

The United States has fallen

□ The United States has turned away from its name-sake.

Last Tuesday morning America was hit with a terrible tragedy. The most vicious attack in our history, the most recent on American soil since the War of 1812, was unfolding before our eyes.

Millions of people watched the tragedy as it poured into their living rooms, pervading their morning breakfasts with images of horror and with shrieks of terror.

Others were on their way to work when their morning talk show was interrupted with the news.

Frantic whispers turned to cries in the workplace and later that day the changing of the guards roared with our national anthem and Congress stood united on the Capitol singing "God Bless America."

Relief fundraisers were established across the country to give whatever they could to support the victims and their families.

The response to blood drives, even those in our hometown, are so full that the waiting lists span into next week.

The last time there was such a response from Americans was during the Oklahoma City bombing. Still, this past week's events have brought such an outpouring of American patriotism that enormously exceeds those of 1996.

For once, Americans have stopped what they are doing to put their values into perspective.

How sad it is that something so tragic has to be the inspiration for change.

Up until last week, most of our lives continued without a hitch. We may have doubted something on our daily schedule but never our freedom. Faith prospers when it is challenged. It allows us to evaluate what is important in a life and

what is not.

This past week, the value of our liberties seemed to be heightened, as flags waved from car antennas and office buildings, and stadiums of baseball fans sang with such vigor as never heard before.

The lives lost in this tragedy were not lost in vain.

They are not victims of a religiously fanatic man. Rather, they are the heroes whose lives were sacrificed, unknowingly, to show Americans how far we have fallen from our namesake.

We have become a money hungry, capitalist-seeking society whose success is only the want for more.

Flannery O'Connor once said, "The truth does not change according to our ability to stomach it."

The truth is that most of us take freedom for granted.

The truth is that our lives have become too preoccupied with self and less of what is better for our fellow man.

The truth is we now need to stand together to fight terrorism in our country.

The truth lies in our ability to realize how far we have gone but more importantly, the truth lies in our ability to not see freedom as a God-given right but rather a privilege worth dying for.



Americans want best of both worlds

□ The United States cannot ignore the rest of the world.

JONI SMITH
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Americans have heard, read, and seen so much in the past week about the terrorist attacks that shocked the entire world last Tuesday.

Some of this information we need to know, like how we can keep this tragedy from happening again, but some of it we could live without, like the way the burnt flesh smelled to the passersby on their way to work.

Here is a piece of information that all Americans who support an isolationist view need to know-

I've heard so much about how our country brought the terrorist attacks on itself by being overly involved in international affairs.

Many people have said that if the United States would stay out of other countries' business

we wouldn't be hated by radicals such as Osama Bin Laden.

However, what these people do not understand is that our country is the world's superpower.

That means that we are expected to behave in a parental, nurturing manner; this is our role in the world.

Since we are the richest country in the world, we have to give economic aid to countries in need.

Because we have the most advanced military in the world, we must protect countries who do not have this luxury.

Also, since we have not been fully engaged in any international conflicts, prior to last Tuesday, and we do have a generous flow of money and an intimidating military, we are naturally the country who should go to the aid of less fortunate countries.

What would happen to countries like Israel or Kuwait if we did not intervene in their disputes with other nations who are more powerful, larger and more militarily capable than them?

We rush to the aid of other countries because we have to. Consider it part of the job

description for a world hegemony.

We are not the first superpower to help a weaker nation.

The United States was once on the opposite side of this spectrum when we were a fledgling, young country trying to get on its feet during the Revolutionary War when we greatly needed the help of France to defeat the British. They obliged because they were then a superpower and it was their duty.

Americans have a tendency to want the best of both worlds.

They want to be the most powerful country in the world with the best economy and most stable government, but they do not want to interact with the rest of the world and they certainly do not want to lend a helping hand when it is needed.

What would this country be like today if France had not pitched in with their calvary, ships, supplies, and money during the time when we were struggling to stay afloat?

The better question is would the United States of America even be?