AN INCIDENT OF WHICH YOU SHOULD BE AWARE

Mr. Kevin W. Toomy
President and Chief Operating Officer
Ruth's Chris Steak House
Ruth's Hospitality Group, Inc.
400 International Parkway, #325

Heathrow, FL 32746-5500

Re: An incident of which you should be aware.

Dear Mr. Toomy,

As you are reading this, so are tens of thousands of people on the Internet.

This past Monday evening, May 10th, with my wife at a dinner business meeting I decided to treat myself to a steak at Ruth's Chris - which I consider the best steak in America this side of Peter Luger's in Brooklyn.

I arrived at the Ruth's Chris in Tyson's Corner, Virginia (8521 Leesburg Pike), a little after nine. My server was a very nice and competent lady named Shannon. As it was late, the place was fairly empty: two fellows in a booth across from me, a quartet at a table to my left, another group to my right, and a third group that I could hear but not see.

Shannon took my order and soon afterwards, both the group on my right and left departed. Only the group that I couldn't see (plus the two fellows in the booth) were left and now that the other folks had gone, I noticed how loud they were. Really loud. As I listened, the language they were speaking was unmistakable. It was Arabic.

They got so loud that I asked Shannon if the manager could please ask these people to not talk quite so loud. I made my request as politely as I could. The loudness continued unabated. Finally I made my request of Shannon a second time, and she informed me that the two fellows in the booth had now made the same request, so she would have the manager talk to the group again.

The loudness continued and in fact increased. I was served my steak by another server, a man whom I asked what was going on. He said the people had had several bottles of wine and the manager could not get them to be quiet. I said, "But they are Moslems and shouldn't be drinking."

He frowned. "No they are not Moslem. I am Moslem so I know. They are Jews."

Startled, I replied, "I have traveled through most every country in the Arab world, and know the difference between Arabic and Hebrew. Those people are speaking Arabic." He shrugged and left.

I attempted to enjoy my steak, but the people got even louder. Finally, I stood up and walked over to where I could see them. There was an older man, a man I'd guess in his 30s, a woman about his age, and a young boy of around 10. From about 12 feet away, I said to them, "Excuse me - could you please not talk so loud?"

Instantly, the man in his 30s looked at me and started shouting - and I mean *shouting* - "F**k you! F**k you!" I was not prepared for this, so in reaction I responded, "Be quiet!" He stood up and yelled - and I mean yelled - "You are a racist! A f**king racist!"

This elicited a big smile from me. "No sale," I said. "Calling Americans racists doesn't work anymore."

So he took to yelling, "We are rich! We will sue you and put you in jail!" He got out his blackberry to take my picture. To block his picture, I put my hand in front of my face and gave him the one finger salute. Telling him to be quiet once more, I returned to my table.

A minute later, he walked around to stand in front of my table to yell obscenities at me some more. I stood up to face him and asked where he was from. "Iraq," was his reply.

I blinked and knew I had to control myself. It was either that or put him in the hospital.

It took every picogram of willpower I possessed to refrain from saying, *"Over four thousand American soldiers died to liberate your country, enable you to become wealthy and come to my country, the country that brought freedom to yours, so you could behave this way?"* - and then beat the living hell out of him.

Not that I really cared about not hurting him. It was that I pictured the police and massive ensuing hassle and decided this drunken Arab wasn't worth it.

So I told him that Mohammed in the Koran ordered Moslems not to drink, and he was a good example of why Mohammed said that. Then I ordered him to go back to his table, sit down, shut up, and sober up.

He backed away, and as he went back to his table he yelled a string of obscenities so disgustingly foul that I cannot repeat them even with asterisks. I could not believe my ears. I have been to almost every country on the planet. I am 66 years old. And I have never ever experienced or witnessed behavior in a public restaurant as vulgar and vile as this man's.

All I did was give him a smirk and waved him away with the back of my hand.

I resumed my attempt to enjoy my steak and glass of wine. The Iraqis were talking loudly again, but in English to someone whom I presumed was the manager. "We are millionaires!" I heard the woman say. "We can buy this restaurant right now with cash!" The man proclaimed he had spent "two thousand dollars" on the dinner and wine and would now refuse to pay. Etc., etc. I tuned them out.

I had not finished when the manager came to see me. He identified himself as such but did not give his name. He said, "I must ask you to leave because you have insulted our guests."

I looked at him in total incredulity. "*I* insulted *them*??" I responded quietly. I did not raise my voice. "You heard what they said to me. You saw their behavior. And you are asking *me* to leave? Are you out of your mind? Look me in the eye. *Are you out of your mind?* I have a junkyard dog lawyer who will tear you apart. So I suggest you leave me alone."

He walked away and I never saw him again. I finished my meal, exchanged a few pleasantries with Shannon who was so nice, and so apologetic to me for what had happened that she made an "executive decision" to waive my bill, and left.

I am writing to you to inform you of this incident because of the complete incompetence of your manager on duty at the time, who did nothing to prevent it, and then had the outrageous temerity to blame it on me.

That Arab nouveau-riche trash come to the country that liberated theirs at so much priceless cost in our soldiers' lives and be allowed to engage in the most repulsive obscenity-laden behavior in one of your restaurants I would think infuriate you.

And I would think that you would ensure that a manager who defends that behavior never will work for your company ever again. Oh, yes -- and that should apply to the anti-Semitic server who claimed his drunken fellow Moslems were Jews.

Sincerely,

Jack Wheeler