March 19, 2003

Just a thought to share with you.

I tried to start my car and sports news came on the radio. I turned it off. I noticed how beautiful the day was as I rode with the tow truck driver, my car holding on behind us. I had a gnawing feeling in my gut. The Ford dealership was busy with service people giving good customer service, henceforth enjoying good business. I left my car and looked at a beautiful Thunderbird in the showroom, imagining how it would feel and look as I drove it with its top down with, of course, a beautiful girl beside me. I walked across the street and ordered a cup of "half-caf" (actually mine is three-quarters de-caf and one quarter regular). I glanced at some of the newspapers and magazines. "Shape", "Time", the "Calendar" section of the LA Times, an article about the Oscars, etc. I sat outside, where it was pleasant. And, while waiting for my car, I sipped my coffee and noticed how wonderfully beautiful the day really was. A nice day. And yet, I had this gnawing feeling in my gut. I knew what it was. My country, "we", couldn't listen to anyone who would differ with us about our policies, and instead, called them "jealous." Everyone who doesn't agree with us must be jealous of us. We are the prom queens of the fifties. The right club. And we were about to bomb the heck out of the weakest of all of the countries that have chemical weapons.

Lives will be lost. "Ours" and "theirs." We speak in terms of ours and theirs as though there is a difference in value. Hopefully Bush's God doesn't delineate. If he/she does, then it must be the same God that grants a beauty contestant a win over the other gals, because somehow it was only her prayer that got heard. I want a God with a better system than that. I believe there is one. One that looks at all human life through the same lens.

That's where we start to go astray. We think in terms of ours and theirs, no matter what. Even if we are the ones who do the attacking. This is no war, no disarmament. It is an attack. A precedent for anyone else who doesn't like the leadership of another country to come up with a reason to attack. The Soviet Union was a hell of a lot more powerful than Saddam. A thousand fold. Yet we never attacked them. We kept illuminating until we prevailed. I only wish it were that noble. We didn't attack them, because they might have given us a real fight. Nevertheless, we waited it out and thankfully, the threat is gone.

So I now think about the destruction of lives. Killing, murder. Isn't pre-meditated killing a murder except in cases of self defense? We are told that Saddam is a ruthless, despicable dictator. I happen to agree. So? Okay? Why kill humans, bomb a country, destroy a country, their infrastructure, their water systems, etc, etc.?

We went from Osama to Saddam. Okay, I suppose I could see how, in print, to SOME, they might look like the same person. So I guess if we want to go after the Mafia, we should bomb the hell out of Italy? Okay, I exaggerate to make a point, but isn't what we are going through an exaggeration?

We, folks, we, are going in to kill humans, and they, by fighting back, will kill humans. A group of people have basically pulled us into their game of life and death monopoly. I'm impotent because I don't even have a get-out-of-jail card. This group, representing us, is deciding all of our fates. A group which is not only responsible for the killing of humans, the destruction of a country and the removal of a power whom we just don't like, but the group/we are responsible for, or rather the beneficiaries of, the rebuilding of the very country we will destroy. And we'll decide whom to put into power (I wonder why?). The power of arrogance mustn't dictate over the grace of humility.

Weapons of Mass Destruction? I'd love to meet the guy who coined that phrase (remember the old comic books?). Yes, perhaps we'll find these and we'll destroy them with our weapons of "precise" destruction (Which then might actually release the weapons of mass destruction, right?). So then why don't we go after China, Russia, Italy, France, Germany, Spain, Iran, Israel, India, Pakistan, Australia, etc., etc.? They all must have nukes and weapons of mass destruction. Oh, we went "Eeenie-meeie-miney-moe" and just happened to pick the smallest and weakest of all of these countries. A country where we know we can kick ass.

I'd like to enjoy imagining driving the convertible thunderbird, or to enjoy sipping a cup of half-caf, or reading the calendar section, or perhaps be interested some sports news again. I could if I didn't have this gnawing feeling in my gut. The kind of feeling one gets when they think they were being a bully or unfair to someone else. You know when you don't quite feel good about your actions. The problem is that I don't know how to alter such actions that are being done, as a country, in my name. In our name. I won't resort to violence, which is practiced by those whom I'm criticizing, because that would make me just like them, and a hypocrite on top of that. It is out of my singular control. But not out of ours, and theirs, and everyone else's if there are enough voices. Voices of those who care to have a dialogue and to, no matter what, try and resolve whatever issues there are, other than real self-defense, without violence.

Thanks for hearing me out.

Nat Christian