

**KEN DEMPS**

After the September 11 terrorist act in New York City and Washington, D.C., I began a preplanned vacation to the San Francisco bay and delta area. I decided to use the vacation to observe the area's reaction.

While driving down I-5 I saw flags on cars, trucks, fences, barns, dogs and buildings everywhere.

In Rogue River, Oregon, the downtown area had an American flag every ten feet or so. Quite a sight.

I met 'Peaceniks' who had just returned from the Berkeley peace rallies and who spoke in low tones to not upset any of the flagwavers.

In Marin County you usually see a VW van with a *Do A Random Act Of Kindness* bumper sticker on the back bumper. Now next to it is an American flag.

The acts of September 11 were a sick, unholy thing to do and someone or something should pay, but I don't want the U.S. to go to war.

An invasion of Afghanistan would be a large mistake. The Russians couldn't win there and they live right next door. In 1838 the British tried to conquer the country. They invaded with a force of 17,000 men and only one man returned.

So all I'm saying is "Give Peace A Chance."

**FRANK MANGELSDORF**

I think we suffered the largest attack in our history, much more costly than Pearl Harbor.

Any nation has a right to defend itself, especially something that big --- beyond just peaceful negotiations.

But the response needs to be measured to the extent that we have to go after the terrorist organization itself. It will take military action --- these guys aren't going to walk into our embassies and give themselves up.

We have to avoid collateral casualties, which we usually do. The big difference between us and terrorists is they attack women and children and we try to avoid this.

**'HIPPIE JIM' HEDFORD**

The evening of September 10 I found myself tuning in the 11 o'clock news, waiting patiently through the whole broadcast, yearning for some national or international news, only to be left wanting... not a single mention of either. Whether a natural inclination of being news-starved or a premonition of the coming events, in hindsight I realize that a little knowledge can be a dangerous thing. Therefore I disclaim my opinion as being biased as a result of living within a society with no regard or interest in history as it really happened. It is as if our educational system has trained us to condense all the subtle nuance of delicate negotiation down to the 3-page *Cliff's Notes* version of the event... shades of gray made out to be black or white. good guys won, bad guys lost or vice versa.

So now G.B.Jr sides us with the "good" guys and announces we are involved in a "crusade" against the "bad" guys. Maybe Oliver Stone could remake a movie depicting the last crusade we led into Palestine and perhaps Americans would learn the Crusaders were not just an '80s vocal group.

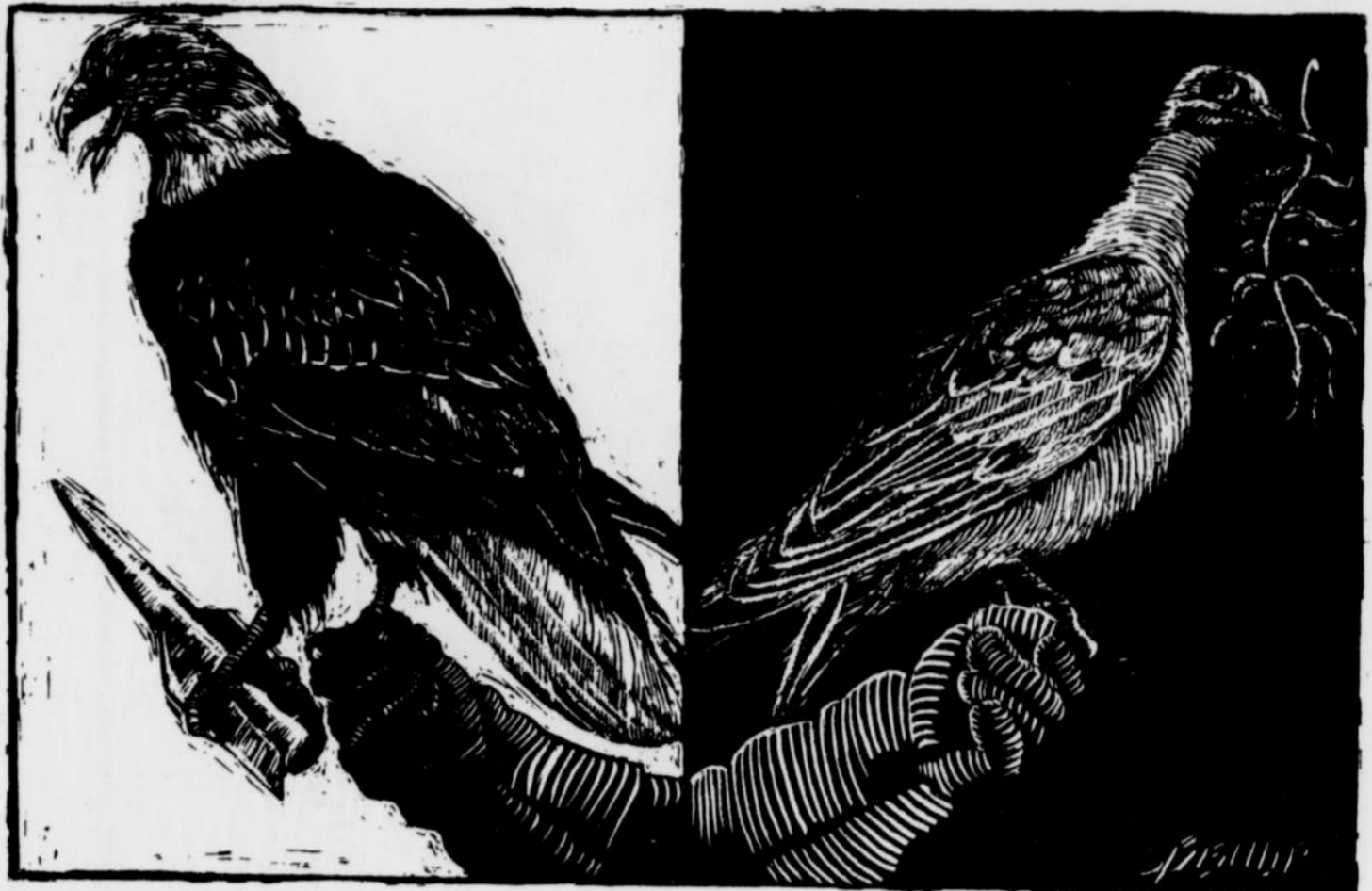
**JO LUMPKIN BROWN**

The first casualty of war is the truth. On all levels by all sides.

We as Americans wonder where all this hate could have come from.

Wake up. Wake up America. Find your soul. Remember yourself. There is truth in self-inventory. There is truth in world history and universal time. Our world will never be the same. Thank God. We still have another chance to change.

I was painting on a lift at Star of the Sea School on September 11. As events unfolded I came off the lift and went into the chapel to cry and pray *Now what do I do?* I go back to painting, the last lettering on an old building. The phrase "For God & Country". As I put fresh gold paint into the last letters I cried. As I finished all below were surprised. "Was that always there? I never noticed that before!" New point. New resolve.



RANDY MACK BISHOP

**DUTCH GREELMAN & CYNDY LEE**

As terrorism experts, take it from us, the biggest terrorist threat is in your mind.

If you want to protect yourself and your loved ones, move on with your life and continue evolving.

**RON WHITE**

Anyone who can get rid of New York cops is my hero. The only persons I feel sorry for are the poor window washers, not the day traders.

Forget the \$5 million reward for Bin Laden. I'll talk to the IRA and for only \$5-grand we'll go get the terrorists.

**EVAN LEWIS**

The real experts on how to deal with this are the Israelis. We should be talking to them. They have been dealing with terrorism the past 50 years.

**PAUL EVALT (9EX)**

It is good karma to seek justice for the God loving people of the USA, except that I don't believe in the death penalty. We should trade Osama Bin Laden's life for terrorist activity secrets. Instead of killing him, I think the USA will find justice by capturing him.

**PATRICIA LONGNECKER**

Samuel Johnson said what is on my mind:  
"Patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel."

**MICHAEL LINK**

I am totally baffled. I don't know what to think. I don't expect our nation to act any differently than it is, but where my heart is I'm pretty confused.

I think the government is using this as an opportunity to squeeze our civil liberties. The FBI warns us about terrorists --- my daughter asks why doesn't the FBI do something about it. The media is making us paranoid.

We are practicing passive/aggressiveness. We're dropping bombs with one hand and bread with the other.

Is capturing Osama Bin Laden going to solve the terrorist problem? I doubt it. On the positive side, we're paying attention to other cultures right now, trying to understand what would make a 3rd world culture risk what is happening. It has to be either insanity or frustration. What is revenge: what are we retaliating for? Is that going to bring back the dead? I don't know anyone who got revenge to say revenge is sweet.

Are we the parent of the world now? Our leaders think that's our new role. Now they can create puppet governments to stop 'The Evil One.' What is this, a comic book?

A teenage girl said to me, "Good thing you're too old to be drafted." Then she asked if she will be drafted. Kids seem to perceive this is like a war movie, nation against nation. It's not going to be like that at all. It's going to be slaughter, not war.

**MASON MEYER**

On KGO on September 11 at about 3 in the morning --- three hours before the attack --- radio host Ray Taliferio had been discussing George Bush's low public rating and made the statement that the only way this "selected President" was going to get his ratings up in the polls was get us involved in a war.

I still believe he is not elected, so how can we be sure he is following the proper course of action in this situation? I am a patriotic American. I want to get behind my President, but I think of Vietnam veterans and how many were killed at the same time the country was lied to about the war. If I smell a rat, it's because I think there is one.

I don't want to rush to judgment. I want to see the right thing done. I just don't want to fall for a story like Vietnam. I don't think America should be lied to again.

The people who perpetrated the attacks on the U.S. should be held accountable. We should get the right people.

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# HAND OF TERROR

On September 11, America awoke to a day that much the world is long familiar with, a day of unspeakable horror. All the blood that was spilled on our soil that day is but a drop in a river of blood and terror that flows around and around our fragile blue ball. If our world has been rocked, it is not because of the magnitude of human suffering, it is because the magnitude of suffering has happened to us instead of someone else. It would give me the greatest pleasure if I could rage at the clear injustice of such a cowardly attack on our "freedom loving" nation, but I can't. I can feel for the victims, for their suffering, for their losses, but as an American I cannot claim a moral ground higher than the perpetrators of these attacks.

Our nation in its more distant past brutally enslaved Africans, killing millions and forcing many more to live lives denied any rights or freedoms. We also waged a war to eradicate the native peoples of this continent.

In more recent times our nation has become one of the chief exporters of terror around the world. This should come as no surprise for we as a nation have only recently guaranteed most freedoms to most of our own citizens. There are those among us struggling to take some of those freedoms away and deny us other freedoms that our modern understanding aptly argue we should have. So yes, presently the citizens of this nation receive some moderate protection of their rights from our government, but millions of citizens of other nations have seen not the protective hand of Uncle Sam but its opposite, the hand the slave child knew, the hand the "Indian savages" knew, the hand of brutal oppression and terror. For an example of this hand we could look most anywhere in the world, but Latin America, specifically Guatemala, gives the clearest evidence of our nation's true love of freedom.

In 1931 Guatemala was ruled by Jorge Ubico who idolized Hitler and Mussolini and brutally subjugated his people, but he was generous to U.S. corporations and U.S. military leaders, and so our "profit" loving government repeatedly praised Jorge Ubico. In 1944 the Guatemala dictatorship was overthrown and Jacobo Arbenz came to power. Arbenz's government quickly set in motion many social reforms aimed at giving relief to a terribly poor people. For the first time the Guatemalan government was giving land to the indigenous people of the country instead of murdering them and taking it away. Unfortunately, Arbenz didn't play very well with

Washington. Strangely, his government felt the Guatemalan people should receive the fruits of their labor and the wealth of their nation's resources, not U.S. corporations. The CIA and some American corporations backed a coup and Arbenz's government toppled.

The next four decades were the bloodiest for the Guatemalan people. A U.S. backed Guatemalan government (U.S. financial aid, intelligence and troops) would kill an estimated 200,000 people. The Finca San Francisco massacre was, according to priests, almost typical of treatment of people all across Guatemala: 300 people were killed. The women were raped and shot or burned to death in houses put to torch. The old people were hacked to death with machetes. The children were disemboweled. The last child kept screaming after being disemboweled so a Guatemalan soldier grabbed a thick stick and bashed his head. I will stop there: it gets worse, and was worse in places all over Guatemala as late as the 1990s and Washington did nothing but sing the praises of Guatemalan reform. Where was the media coverage of these atrocities?

Unfortunately whole villages fled Guatemala to seek political asylum in the U.S., where they were denied, returned and beheaded.

Again and again and again the U.S. government has backed and befriended practically any government that is friendly to our corporate interest regardless of how repressive these governments are to their own people.

I wonder how proud to be American these corporations are? So proud they would close factory after factory and displace hundreds of thousands of American jobs to other countries? Do they fly the American flag on foreign soil? Indeed, if they are so freedom loving why do these corporations so quick to work with governments that imprison or even kill people who try and organize labor, social or environmental reforms?

I'm not proud to be an American. I don't even know if I am grateful. All I know is our history and our present are full of episodes that inspire and those that cause the greatest of distress and shame. I know also that the war to stop terrorism begins with staying informed and with holding our government and corporations accountable for their immoral behavior. "Why," Jesus asked, "do you complain about the speck in your brother's eye, when you have a board in yours?"

-MICHAEL MILLER (aka SASHA)



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