

Embrace America's diversity

Since the Declaration of Independence was penned, people have looked to the United States for liberty and freedom, but since the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, the people of the United States have been finding new avenues for their rage. People of different colors

who appear to be of Muslim origin have been openly harassed and attacked for the color of their skin and the obscure possibility that they had something to do with these attacks.

We need to stop the hate. Granted, the people that flew the planes killing thousands of people and injuring so many were filled with hatred, though they believed it to be for a greater good or God. I am sorry so many lives were lost and so many more affected. But to place blame where it does not belong only fans the flames of further reper-

cussions of these actions. Muslims are not the culprits, not any more than Caucasians, Hispanics, or African-Americans. Have



Say It Loud
&
Proud!

Salena De La Cruz
Opinion Editor

we not learned from our previous mistakes such as the Salem Witch Trials, where so many were wrongly accused.

I pity the people who are harassing and attacking people who just wanted a chance at freedom and liberty. These are our brothers and sisters. How dare you make yourself judge, jury and executioner for people that have not been found guilty by a court of our great nation.

I have heard so many reported attacks that I shudder at the thought. I am of Mexican descent and my skin is brown in

color. Will I be subject to such attacks next? Though I was born and raised in Oregon, I sometimes wonder. When will I or someone I love be harassed or hurt because of their skin color? When will it all end? The only way I ever see this happening is when people realize that you cut us open we'd all bleed the same.

My friend's sister married a French-Arab and he is Muslim. Her grandmother called her dad after the attacks and said if she didn't leave her husband they would basically disown her. Family is supposed to be there for you and if they won't, then who will? It's that kind of bigotry that is fanning these flames.

I pray that my American brothers and sisters will unite against this hatred and demand it to stop. I am only one voice, but one voice with a cause. One voice can turn so many others by just opening their ears. If you see someone being harassed or attacked, speak out. You could be the one voice that is heard.

Belief: an idea worth fighting for

JOEL SHERPERT
Contributing Writer

It is a commonly held dictum that ideologies and dogmas are the cause of wars, oppression and suffering in general. To believe in something, particularly something religious, is increasingly associated with cruelty and evil, until belief itself is suspect.

Our nation is even now waging war on a people whose beliefs stand in stark contrast to the majority of ours. There seems to be very little effort in the general public to understand these people. A national agnosticism instead reigns: "Why would anyone want to harm America?" is the baffled, shoulder-shrugging slogan of our leaders and their parrots in the media and populace.

The label of fanatic or madman rolls easily off our lips, while we forget that our national history, beginning with its founding, is predicated upon that very power of human conviction. But we are not charitable enough to extend that right to others. Leave aside for a moment the despicability of slaying civilians on commercial aircraft; we have no tolerance or understanding for even purely military acts of resistance, such as last year's "terrorist" attack on

an American destroyer. We are unwilling to accept or understand war on the behalf of anyone's beliefs—except our own.

It is perhaps the veil of security (recently shattered), the long years of shelter from many life-and-death difficulties, that make us ask, "why would people kill?" The late songwriter

Rich Mullins once wrote, "I wasn't too sold on the idea that disbelief in war would bring about peace...I could easily imagine wanting to fight another human being. I could imagine hunger and I could imagine (or, more honestly, I would remember) greed. I could imagine rage over injustice and I could imagine honest (even if mistaken) fear...I can imagine, remember and even presently see a lot of things that would make someone want to fight another person. And worse, I suspect that a world emptied of these things would be no more peaceful—it would just be more dead."

If a thing is worth having, then it is worth fighting for, even at times dying for. This may be the

basis of war but is also the foundation for the best things that have been established in this or any civilization. It may also one day be the pavement on the road to long sought-after peace. Mullins continues, "The person who doesn't believe in gravity is no more apt to fly than the person who does believe in it. Chances are, the person who believes in gravity...is more likely to discover the secret of flight than the one who denies the reality of weight."

Belief is a positive thing, something to go toward, is worth more than the most powerful of denials and refutations. Once a foundation of belief is secure, the greatest of waves may not batter it down.

We as a culture, however, do not understand this force of conviction. Our "beliefs" are heartfelt, even vehement, but they are shadowy and even malleable. We do not understand the current of ideas, or the viewpoints of others, especially not of others overseas, in lands vilified by the press and warred against by the state. We do not understand the Muslim religiously or the Middle-Easterner politically—do not even understand him enough to disagree.

We once took up arms, once gave up our lives, for an ideal. Until we understand this conviction in others, we will never be at peace, with them, or with ourselves.

"Belief is a positive thing, something to go toward..."

Joel Shempert
Contributing Writer

TERROR TRACKING

11/12/01

NEW YORK-A plane crashes into a suburban area with more than 260 people on board. Terrorism has not been ruled out. Investigations continue.

11/10/01

WASHINGTON-Airline passengers welcome troops, but hope for more security at airports.

NEW YORK-Charges to be dropped against firefighters involved in clash with police at Ground Zero.

WASHINGTON-Polls: Support for military action remains high; few want suspension of military action during Ramadan.

WASHINGTON-Veterans groups ride wave of patriotism in wake of terrorist attacks to boost membership.

AFGHANISTAN-Bin Laden claims to have nuclear weapons in interview with Pakistani newspaper.

FRANCE-French agents detain five in anti-terrorist sweep.

AFGHANISTAN-Taliban acknowledge they lost key city of Mazar-e-Sharif to opposition.

AFGHANISTAN-The Taliban acknowledged Saturday that they lost the city of Mazar-e-Sharif, and an opposition commander said an

attack on the capital, Kabul, would start within days.

WASHINGTON-Secretary of State Powell suggests turning Kabul into an "open city."

AFGHANISTAN-Northern Alliance is able to oust the ruling militia from Kabul, Secretary of State Colin Powell said.

NEW YORK-Woman charged with helping hijackers establish residency pleads guilty to unrelated charge.

NEW YORK-Czech Prime Minister says terrorist Atta contacted Iraqi agent about a bomb plot in Europe.

NEW YORK-Official count of dead and missing from terrorist attacks confirmed.

NEW YORK-Judge orders tests at post office, but refuses to close nearby distribution center.

NEW YORK-A federal judge ordered anthrax testing at a huge Manhattan post office.

NEW YORK-New Jersey finds anthrax at four more post offices linked to Hamilton processing center.

NEW YORK-Four New Jersey post offices were closed for cleaning after tests found traces of anthrax in mail-sorting areas of the buildings.

Information compiled from KATU sources as well as The Oregonian.

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