

FIGHTS FOR FREEDOM

Resist the fever of patriotism, support your rights

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Staff Writer

The terrorist attack on the World Trade Center is evil because it killed innocent civilians; people like you and me just going about their daily lives. To propose a war on Afghanistan would achieve the same end.

Some people say that the United States knew that this was going to happen, but whether the U.S. government knew that this was going to happen ahead of time or not is not at issue. What is at issue, as I see it, is how we the people will react to government policy.

To cite a couple of examples outside of war, I would like to point out the U.S. warship's bombardment of the Mexican city of Vera Cruz in 1914, which killed 100 Mexican civilians because the Mexican government wouldn't apologize for arresting some American sailors. More recently, in 1986, President Reagan sent planes over the Libyan capital city of Tripoli after its dictator and suspected terrorist, Muammar Khadafi. Khadafi wasn't killed, but around one hundred civilians were killed when the planes dropped bombs on the crowded city. There are more examples like those ones to be found.

There are also the wartime acts of terrorism carried out by the United States. I question

the 'military necessity' of such bombings on civilians as those and Nagasaki. In all of these cases, civilians were the tar-



carried out on the cities of Dresden and Tokyo, and the atomic bombings of Hiroshima

gets. Let us not forget the massacres of villages during the Vietnam War. How about all of

the civilians killed by the U.S. military during the Gulf War, when such targets as hospitals, electricity, and water supplies were bombed. These were not of military importance, but the civilians needed them. Now I hear that the United States wants to avoid killing civilians, but during the Gulf War didn't they claim that their so-called smart bombs weren't killing civilians?

Even more frightening for me are the implications here at home. I am reminded of George Orwell's 1984 - "It was not desirable that the [people] should have strong political feelings. All that was required of them was a primitive patriotism which could be appealed to whenever it was necessary to make them accept longer working hours or shorter rations." Or in this case, the official repealment of rights that were only dubiously promised anyway. I worry about my human right to speak my mind without being brutalized, imprisoned or assassinated.

During the Gulf War, the Pentagon had exercised "virtual total control...over the American press", according to a joint statement by fifteen Washington News Bureau chiefs. Now we hear of an anti-terrorism fanaticism reminiscent of the anti-Communist McCarthyism of the 1950s. Where does it stop? Will some anti-terrorist version of the

House Un-American Activities Committee arrest me for speaking my mind about terrorism, under suspicion that I am a terrorist collaborator?

I don't know if anyone else has been watching, but worldwide, governments seem to be cracking down on their own people, and there is no reason to exclude the United States from that. To quote Sub Commandante Insurgente Marcos, of the Zapatista National Liberation Army in Mexico, "More or less rapidly, national societies are being militarized, and armies supposedly created to protect their borders from foreign enemies are turning their cannons and rifles around and aiming them inward." Let us not forget that on May 4, 1970, National Guardsmen fired into a crowd of student protesters against the Vietnam War at Kent State University, killing four and wounding nine leaving one paralyzed for life.

Don't let others think for you. It is easy to be taken by the media-generated fear and hatred, but please resist the fever of patriotism. This issue threatens the life and freedom of humans here and humans in Afghanistan, so it is important to be careful what actions you will tolerate from the U.S. government. I honestly don't know what can be done to prevent terrorism, but the loss of our freedom here and the loss of innocent lives in Afghanistan are intolerable.

Standing tall, proud patriotism emerges amid the ashes

FRANK JORDAN
News Editor

The terrorist attacks that occurred in New York City, Washington D.C. and the Pennsylvania countryside on Sept. 11 have shocked the citizens of this great country into a sense of newfound patriotism. While this can be nothing but good, the only question that I have is "Where was this sense of patriotism on September 10 and before?"

As members of this great society, Americans have taken for granted for many, many years the freedoms that are guaranteed in the U.S. Constitution. The freedoms of speech, religion, assembly and print have been used and abused by citizens up to the point that when any of these freedoms are threatened, either by our own government, or by exterior forces (such as terrorists), we will vigorously defend our very right to exercise these freedoms. This is where I think patriotism comes into play. The

love for one's country and its way of life is something not guaranteed by any official document, but something that each one of us as Americans feels in our heart and soul.

The United States has not seen this kind of outpouring of love for our nation and its members of our armed forces since the end of Operation Desert Storm in February 1991. The way that

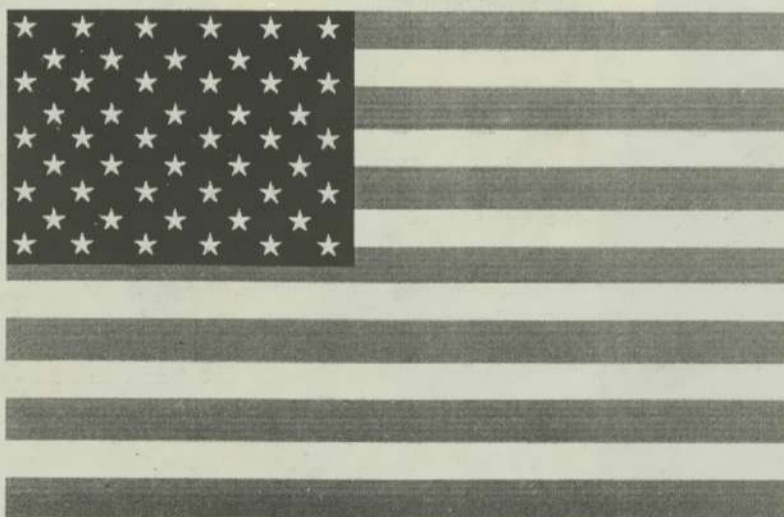
Americans responded to the troops before, during and at the end of that conflict had not been seen since the end of World War II. But as soon as

their busy lives and forgot about their country as a whole, unless the country was trying to do something wrong to them, to mess up those daily lives.

Now, the attacks of Sept. 11 have regvanized our efforts and our attentions to the eradication of the terrorist threat, not only in the United States, but in far-off places. What

thing about this country is that we will not back down from a fight. From the beginnings of this country until the present day, Americans have correctly had an "us versus them" mentality. Everyone around the world really does want to be like us, and it is up to us to keep this feeling alive.

Fly the Stars and Stripes, sing the national anthem and "God Bless America" and support an American service person who may very soon be marching off to war. As a veteran of the United States Army, I know firsthand what those symbols and songs mean to me. To fight for a country that stands behind you, no matter what its citizens' feelings toward war and the military are, is the single greatest feeling that a person can have. The only thing that I ask is that the citizens of the greatest country of the world don't forget what living here really means. And not to ever forget it, even in the hustle and bustle of our daily lives.



God Bless America

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America needs to do has not been clearly defined. But the resolve is there. The very best

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