

What does "Attack on America" Mean To You?

■ By Simon Smith

Back in the early 1980's, Judge Tjoflat, President of the North Florida Council Boy Scouts, made the comment that " unless we do a better job of transferring our values to the next generation, our country will be morally and financially bankrupt within our lifetime." I found that hard to believe, but the judge was very perceptive- he saw what most of us didn't see and it's coming to pass as you and I are reading this article.

At another meeting, a presenter asked a group, "How many of you have seen something and said to yourself, ' somebody ought to do something about that?'" Obviously almost all hands went up. Then, he said, "If you don't remember anything else from this conference, please remember this- you saw it, you had your call from the Lord, what did you do? Obviously, we usually think that somebody ought to do something - the sheriff, teacher, preacher or whoever, but not me. The point is, you had your call, what did you do?"

Question: How firmly do you believe what you say you believe? Churches have creeds that express their faith; civic organizations have statements that say what they believe, and organizations like the Scouts have an Oath and Law. Scouts say: On my honor I will do my best to do my duty to God and my country.... etc."

Question: How well do we represent that which we say we are? Society has come to a condition where "we the people" must start being what we say we are or our society, like the Judge said, "our country is going to be morally and financially bankrupt within our lifetime."

Read the newspaper any morning. It's unbelievable what is happening in the lives of our children, grandchildren and community. It is hard to believe that it is against the law to have a Bible in the classroom or the Ten Commandments on the wall. But we can show condoms, teach sex, have "how to" magazines, complete with pictures in neighborhood stores and pornography on TV - all in the name of freedom, 1st amendment rights, the American way, don't be judgmental, etc. We have wonderful young people, but we are sending bad messages. "We the people" have got to decide what "we the people" believe and stand for. Have you had your call? Do you live on Tuesday like you profess to believe on Sunday? So, you had your call, what did you do about it?

Whatever the situation in your family, church, youth organization or other, each of us has some way to be more effective, or less effective - we decide how and to what degree. Do you give praise where praise is due, fight issues that are wrong, take a stand and put your faith, beliefs, your creed on the line? Do you help perpetuate your beliefs, give money, have a will, help a foundation, open doors of opportunity or do you do whatever to help the organizations and causes you believe in? You do make a difference. What you do and don't do or say is important. Be informed. Get the facts, and lift your voice!

If not you, who? If not now, when? And never ask for whom the bell tolls...

Simon Smith is a regular contributor and strong supporter of the Justice Coalition. He is with Voices for a Better First Coast and may be reached at 388-9200.

BUSTED

This Feature Made Possible



Since we began publishing pictures of wanted fugitives in the Justice Coalition's Victims' Advocate, and running these pictures on Channel 4 News, we have been given over 400 photographs by the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office. Your record of reporting these fugitives to the authorities has been impressive.

Lately we have begun re-running selected photos that were featured many months ago, in addition to the new ones we are given. The hope is that the fugitives may have come out from hiding, thinking the coast is clear. Once again, alert citizens have stepped forward to report the whereabouts of some of these individuals, and a few of the pictures of these surprised criminals are in this feature today.

Each of us has a responsibility to help make our community safe, and aiding in the apprehension of those among us who choose to scoff at the law goes a long way in fulfilling that obligation. The citizens of Jacksonville thank all who have participated.

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MELVIN BROWN

VA#: 1162
Featured: September 2001
Arrested: 11/01/01
Violation: Battery on a LEO

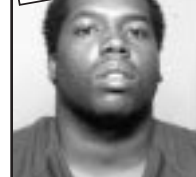
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ALEXANDER D. GILLESPE

VA#: 1229
Featured: November 2001
Arrested: 11/18/01
Violation: Sexual Batt/Threats
w/deadly weapon

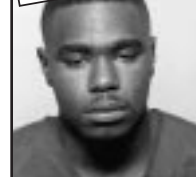
BUSTED



LEON HARRIS

VA#: 1102
Featured: July 2001
Arrested: 11/02/01
Violation: VOP-Agg Battery

BUSTED



STEVEN HODGES

VA#: 1173
Featured: Sept. 2001
Arrested: 11/27/01
Violation: Poss Cocaine

Please, get involved and make a difference in our community. Call the appropriate phone numbers if you recognize someone declared wanted or missing. To get more involved, please call the Justice Coalition at 783-6312.