

Editorial

Time for tolerance

As people of the United States and abroad continue to mourn the unprecedented loss of life from last week's acts of terrorism, it is a time for us to come together, not tear apart, as civilized societies.

In addition to supporting the men, women and children so profoundly affected by the loss of thousands of innocent victims, we must also band together as caring multicultural communities and countries.

This is not the time for reacting impulsively to last Tuesday's tragedy— not on a global scale or on the much smaller community level.

As a civilized and educated people it is vital now more than ever that we do not paint people of Middle Eastern heritage with a brush moved by anger and frustration.

As a society that purports to be above such barbaric acts of cowardice as what we witnessed last week, we must be careful to act with our heads and not our hearts.

Both Canada and the United States have been built on the foundation of welcoming people of all nationalities to our shores. Our diversity and relative tolerance for one another is what makes both nations so popular that people literally die in their effort to come live here.

In the wake of last week's horrifying attacks against humanity it is absolutely essential we remain tolerant of each other.

Anything less will amount to having surrendered to the irrational fears evil often cultivates.



Letters to the editor...

Religion missing from day of mourning

Dear editor,

Although the recent National Day of Mourning ceremony on Parliament Hill was very nice, I was

very disappointed to see the complete lack of any religious observance as part of the program.

As a nation, we have all been praying for the victims and families of the World Trade Centre attack. However, I was astounded that any spiritual component was expunged from Ottawa's observance program.

Our Christian heritage has been one of the foundations of our nation since its inception. Considering that our very Constitution recognizes the supremacy of God as one of the precepts of our national character and that we sing, "God keep our land" and "God save the Queen", there ought to have been a prayer and a hymn at that service. I was not only amazed at how completely secular the service was but also deeply offended.

Despite that the vast majority of Canadians subscribe to the Christian faith, that integral part of our national fabric was utterly disregarded in the Ottawa ceremony. If ever there was an occasion when a

nation needed to look to God for strength, it has been in these very recent days.

While I recognize there are those who practise other faiths in our nation, to deny our Christian traditions in our national observances is seriously wrong. Our Parliament Hill service stood in stark contrast to those services held in Washington, D.C. and at London's St. Paul's Cathedral. Both the United States and Great Britain are certainly no more religiously diverse than we in Canada, yet both countries heavily incorporated the spiritual dimension in their services. Ottawa's failing to do so was both a missed opportunity and an insult to millions of faith-believing Canadians.

I pray that, in the future, we, as Canadians, will ensure that we recognize God in our national life and in our national ceremonies.

Byron Thomas, Georgetown

More letters page 8

Donate to U.S. relief fund

Dear editor,

As I watched the series of events of last Tuesday, a wave of mixed emotions came over me: shock, disbelief, sadness, terror and a feeling of helplessness.

More than a week later, these feelings still exist. It will be a day etched in our memories forever.

What I am asking today, is for every resident of Halton Hills to make even a small donation in this way: Give up something that is a "routine" for you— a morning coffee and donut, a movie you've been wanting to rent— just something that we all take for granted. Do this as a symbol of all of the victims and their families, who were going about their routines when those routines were torn from them.

Imagine your spouse, your child or your mother/father, leaving for work in the morning, and saying, "See you tonight." Just a routine, but it doesn't happen.

We must think of the families left behind, as well. Imagine not having the chance to see your child's first day of school, first home run, graduation, wedding, etc... things we take for granted, but that are lost forever.

Again, I urge you to give up just one simple pleasure, and donate that money to our American friends. Most banks are accepting donations, as is the Red Cross and other agencies.

Gordon Clarke, 17, Georgetown

Letters to the editor

Letters to the editor must be signed and include an address and daytime telephone number. Unsigned letters will not be published. Letters should not exceed 200 words and may be edited.

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