

Let's dissolve terrorism's roots, not water them

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Dear Editor: All thinking Americans are nervous now as we walk, eat and sleep. We each know, in the privacy of our hearts, there's no security system perfect enough, no missile accurate enough, no wall high enough to keep out a determined terrorist.

With each bomb we might drop in retaliation, with each bullet we might deliver, we'll kill one terrorist and create 10 more. People from all nations have mothers, brothers, cousins and uncles. Violence is not a long-term solution. We've tried that often enough, and this is where it's brought us.

Now is the time to think globally, not nationalistically. What do we want to stand for as human beings on this Earth? What do all great, openhearted, non-fundamentalist spiritual traditions advise? We know the

advice well: The meek shall inherit the earth, love your enemies, offer forgiveness, show mercy. These are lofty concepts, impractical under today's harsh realities. Or are they?

Hate will never overcome hate. Only love can overcome hate. A simple truth, but easily overlooked in the political stress of the moment. Rather than attempting the impossible bloody task of sniffing out and pulverizing every last terrorist, I suggest a radically different approach. Let's each take time to sit in a quiet room and look inwardly. I suggest we examine the seeds of terrorist rage. Where did these terrorists come from? Why would someone be willing to sacrifice his life to destroy America?

If we discover unflattering qualities during our introspec-

tion, let's experiment with self-transformation. The recent tragedy in New York and Washington must serve as a spiritual wake-up call, so that the lives lost will not have been in vain. The single thing we can sometimes control (with a lot of practice and determination) is our own behavior. The surest way to protect our world and ourselves is for each of us to make the cultivation of wisdom our highest goal. Then virtue will be real, and the Earth can begin to heal.

Let's dissolve the roots of terrorism rather than sloshing poison on its foliage as it sends out thousands of new underground shoots. God bless all who share this planet. May we walk the path that leads toward universal understanding, peace and healing. Our children are counting on us.

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