

Yo, Osama!

Well, the government finally named you as a suspect, so I guess it's fair to talk about you now. Thought you had us, didn't you? What a laugh! You did more to unify this country than George Washington. See, we Americans had gotten sort of distracted. We worried about things like lockboxes, taxes, and who was committing hanky panky with whom. We were too stressed to reach out to one another, to sit down and talk with our kids, to call our spouses at work and tell them we loved them. We were MUCH too busy to even think about giving blood or going to the hardware store to buy and hang an American flag.

You changed all that, Osama, you and your gang of creeps. I met my neighbors in the park across the street tonight. We talked quietly while everybody gathered. Then we lit our candles and just stood there silently, holding them. Without anybody saying anything, we walked back to our neighborhood and set them on our doorsteps. They are still burning. You will never be able to put them out.

I've had more meaningful conversations with my teenager this week than in the last couple of years combined. Tonight I was driving her to a friend's house when the voice of Lee Greenwood came over the radio singing "I'm Proud to Be an American." We were stuck in traffic, and normally we would have been snapping at one another. She started singing along softly with the radio. I joined in. By the second verse we were singing at the top of our voices with the windows rolled down. People stuck in traffic on either side of us joined in. By the time we were finally able to move a little, perfect strangers were wiping their eyes, blowing their horns and shouting good wishes to one another.

I hung an American flag on my house yesterday for the first time in my life. I'd like to get another one, but there are no flags or anything else red, white, or blue left in any store in this town. My daughter and I did find some white and blue ribbon in the sewing box. Tomorrow we're going to make a huge blue-and-white bow and fasten it to the front grille of the car. The car's bright red; we think it will look nice.

I called my husband at work today just to tell him I loved him. I hadn't done that for awhile - too busy, I guess. It felt wonderful. We are going to send some money to a fund to help the victims. Tonight at the dinner table we talked about the various charities and tried to decide which one was best. Normally we just eat and run. It was the best dinner table conversation we've had in a long time. We finally decided on a fund that's been set up for the children of the rescue workers who were killed in New York City. We'd never given much thought to appreciating all they do for us before now.

My husband and I are on a waiting list to give blood. It'll be awhile before our names come up; there are over 500 people ahead of us. There's been a shortage of blood in this area. I wouldn't be surprised if the blood donated all across this country eventually saves more people than you killed. That would be a fitting memorial to those who died.

We're sticking together. Our politicians are rising to the occasion. Rudy Giuliani and George W. Bush never looked half as statesmanlike as they have this week. Partisan bickering? What's that? Half the Congress stood on the steps of the Capitol the other night and sang "God Bless America."

See, Osama, you underestimated us. And maybe for too long we've been underestimating ourselves. This is the greatest, strongest, richest, most beautiful country in the world. Our firefighters, policemen, EMTs, and people like the ones on the plane that crashed in Pennsylvania have reminded us that we're also the bravest and most determined.

You can't destroy us, and you can't stop us. Because we're coming, Osama. We're gonna find you and the rest of your murderous thugs, and when we do, we're gonna kick your butts all over the face of the earth. You are gonna REGRET the day you messed with AMERICA! Just thought you oughta know.