¹



Those four beasts and their riders still bring misery and sorrow around the world. Dr. Lester R. Brown, Founder of the Worldwatch Institute and the Earth Policy Institute, and one of the world's most influential thinkers and authors, has been following the hoofbeats of the four horsemen and the issues threatening human progress for the past sixty years. He sees "*The World on the Edge.*"² His message is to mobilize to save civilization by changing directions:

"Time is running short, but we can pull back from the edge. While security is a major concern for the world's governments, we have inherited a definition of security from the last century, one dominated by two wars and the Cold War. Rather than armed aggression, today we are at risk from the fallout of climate change, population growth, water shortages, poverty, rising food prices and failing states. Military spending worldwide exceeds \$1.5 trillion annually, yet traditional defense outlays do little to address these true threats to our future."

¹ Thanks to the Book of Revelation and to Billy Graham's book, 1983. *Approaching Hoofbeats: The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse*, World Books.

American Society for Quality leadership also sees these needs (see my Quality Essay #5, *Quality for the World*). Improvement of products and services has been ASQ's mission for half a century. Social responsibility and global quality improvement are now recognized needs. If the changing of direction and mobilization advocated by Lester Brown does not occur improvements of products and services could be irrelevant to global society. One month after publication of Lester Brown's book with the above quote states of the Middle East failed.

So what should Quality Managers and Quality Scientists do? Here are my personal recommendations:

1. Define Social Responsibility as fixing existing incapacity for ethical and effective public and private governance on a global scope to meet human needs. Then create ASQ Goals to address that huge need.
2. Invent ways to reverse the downward trend of the ratio of positive construction (the numerator) to waste and destruction (the denominator). That would be ASQ's macro vision and commitment to Continuous Improvement. This would expand the scope of traditional approaches to that classic Quality Sciences tool (see {HYPERLINK "http://www.asq711.org/QualityClassics"}).

American Society for Quality leaders and members have proven the critically important role of Quality over the past sixty years. Implementation of Quality Management, and its set of validated tools, has produced economic and social progress under huge adversities through the last half of the 20th Century. Superimposing the creative thinking that achieved that progress can achieve even greater outcomes in the 21st Century. Human survival being the ultimate.

² Lester R. Brown, 2011. *World on the Edge: Environment and Economic Collapse*, Amazon.com.

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