commentary

from our viewpoint...

The U.S. can't ignore terrorism; this is war

No doubt, this country is at war.

It takes an event like last Tuesday — Pearl Harbor, Fort Sumter, the sacking of the White House — to get us fighting mad.

For years, we have ignored terrorists, hoping perhaps that they would go away.

Now we have vowed to root them out, hunt them down and wipe them out. We will have to make good on our pledge, or we will pay the price. It isn't going to be fun.

It will be a long war. Five years, maybe a decade. Conceivably more.

The United States is the most powerful nation on earth, but the terrorists have shown that cunning, stealth, preparation and surprise can be more important than military power. They will not be easy to find or eliminate. The campaign will require measures that this country abhors. Eliminating terrorists means tracking them down in their hideouts and wiping them out, cold-blooded and messy.

Do we have the stomach for that? If we're angry enough, I guess.

The terrorists will not be idle, especially at first. They were successful this time — though not all their teams came through. One crashed short of its target, others may have failed. There will be more attacks. No place in this country or abroad will be safe. We cannot make any place safe from terrorists — until we have eliminated them.

When they come to this country, they use our freedom against us. We will have to give up some of our freedom to win. Security will be tight, tighter than we will like.

But it will not be tight enough. Some maniacs will get through. There will be more casualties, more innocent lives lost.

Unless we fight this war now, though, and see it through, our way of life will be lost. The terrorists will keep at us until we retreat within our shores. Evil will be abroad in the world with no hand raised against it.

We will have allies. The entire western world stands with us. So does Asia. So in fact, does most of the Islamic world. Terrorism is the enemy of freedom everywhere. While our country is the main target, the world knows that it cannot afford to give in to terror. The world has been shaken by the events of Tuesday.

Will we prevail?

Yes, if we keep our resolve and remember that, like our forefathers before us, we cannot afford to fail. There is too much at stake here.

But the path will be long, perhaps bloody, always difficult. When it mattered, though, and when we have been aroused, America has never failed. Nor shall we this time God bless us. We have a war to win. — Steve Haynes



The enemy in the shadows

Our country is in a war with an enemy who hides in shadows.

Our enemy is a variety of cowardice cells of blinded infidels who use a noble cause, religion, to an evil purpose. The Islamic religion, whose 850 million followers are called Muslims, is not the enemy. The fanatics who hide behind religion to gain political and cultural power are.

Islam is the youngest of the world's universal religions, originating in the seventh century. Its chief spokesperson was Muhammad, known as the Prophet, or "the one who speaks for God." He chose the name Islam because in Arabic it means "submission to or achieving peace with Allah, the One God." Muslims are taught to submit to God.

Muhammad was orphaned as an infant and raised by an uncle and grandfather.

During journeys as a young man he began to examine his culture's religious beliefs. Islam teaches that Abraham had taught a faith to Arabs, but it was being disregarded by the time of Muhammad. At the age of forty, he was seized by the conviction that he had been chosen by God to be the prophet of a "true" religion among Arabs. During meditations, the archangel Gabriel came to him as a messenger of God and told him to preach.

In 610 C.E., or Current Era, he began writing his visions into a sacred "recitation" he called the Qur'an. Still today it is considered by Muslims to be the authoritative word of God.

According to the teachings, it cancels and replaces all previous revelations from God, including the Bible and the Torah. Allah explains that the original revelations by Jewish and Christian prophets were corrupted and misunderstood by those religions, so only the Qur'an is genuine and holy.



Eventually, Muhammad united the tribes of Arabia under the flag of Allah and the brotherhood of all Muslims. But not without violence and blood, as opponents of Islam were killed to free up territory for Muhammad's surge. After Muhammad's death in 632 C.E., opponents of Islam tried to reverse the trend, but by 634 all the opponents to Islam had been "put under the sword."

A century later, the armies of Islam had built an empire from Northern Spain to India. The idea of "jihad" (holy war), with eternal rewards as well as temporal plunder in fighting for Allah, spurred the Muslims to victory. Today, this is an idea Islamic extremists use to excuse their barbaric behavior.

In 762, an Islamic leader founded the city of Baghdad, now Saddam Hussein's capital in Iraq. It soon became the center of the Muslim world. Eventually Baghdad declined, and was finished off by the Mongol invasions in the mid-1300s. The Ottoman Empire gradually took possession of the area, and captured Constantinople in 1453. All of Europe might have become Muslim and speaking Arabic, if the Turks hadn't been defeated in battle at Vienna, Austria in 1683. The Turks retreated to the Middle East where their boundaries were relatively untouched until World War I, when the Allies stripped it of its power and split the Middle East rulebook. At the heart of Islam is a tie to Judeointo smaller states. The birth of Israel after World Christian traditions. The verse of Psalm 111 says. War II split the former Islamic territory even further, and created the pall which hangs over the so Muslims say from the Qur'an: "The head of wis-Middle East today. The basic beliefs Muhammad preached have remained virtually unchanged over the last 1400 years. Outlined in the Qur'an, the Muslim is expected to believe without question or argument. They are to submit. By so doing, one is guaranteed salvation in this world and the next. Allah is the name given to God. He is all-powerful and all knowing, all merciful and all compassionate. He occupies a throne of eminence in the

seventh heaven, with angels who do his bidding. Muslims differ from Christians in their concept of God because they look at Christian's Trinitarian formula as being polytheistic. Allah, according to the Qur'an, is both Lord of the Day of Judgment and the maker of the universe, and the ruler of the world and the lord of all life.

Central to a Muslim's faith is the belief in predestination and hence no free will. Muslims therefore tend to face life with a fatal attitude. Muslims are warned that their wrongdoings will be balanced with the good with some falling into hell-fire and some moving to a sensuous paradise. To avoid the fires of hell, Muslim's must be faithful to the Five Pillars of Islam, which include things such as daily prayer and a month of fasting. While there is an important unity to Islam, Muslims are divided into two major sects: Shi'ites and Sunnites.

Bitter persecution has afflicted the Shi'ites, often forcing them underground and into violent resistance. Shi'ites claim that the successors to Muhammad should be relatives and part of Muhammad's lineage.

They compose approximately 14 percent of all Muslims in the world today, and are usually known to be the most violent.

Islam today is undergoing changes. Many fundamentalists are becoming active to keep the "corrupting" influences of the west, a.k.a the United States. away from their culture.

Islam was born as a religious and political revolution, so Muslim terrorists like the ones that cowardly attacked the U.S. on September 11, look to Muhammad for their playbook, the Qur'an as their "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," dom is the fear of Allah." Knowing something of the Islamic religion will be important in the next few years as the war against terrorist cells continues. The war will be long and arduous, but a war the United States will win. Just remember not all Muslims are terrorists, just like not all Christians are tea-tottlers. The extremists in each case are the real shadows in this world that has quickly turned darker. Please turn the lights on when you leave.

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Recurring visions confirmed to Muhammad that he was the prophet of Allah.

Muhammad also wrote the primary Islamic laws and traditions, which affect all aspects of daily Muslim life.

The words Allah was pushing him to reveal, Muhammad believed, were even more important than those given to Jews and Christians because they were meant just for Arabs and were the final revelation from God.

Red Cross volunteers disappointed by column

To the Editor:

We are very disappointed in the negative comments made toward the American Red Cross by last Friday's Goodland Daily News and wish to correct the inaccuracies reported in that column.

The bloodmobile comes to Goodland four times/ year and makes a total of 49-plus visits annually to all of northwest Kansas. The effort to recruit new donors at our most recent Goodland blood drive was very successful. (Twenty-nine first-time donors, representing approximately one-third of our total collection goal for the day.) We publish statistics reflecting that only one out of every 12 "eligible" donors actually give blood to help the public overcome complacency and the thought process so familiar to most of us: "Someone else will do it."

Our phone has been overrun this last week with people seeking information on where to give. Blood drives are scheduled a year in advance and as an entire northwest Kansas community, we know donors will work together to ensure that each one is fully successful. A recent concern from our blood region is for donors to pace their donations and make sure they are spread out over the weeks and months to come. A glut now, with future shortages, would be counterproductive. In light of our donors' urgent generosity, we thank each of you for your understanding and response to the true, long-term need. The, entire northwest Kansas schedule will be published soon.

Our local bloodmobile hours were changed to 12-6 p.m. several years ago at the request of school teachers and many other donors who wanted later giving opportunities. Even at this, we know every donor's schedule is not accommodated. There is some flexibility in each community requesting their own hours, but the blood staff travel schedule must be considered. These people are on the



road five days a week, 51 1/2 weeks per year, and we owe them consideration and great respect for their dedication.

The American Red Cross would be delighted if circumstances permitted every donor to give every 56 days. However, blood collection is strictly regulated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. According to our local hospital lab director, there are far too many regulations to make hospital/clinic collections practical or financially feasible, not to mention the challenge of immediate shipment to the central testing lab (also required by the government). These rules all contribute to the safety of our national blood supply.

Numerous restrictions 'imposed on the system also continue to ensure each patient will receive the safest blood possible. Even though each question and every "rule" may not be fully understood by all, it goes without saying that each of us would want safe, well-tested and thoroughly screened blood in our time of need.

The Red Cross does not "complain" about a lack of blood, but it is our solemn duty to inform all Americans of our nations, blood supply status when it is low. The Red Cross provides one half of the nation's blood supply. If our current system was greatly flawed, we could not be in that position.

Highlighting the importance of meeting and exceeding our goal every time, are the tragic events of this past week. Our regional blood representative extends a hearty than \bar{k} you to every donor who

came in Aug. 29. That blood was processed, tested and ready to use when the sudden and unexpected need arose. That's how the Red Cross system is designed — to meet the need.

Although our volunteer blood committee plays an important role in the success of each visit, it is you, the community who determine the outcome of the drive. We, and every patient/blood recipient, appreciate that. This truly is your American Red Cross and it is your bloodmobile. Thank you very much and keep up the good work. Roberta Bretz, volunteer Harriett Demaree, bloodmobile co-chair Mary Brady, bloodmobile co-chair

Martha Gunderson, donor recruitment chair Mary Lou Franklin, volunteer recruitment chair Luella Richardson, bloodmobile publicity chair Goodland

Editor's Note: I applaud the work of the Goodland Red Cross and its volunteers for holding their bloodmobile drives when people can come and holding them four times a year, unlike my hometown of Oberlin, which only gets the van twice a year.

However, donors can give six times a year, and many would if they could do so at their local hospital. As a regular donor, I get mailers regularly from the national Red Cross asking me to donate. When I call and ask where, they tell me I will need to go somewhere that will require me to take off from half a day to a full day of work. In an emergency, anyone would be willing to do this. However, most of us can't do it six times a year.

My hope in writing the editorial is that someone will look at how they are doing things and, maybe, think of a better way. It was not intended to diminish in any way the work of blood drive volunteers. Cynthia Haynes, O+