

9/11 Echoes Even Today

Fourteen years have passed since September 11, 2001, a day that changed the trajectory of the United States. The worst terrorist attack on our homeland taught us two things: that our oceans would not protect us from a determined enemy in the 21st century, and that radical Islamic terrorism was not a regional annoyance with limited capacity, but a real and present danger to our very way of life.

Today, we remember the victims: the people in the twin towers of the World Trade Center, that emblem of America's economic power, and the first responders who charged in to save them. The military and civilian personnel in the Pentagon working to keep our country safe. The innocent passengers on those four doomed flights, some of whom heroically sacrificed themselves to minimize the casualties on the ground.

But as we pause in their honor, we must also look forward. The hard fact of the matter is that today, we again face a gathering threat from radical Islamists who may have changed their name or affiliation, but who are unchanged in their determination to degrade, and ultimately destroy, the West.

Today, the threat of radical Islamic terrorism is still very much as real as it was 14 years ago. From Nidal Hassan yelling 'Allahu Akbar' before he murdered 14 innocent people in Ft. Hood, Texas, to the Boston marathon bombings, a beheading in Oklahoma, and the attack in Chattanooga that left four marines and a sailor dead.

September 11, 2015, should be more than a day of reflection and remembrance. It should be an opportunity to resolve that we will not allow political correctness or complacency to lull us into the same false sense of security that al-Qaeda exploited 14 years ago. We owe it to the memory of those whose lives were lost to squarely face the ongoing, virulent threat

of radical Islamic terrorism, unafraid to call it what it is, as we defend ourselves and the founding principles that make America the greatest force for good in the world.