

The Drink Tank

Special on a Sad Day

A few years ago, right after the Big Deal that happened in New York City, a friend of mine and I were chatting over lunch. We were talking about what America could have done differently to prevent the unhappy event that had ripped the country apart less than a week before.

“I don’t think we can change it without giving up what makes us Americans.” she said.

I sat and thought for a minute. Then I took a bite of my lunch, took a sip of Coke and leaned back.

“I don’t think it’s about our way of life, our religion, or even our politics, it’s not even about our unreasonable requirements that the rest of the world be like us. It’s about something much bigger. It’s about the ways in which we seep.”

She looked at me with a face of questioning.

“What do you mean?”

“We seep. Our culture, our food, our way of life seeps, it gets under doors that are locked, it works its way into the corners. It’s not political, though with everything we’ve been doing of late, it’ll become political. It’s because we’re so successful at enabling our culture to weasel in to every corner of the world. One story goes that Osama bin Laden had made a trip to Mecca and on the way he saw a billboard for Coke in Arabic. Some say that’s what set him off. It wasn’t put there by decree of government, it was put there by Coke, and probably the Coke bottling plant employed hundreds of Saudis and followed proper Islamic law for the work day, but still, it was an American thing that had infiltrated the road to Mecca.”

We ate in silence for the next few

minutes. Then she looked at me.

“Chris, it’ll never stop then, will it?”

We finished lunch and headed home about ten minutes later, the topic sort of sitting over the whole thing.

I’m a conservative American. I hold my personal beliefs sacred. I’m not one of those right wing guys who believes that the government should uphold Old-Timey Family values. I care about how we spend our money and the ways in which we deal with our criminals, though I don’t care if men marry men or if Maggie has two Mom-mies or if someone wants to have an abortion (though I’m not quite so socially liberal to say that it doesn’t matter). There is one thing I believe and I will always believe it: The Life is Sacred.

Every terrorist attack takes human life. There is no way to replace that. Attack a monument, that can be rebuilt. Burn down a school, we can teach kids elsewhere, but kill a human being and there’s nothing that can be done.

My heart goes out to everyone who lost a family member or friend in any of the London attacks or even in the attacks that happened in the years prior. It’s a blot on the world as far as I’m concerned. The US is doing bad things right now. I’m not as against the war as many are, but we could have just sent in the CIA with proper orders (and taken the handcuffs off of them) and saved billions of dollars and hundreds of lives. Life is the important part of that equation.

I apologize for the rant, but here’s the most important thing to remember: life is beautiful and fragile and sacred. We must live our lives in love and find joy where we can. Never let any of us forget that.