

## OPINION

## Fear and Hatred 10 Years after Sept. 11

We must overcome for the sake of our children

BY M. LINDA JARAMILLO

I have vivid memories of that tragic Sept. 11 morning 10 years ago. It was early in the morning in my hometown of Portland, Ore. The waking news blaring from my radio seemed like a dream.

I jumped out of bed and ran into the living room to turn on the television. Sure enough, there it was. The first plane had blasted its way through the north tower, seemingly a terribly unfortunate failure of the airplane's radar system that led them off course. Then the second plane was in

sight, crashing into the south tower. It became clear that this was no accident.

The shock of such a horrible sight had not even set in when we heard the news stories about



two other high-jacked planes, one crashing into the Pentagon, another into a field in Pennsylvania.

Were there more? Who was capable of such mean spirited destruction? Little did I know then what would follow.

Every year on Sept. 11, I feel the emotional disbelief and fear that I experienced that morning. However, two days prior to that fateful day is still equally alive in my memory—Sept. 9, 2001.

Our local congregation, Ainsworth United Church of Christ in northeast Portland,

was offering adult forums on diverse faith traditions on Sunday, Sept. 9. We welcomed two leaders from the Muslim community to share the key tenets of their faith. We learned about the importance of peace and harmony in their teachings.

During our discussion, it became obvious that we shared a mutual understanding of God's unconditional love for everyone and our responsibility for the common good of humanity. As Christians and Muslims, we agreed to journey together and continue to learn from one another toward deeper solidarity in the midst of our differences.

In the days following Sept. 11, 2001, it became clear that all Muslims were being held responsible for the tragic acts of a violent sect of Islamic fanatics whose values and in-

terpretations of the Qur'an are radically different than the majority of Muslims.

Our Muslim friends went into hiding in Portland, just as others did in cities across the nation. They feared going to the grocery store, sending their children to school, or worshipping in the local Mosque that had previously been relatively safe. My fear and disbelief was revived as I saw the universal hostility being directed at our neighbors.

I joined a group of Latino and Latina leaders who gathered with neighbors from the Muslim Educational Trust led by Wajdi Said (who continues to be a close friend to this day). We wanted to offer support to a community whose complexion is much like ours. We knew what it was like to be singled out for ridicule and exclusion.

We had experienced similar verbal and physical attacks for no other reason other than the color of our skin. We prayed for forgiveness and healing and pledged to teach one another and our children about our shared understanding of goodness as opposed to evil.

Mahatma Gandhi once said, "I have seen children successfully surmounting the effects of an evil inheritance. That is due to purity being an inherent attribute of the soul."

As we approach this 10th anniversary, my prayer is that in our disbelief, we will strive to overcome the fear and hatred that has resulted—for the sake of our children and the purity of their souls.

M. Linda Jaramillo is executive minister for Justice and Witness Ministries in the United Church of Christ.

## Issues in Riot-Torn London Plague Us Here

Prevent youth uprisings

BY JUDGE GREG MATHIS

The recent youth-led uprisings in London that caused millions of dollars in damage and led to over a thousand people being arrested are not just a wake-up call for Britain. The U.S. must take notice and put into place measures that would prevent such uprisings here at home.

The London uprisings began when a group of young people, upset over the death of a 29-year old black man killed by police officers, gathered outside a police station in London.

Frustrated with high unemployment rates, a failing education system and police misconduct that seemingly goes unchecked, the protester's tempers flared, their emotions took over and the protests quickly turned violent. The violence spread, growing to massive proportions and citizens in the United Kingdom and around the world, were shocked.

While it is very easy to dis-

miss such uprisings and think they'd never occur here in the

U.S., we must not be complacent or naïve.

The same issues that drove youth in London to act out plague us here in America. Youth unemployment in the

U.S. exceeds 20-percent; police misconduct is a regular occurrence throughout country and our schools fail to prepare our children for college or the job market.

What can we do here in the U.S. to prevent such uprisings? We can start by doing the exact opposite of what London Prime Minister David Cameron has proposed.

Cameron proposed a tough crack down and wants to ban rioters from using social media, evict them from public housing and impose restrictions on youth.

His political opponent, Ed

that aim to keep youth out of trouble, create jobs and monitor police activities.

If the goal is to prevent youth from destroying themselves and their communities in anger, then

*Miliband, suggested a different, better approach: one that would put into place social programs that aim to keep youth out of trouble, create jobs and monitor police activities.*

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an approach like Miliband's is needed, in London and here at home.

The uprisings in the Middle East, starting with Egypt and then spreading, did not alarm Americans. We believed that, because the political and social environments in those nations are so different from ours, we'd never have to deal with such large, violent, citizen-led protests.

Watching the events in London unfold should change that way of thinking, because, in so many ways, the country is a lot like ours. London showed us that the world is on edge. America must take steps now to support its people and prevent violence.

Greg Mathis is a former Michigan District Court judge and currently is a judge for his syndicated television program.

The Portland Observer Established 1970

USPS 959-680

4747 NE Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd., Portland, OR 97211

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, PUBLISHER: Charles H. Washington

EDITOR: Michael Leighton

DISTRIBUTION MANAGER: Mark Washington

CREATIVE DIRECTOR: Paul Neufeldt

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Portland Observer,  
PO Box 3137, Portland, OR 97208

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