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Our fury: Handle with care

As Tuesday gave way to Wednesday, grief and disbelief, for many people, crystallized into rage.

When terrorists carried out the unthinkable, the universal reaction was "Oh, my God." It took a day for that shock to harden into a steely resolve: "This is war."

It was everywhere: The president, the shell-shocked survivors, the military leaders whose grim demeanor plainly says they're ready to fight as soon as somebody points out the enemy.

A Dallas parking lot attendant, interviewed on camera, said he's ready to sign up, ready to make any sacrifice to strike back at whoever inflicted such awful damage on our sense of liberty and security.

It's a reaction that has served this country well in the past. Any historian will tell you that the Axis powers fatally underestimated the United States' tolerance for provocation during World War II: They thought Americans were too politically divided, too lazy, too pleasure-loving to fight. They thought Americans were too rich and fat to make the sacrifices that war demands, and they were wrong.

I'm angry, too, at the sheer scope of the devastation that a few terrorists were able to inflict. According to some reports, the hijackers coldly told passengers aboard the doomed airplanes that they were about to die. I find such cruelty unfathomable, inhuman.

And it was easy to be angry at the news footage — shocking, even after so many other shocking images — that showed joyous Palestinians at a celebratory street dance in Jerusalem. How dare they, I thought.

It's easy to be angry. It feels better, in a way, than the numbing disbelief that came before. Some of the writers who e-mailed their thoughts to our Web site gave full vent to their rage:

"We must build our case and go after those who are at fault," said one, and I certainly agree.

But then there was this: "So they want a 'Holy war,' huh?" said one posting. "They got it! Onward Christian Soldiers!"

Then there was this person, who apparently hasn't heard about that church-and-state thing:

"The U.S. should be closed to all peoples who are worshippers of Islam."

And I'm sure anybody with a radio has heard callers from the giddy "nuke 'em all" lobby queued up to get on the air.

Those comments hit me like a bucket of cold water. Anger is a powerful motivator and a potent weapon, but it doesn't seem very productive to wave it around like a drunk with a loaded gun.

Because this is not about "Christian" and "Muslim." It's not about "American" and "Arab." Yes, those political overtones are present, but thinking in those terms drags untold numbers of innocents into the fray. This is about the vast majority of us being shocked and unsettled by a handful of lunatics poisoned by their own fanaticism.

I'm mad as hell at the people who did this, and whoever financed and sponsored them, and even at any nation that tolerates and harbors their organizations.

My anger doesn't extend to the kindly Jordanian man at the convenience store near my house, or to the cheerful lady in Islamic dress who works at the supermarket. It doesn't have anything to do with the deeply religious Muslim doctor who has been a helpful source for me on several medical stories.

There was another hard-learned lesson from World War II. That was the lingering shame of having locked up thousands of Americans of Japanese ancestry for no earthly reason other than racial paranoia.

My in-laws lived in Hawaii at that time, where the Japanese-American population was much too large to be interned. Had they lived on the mainland, they might have been locked up, too.

History provides us some valuable lessons, and the most valuable may be this:

Anger is a powerful weapon. Let's use it carefully.



RANDY ELI GROTHE/Staff Photographer

Jeff Payne (right) and other American Red Cross workers prepare to transport and process blood donated after the attacks.

Blood donors asked to wait

Center officials expect need to be greater in coming weeks

By LOUISE APPLEBOME
Staff Writer

Blood donation centers overwhelmed by donors in the wake of Tuesday's tragedies are asking people to hold off a week or two before giving blood.

"We need donations, but we will need them as much, if not more, in coming weeks," said Avonelle Chitwood, communications manager for Red Cross Blood Services in Texas.

Five Red Cross blood centers operate in Texas. On Tuesday, they collected nearly 1,400 donations, more than double an average day. At the Dallas center, 400 donors came in compared with 25 or 30 on an average day. Long lines continued Wednesday.

Ms. Chitwood said that she appreciated the giving spirit of so

BLOOD DRIVES

■ Carter BloodCare will have a blood drive from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Thursday at the Will Rogers Memorial Center Exhibits Hall, 3401 E. Lancaster Road, Fort Worth. Blood also may be donated at neighborhood centers from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Thursday and Friday and from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday. BloodCare officials say they are urging volunteers to wait several days because facilities are being overwhelmed by the number of donors. For more information, call 1-800-DONATE4 (toll free) or see the Web site www.carterbloodcare.org

■ American Red Cross Blood Center at RHD Memorial Medical Center at

Interstate 635 and Webb Chapel Road will conduct blood drives from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Thursday, Friday and Saturday. For more information, call 972-241-4483 or 1-800-GIVELIFE.

■ Eastfield College in Mesquite will have a blood drive from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Thursday in Room C-135. The school is at 3737 Motley Drive. For more information, call 972-860-7190 or 972-860-7180.

■ The Greater Southlake Women's Society will have a blood drive from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Friday at the Southlake Senior Activity Center, 307 Parkwood Drive. For more information, call Era Lee Caldwell at

817-481-1330.

■ South Grand Prairie High School will have a blood drive from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday at the school, 301 W. Warrior Trail.

■ White's Chapel United Methodist Church in Southlake will have a blood drive from 4 to 7 p.m. Thursday at 185 S. Whites Chapel Blvd.

■ Frisco High School will have a blood drive from 3 to 8 p.m. Monday in the cafeteria. The school is at 6401 Parkwood Drive. For more information, call Frisco school nurse Karen Kaighan at 469-633-5508

many people and that she doesn't want to discourage anyone from coming in. But next week and in coming months, when the centers resume regular schedules, donors can make appointments and get in and out much faster. During the next few days, no appointments

will be accepted — the wait to give donations could be up to four hours, Ms. Chitwood said.

Jenny Nelson, spokeswoman for Carter BloodCare, made the same request. She suggested that donors hold onto that desire to respond to the tragedies and defer it

a few weeks so that a steady stream of blood is available.

For more information or to donate blood, call the Red Cross at 972-241-4483 or 1-800-GIVE LIFE (448-3543, toll free) or Carter BloodCare at 1-800-DONATE 4 (366-2834, toll free).

Back to work, not back to normal

With heavy hearts, thoughts, area residents try to return to routine

By JOSHUA BENTON
Staff Writer

John Jackson rose before the sun Wednesday, looking for calm waters.

He found them at his usual fishing spot on White Rock Lake. But they couldn't provide all the solace he sought.

"I couldn't sleep last night," said the 74-year-old World War II veteran, who had been awake since 1 a.m. "I couldn't stop thinking about all those innocent people. It's so terrible."

A day after the terror in New York and Washington, much of North Texas reacted as Mr. Jackson did. People tried to go about a normal day's business.

Students returned to school. Downtown buildings reopened. Friday night football was back on schedule.

But it was clear that life had changed, almost imperceptibly, perhaps irrevocably. Children struggled to understand why so many people were dead, and parents searched for the right words.

Some workers stayed home, and others were evacuated after false bomb threats.

People returned to their routines, but they didn't return to normal.

"I'm still not believing it," said Bill Spear, a businessman who attended Mass on Wednesday afternoon at St. Jude's Chapel downtown.

He went home to pick up his whole family so he could be with them.

"I just wanted them down here

so we could all try and gain a little peace," he said.

The number of people attending Mass and confession at St. Jude's was triple the usual number. Men and women shook and sobbed uncontrollably.

Workers in downtown skyscrapers in Dallas and Fort Worth felt among the most threatened after the World Trade Center towers were toppled. But for the most part, they arrived at work Wednesday morning wary but ready to resume their lives.

"It's very quiet," said Jim Kirke, who works on the 23rd floor of Bank of America Plaza in downtown Dallas and was among those evacuated Tuesday morning as a precaution.

"It doesn't seem real. It's like something that you see in the movies, but in the movies people get up and walk away. In real life, a lot of people don't get up and walk away."

Scattered police presence Wednesday didn't go unnoticed by passers-by and workers.

In Dallas, officers were posted outside the entrances to high-rises downtown and all government offices. They evacuated Lincoln Pla-

QUOTES FROM THE SIXTH FLOOR

"On this tragic day it is encouraging to be reminded that JFK stood for courage and freedom, and that our nation is resilient and will overcome the cowardly acts committed today, just as it did in 1963."

Peter O. Griffith,
Davidson, NC

"On this unforgettable day,

when cowards attack the citadel of freedom, I am reminded that our liberty has a price. A price that JFK paid."

Unsigned

"Everybody my age can tell you where they were when President Kennedy was shot. I was in the ninth grade in my Oklahoma History Class."

I will also be able to tell where I was for the OKC bombing and now today 9/11/01 when we were viciously attacked and devastated by the World Trade Center disaster. God bless all those who have died. Our prayers and thoughts are with you."

Judy K. (Parker) Reynolds

za, First Baptist Academy and the YMCA at midday after receiving reports that a suspicious package was left inside a vehicle on Akard Street.

Power was cut to Lincoln Plaza during the evacuation, temporarily stranding three people in an elevator, officials said. The package was eventually found to contain small gifts that a group of men had planned to sell at area hotels, police said.

In Fort Worth, a bomb threat shortly after 9 a.m. forced evacuations of three Tarrant County court buildings. After barricading several streets and moving employees several blocks away, the threat was determined to be a hoax. Workers returned to the buildings about 10:15 a.m.

"I think we handled it a little differently because of what has happened this week," said Lt. Kent Worley, a spokesman for the Fire Department. "Our response was a little heightened, and I think the public expects that."

Others reacted in small but noticeable ways.

The Bureau of Engraving and Printing in Fort Worth resumed

printing money Wednesday but canceled public tours. Officials said they wanted to minimize the number of nonemployees in the building.

Area schools generally reported normal attendance. Dallas schools are required to alert district officials when daily attendance falls below 90 percent, and none did Wednesday, officials said.

High school sports teams returned to their routines, a day after most games and many practices were canceled. Some volleyball teams played the matches that were postponed Tuesday.

At The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza, many visitors found some comfort drawing parallels between the terrorist attack and the Kennedy assassination in 1963.

"People are coming here to deal with their own grief, to remember how resilient our country was after another tragedy," said Jeff West, the museum's executive director.

Museum visitors record their ruminations in "memory books" at the end of their visit, and several wrote about trying to adjust after Tuesday's tragedies.

One tourist wrote about watch-

Old Glory flying off shelves

By NANCY CALAWAY
and DEBRA DENNIS
Staff Writers

FORT WORTH — The attacks on New York and Washington have spurred patriotic pride across North Texas, causing a run on the Stars and Stripes 10 times that of a Fourth of July, flag sellers said Wednesday.

"The flag is an icon. It's probably the most recognizable symbol in the world," said Jim Eggleston, owner of ABC Flag Co. in Fort Worth. "People want to fly it because it says we are strong. We're bent, but we're not broken."

The Fort Worth shop, like many others around North Texas and the country, has been swamped with orders since Tuesday's attacks. On Wednesday, the company was doing 15 to 20 times its normal daily business, and 10 times more business than on a typical July 4.

"There are even indications that there will be a greater demand now than there was during the Gulf War," Mr. Eggleston said.

Wal-Mart Stores Inc., based in Bentonville, Ark., said it sold 88,000 American flags Tuesday. On Sept. 11 a year ago, Wal-Mart sold 6,000 flags, spokeswoman Jessica Moser said Wednesday.

Groups have been placing large orders to distribute flags at events. Car dealerships have called seeking to blanket their lots with Old Glory.

Mr. Eggleston, who is also president of the National Independent Flag Dealers Association, said the run on flags has been nationwide and he expects it continue for days and possibly weeks. The flag-making industry is working to step up to the demand.

At Symonds Flags and Poles in Fort Worth, production is up, said spokeswoman Sonya Wallace.

"We have had a tremendous response. Our phones are ringing constantly. People want to show their patriotism," she said.

Ms. Wallace said the company usually has up to \$2,500 a month in sales. In two days, sales have jumped to \$6,500.

The company, which manufactures and services flags and flagpoles, said many businesses have flooded its office with requests to lower their flags.

"We appreciate the business so much, but it breaks our hearts," she said.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

ing the shocking news reports: "Finally, I had to leave the hotel room — try to forget one tragedy by learning the history of another. I'm still numb."

Some area residents said it was important that the terrorist attacks not be allowed to disrupt events in their lives.

Laura Keith and Sean Weigler long ago scheduled their wedding for Saturday. And though federal restrictions on travel have caused some difficulties, they plan to go ahead with the ceremony.

"It's hard to know how to feel," said Ms. Keith, 26, who works for Southwest Airlines. "It's a tragedy and you're grieving, but it's also supposed to be the happiest time of your life."

She's concentrating on getting the pastor, two groomsmen and her maid of honor to town from various points in the country.

"At one level, you feel selfish, but canceling the wedding would just let the terrorists win on another level," she said.

Others, from ministers and rabbis to grocery store clerks, found relief in trying to help people deal with the sense of loss.

Carolyn Thompson manages the bakery at an Albertson's on McKinney Avenue. She said she has been doing her best to raise customers' spirits.

"I've asked everybody who comes by how they're doing, and some of them want to talk," she said.

"One woman didn't say anything for a moment, then said, 'I'm very upset. I'm really down.' Then she kept on shopping."

Staff writers Laura Heinauer, Connie Piloto, Linda Stewart Ball, Nancy Calaway, Dan R. Barber, Rachel Cohen and Chuck Carlton contributed to this report.