MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2012

Another 9/11 Anniversary

Tomorrow marks the 11th anniversary of the terrible events of 9/11/2001.

Perhaps I am in the minority in this perspective, but this year's anniversary seems to have come along much quicker than previous ones, and with much less fanfare. To be clear, the point of the title, *Another* 9/11 Anniversary, is not meant to suggest it is becoming tiring, or that it is unimportant to mark any and all days that memorialize events which should remain in our consciousness; the title is meant to indicate, simply, that this year's anniversary has come very quickly and does not seem as publicized as previous ones.

Of course, after the 10th anniversary of last year, perhaps it is natural that the eleventh might be underwhelming. And, as the national focus is on the upcoming presidential election in November, perhaps it should come as no surprise that this year's 9/11 anniversary seems to have approached without the usual flourish of publicity.

As evidence of the difference in perspective on this year's anniversary, I sight the topics of the two articles I read this past week in the Philadelphia Inquirer that touched on 9/11.

One described the flap that has blossomed between the governors of New York and New Jersey, and the privately run organization that has funded the creation of the National Sept. 11 Memorial and Museum. Apparently, a number of issues has created some friction, including the length of time it has taken for the 9/11 memorial to be completed, who will have jurisdiction over it, and the recent decision by the board led by ex-Governor Bloomberg to exclude speeches by politicians for this year's anniversary ceremony. In short, the article was less about remembering those innocent victims who were in the wrong place at the wrong time, and the brave emergency personnel who willingly entered the effected zone, and more about political wrangling over who might emerge with jurisdiction over the

memorial, and perhaps, without saying it outright, who might be able to take the most credit and use it to their best political advantage.

The second article touched on the emotional "hit" America took on that fateful day, and its lasting impact today. The main thrust of the article was that before 9/11, most Americans considered death at the hands of a terrorist to be a very low risk. After 9/11, understandably, approximately one in three Americans "..were very or somewhat worried that they or a family member would become a victim of terrorism". Yet, 11 years later, that rate has remain unchanged, even though the actual chance of dying at the hands of a terrorist, statistically, is less likely than getting hit by lightning. Further, a significant percentage of Americans (almost 75%) "..consider another major attack in the near future to be very or somewhat likely", about the same as in early 2002.

I imagine there were other articles about 9/11 that I missed. I know that there are many groups, especially those associated with family and friends of the victims of 9/11, that continue to work hard to help us "never forget". And, perhaps that is the most telling point of all; that there needs to be people in our face to remind us of the most defining moment in United States history in this young century.

To me, the events of that day have shaped our country ever since. Worried about the deficit? Depending on who you ask, we have spent at least $2 trillion, possibly 4 trillion unfunded dollars in our war against terror. Want a balanced budget? Not when we earmark one in three discretionary dollars for the department of defense. High unemployment and a lack of good-paying jobs an issue for you? Perhaps a war on our failing infrastructure might be a better solution.

The events of 9/11 were horrendous. Our generation's Pearl Harbor.

And, like all defining moments in history, many lessons have been and will continue to be learned.

My hope is that we might someday come to understand that the past does not consist of static events that "happened", but that where we are today, individually as well as nationally, is the accumulation of past events.

We need a balance of remembering events such as 9/11 mixed with the understanding that our reaction to those events help create our future. If we want an America where the middle class is

employed at jobs that provide a livable wage, empowering them to create the demand for products and services that will speed the cycle of economic recovery, we need to remove our collective heads from our asses, shed our "fears" of radical Islam, Al-qaeda, same sex marriage, contraception, evolution, and anyone "not like us".

We need to break the cycle that has made us like so many deer in the headlights of life.

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2 COMMENTS:



Anonymous September 12, 2012 at 9:38 AM

The attacks of 9/11/12 on our US Embassies in Egypt and Libya, and the murder of our citizen diplomats, are further evidence that radical Islamists are continuing their war with us.

"Somewhere a true believer is training to kill you. He is training with minimum food and water, in austere conditions, day and night. The only thing clean on him is his weapon. He doesn't worry about what workout to do — his rucksack weighs what it weighs, and he runs until the enemy stops chasing him. The true believer doesn't care how hard it is; he knows that he either wins or dies. He doesn't go home at 1700; he is home. He knows only the cause."

Reply



JOE PUGNETTI September 18, 2012 at 5:06 PM

So there are people in the world who hate America and Americans. Does that mean we should bankrupt our country by spending over $600 billion a year, emphasis on A YEAR, while our roads, bridges, schools, etc age and decay? They are winning because of the fear that we have allowed to color everything we do in the world and in our own country.

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ABOUT ME



JOE PUGNETTI

Joe Pugnetti is a resident of Perkasie who recently started sharing his political views through letters to the News-Herald opinion page. A proud liberal with an open mind, he is looking forward to creating some lively and civil discourse concerning the topics that most concern readers. To purchase his first story/blog compilation for your e-book, cut and paste this link http://www.amazon.com/Short-Stories-wurdsfromtheburbs-Joe-Pugnetti-ebook/dp

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STILL, I AM EVER HOPEFUL THAT HUMANS WILL CONTINUE TO EVOLVE TOWARDS AN UNDERSTANDING THAT MIGHT DOES NOT MAKE RIGHT, THAT MAKING MILLIONS OF DOLLARS DOES NOT MAKE ONE RICH, AND THAT LEAVING THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE, REGARDLESS OF THE SCOPE OF ONE'S WORLD, IS THE POINT OF THIS LIFE.