## IDS Imerica's lessons from Sept. 11 hijach rue meaning of heroism and importance of community learned in aftermath

has been exactly one year since the nation's outlook excerpts of hanged. Professional athletes and movie stars suddenly

Tuesday in ook a back stage to real heroes: firefighters, emergency voice attni ical personnel and police officers. Even in College bin Ladenceion. Texas, a small town with virtually no similarities ing all 19 seew York City, the blow was felt. The United States was On Monaiged forever.

RICHARD BRAY

broadcast a fatriotism came to mean something more than it had in the past. Although the United tape in wes was no longer the indomitable force we once thought it was, it was also, paradoxivoice, speary, stronger.

named the formericans came together across the country to mourn the tragedy and, perhaps even

ept. Il e importantly, most of the world joined. The tragedy of Sept. 11 was not just an Mohamed American tragedy, it was a world tragedy.

Shehhi, Ziad mall communities were strengthened as well. Texas A&M showed its support by fill-

Kyle Field with red, white and blue shirts, making the football stadium something e than just a stadium for a day. Just as Aggies came together following the 1999 Aggie hijackers and fire Collapse, students again united to mourn America's losses and to strengthen our birth were alve. A blow had been dealt, but mere terrorism could not bring America to its knees. were lavish as it had following Pearl Harbor, the "sleeping giant" awoke.

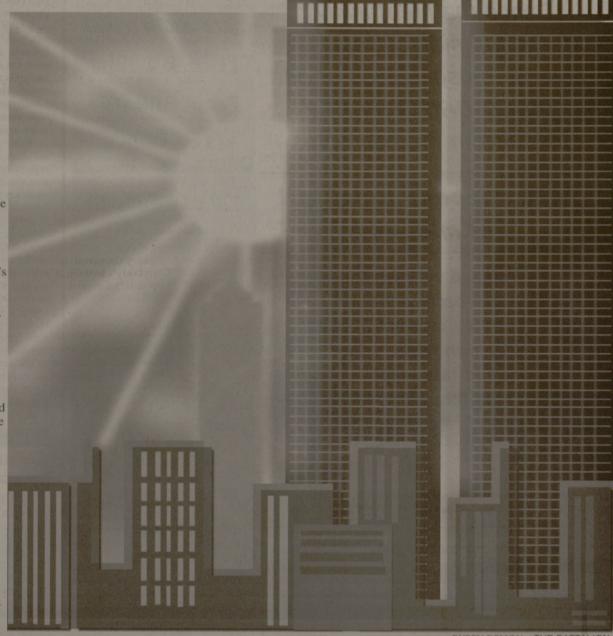
Even as American soldiers remain in Afghanistan, it is now apparent that America's Those Litest strength is not the speed of its fighter jets or the power of its weaponry. America's ers) have pree of resolve comes from the people's belief in America. The ideals upon which this only course on was founded have survived for more than 200 years not because the United States tice and de always been a military power, but because the American people believe in the system. through jibs Admittedly, Americans may not have an affinity for politicians, and government waste for problem virtually every taxpayer is concerned with, but despite these problems. God," the mericans consider an attack against their nation a personal assault. They believe in the

said in Tuskiem, and they will display an unmatched courage when that system is challenged. There was Americans throughout the United States became heroes that day. The policemen and ify whethe fighters who saved lives that day are undoubtedly heroes. The people who provided a \*Bulder to cry on; the organizers of Red, White and Blue Out; the church leaders who led yers and the counselors who offered their services all served important functions as the ion struggled to come to grips with the inexplicable. Suddenly athletes who we once

ught of as superhuman were simply entertainers. Al-Quds Alfound itself facing a tragedy that hasn't been equalled on American soil since Pearl rbor. Instead of faltering, however, it reacted admirably, raising millions of dollars oss the country for relatives of the Sept. 11 victims through a variety of programs. Even today, the United States continues to heal from Sept. 11. It will be a day of quiet

A differentemplation, not only upon Sept. 11 itself, but of the changes America has undergone on Tuesday's ce the largest terrorist attack in U.S. history. This nation has a firmer grasp of its own the hijackers ingth, and a greater appreciation for both this country and the communities of which it

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## New video games carry insightful messages

Thile searching online for obscure information on the snakehead fish, I umbled across a link to an online ideo game called New York

lefender. The game begins with a icture-perfect view of downtown New York City before Sept. 11. es soon began flying onto the screen heading for the Twin owers. The object of the game is to shoot the planes out of the being among ir before they collide with the buildings, but within a minute so They appeared lany planes are pouring onto the screen that even the most at maps, includ schaustive effort becomes futile. The planes crash into the towers Washington Dreating massive holes of dark smoke and the World Trade Center

manuals of colors down. Game over. Video games are popular because they offer the player a difseveral books cult but feasible challenge to overcome. The player has an could be set prortunity to win, thus the tired eyes and sore thumbs at 5 desks and a hum, but New York Defender is different: You can't win. This pointing at that ame is anything but satisfying. It makes the player feel power-Pentagon on of ss and vulnerable.

Another exact The game wasn't created for a good time, though. It is a mesman identified age about the hopelessness of anti-terrorism: Try as you might to Abdulaziz Alolow every enemy out of the sky, some will always slip by. what appeare There are no ways to actually win," Jonathon Pitcher, one of the farewell mession ames French designers, wrote as a side note to the game. "The "God may inner becomes the last one to lose."

Some are concerned about the message this game conveys. They say it is negative and insensitive to the efforts of America. But the point of this game, and others like it, is not to mock America, but to sympathize. The message of New York Defender is not that America is doing a lousy job of protecting itself; it is that no matter how peaceful the world gets or how well the United States guards itself, you can only do so much to keep a plane from flying past the reaches of your gun.

The online video game has become the newest means of making statements about current events. Tech columnist, Clive Thompson, says last summer the pass-around hit was a Lizzie Grubman game in which players mowed down unlucky Hamptons townies using a smirking Lizzie in her SUV. Now there is a parody of the popular arcade game Street Fighter out-Downing Street Fighter, in which nine British politicians maul each other in an effort to become prime minister. As if the sight of nine suits throwing fists isn't entertaining enough, the men yell mangled Japanese-style English taunts at one another. It's a jab at the concept of party politics where ethical debate often turns into childish smack down - a game.

The war on terrorism has inspired the creation of many online games, and their makers span a wide variety of people both for and against the war. One designer crafted War on Terrorism, a game that allows you to take down the Taliban with sniper rifles and AK-47s. If you're still alive by the last level, you get to pummel bin Laden with your fists. Yet another designer created Al

Quaidamon, a satirical play on both Pokemon and human rights concerns over how prisoners of war are treated "Your very own prisoner of war! How will you treat him?" the game asks. "Be careful, you might just grow to love him!'

Most of these games, while sometimes violent and gruesome, are meant to be humorous and in good fun. Others send out a powerful message about the state of the world. The French creators of New York Defender have developed another game called Enduring Freedom, and while the title sounds positive, the game is quite the opposite. The player's goal is to try and bomb Afghan military bases while avoiding peaceful settlements. But the bases look nearly identical to the townships and they go by so quickly the player ends up accidentally taking out innocents in the effort to defeat the enemy. Although the villages being bombed are in a country on the other side of the world, the message hits close to

Most of these games are pretty dull. They will never make it to the arcades and more than likely, you won't find yourself at the keyboard early in the morning. They are low-tech, 2-D and so simple most can be mastered within two minutes, but this is all part of the point. These games aren't trying to get you hooked. They're trying to make you think.

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## oreign visas too difficult to obtain after Sept. 11

may God pro. Alomari and aboard Americ Flight 11, which the World Trade obtain a student with Al-Jazeera and their school weekend that of hoice is some-respondents had ig most

this noble act



COLLINS EZEANYIM

wo top al-Querican college students take for granted. wanted in the eign students, however, are not so fortunate. According n before last year's terrorist attacks, internariew, reported all students had to endure rigorous regulations n June with order to study in the United States, according to Mohammed Association of International Educators. Since Binalshibh. events of Sept. 11, the scrutiny has grown Congress was

American land The Associated Press reports many foreign stu-Paida's Sept. hts were unable to re-enter the country to attend he terror group sees this fall because increased security has led red striking visa application delays. In particular, students

m the Middle East, Africa and Asia have experifficials, speak ann Drolesky, executive director for the inter-on of anonymional programs for students at Texas A&M, said Mohammed rtually no students from Saudi Arabia received bout the originas to enter the United States." This should not 1 plot are phappening. After Sept. 11, the government ley have no uld exercise more caution when dealing with at would verificing visitors. But by unfairly focusing on interional students, the government is performing a

grievous error that will negatively impact both foreign and American students and their universities.

For example, in 2001, the visa application process for foreign students lasted about a week. according to The Associated Press. Since that time the government has stretched it to last as long as three months. The expanded time frame is grossly unfair. For some foreign students, it means they may have to wait until spring to continue their education. Even when Sept. 11 is taken into consideration, there is no reason why a process that took only a few days a year ago now takes months.

What makes the situation worse is the government's inconsistency in handling foreign visitors post-Sept. 11. While the federal government is being stingy in approving student visas, some state governments readily give away driver's licenses to people who are in America illegally. In fact, Governor Gray Davis is about to sign a bill that would make this official policy in California.

The Justice Department claims the intense scrutiny foreign students endure is in America's interest - yet only one of the Sept. 11 hijackers was able to obtain a student visa, according to NAFSA.org. FoxNews.com reports at least seven of the Sept. 11 hijackers were able to obtain driver's licenses. By this proportion alone, the government should be more focused on how illegal

immigrants obtain driver's licenses. Instead, they have directed too much attention on international

Worse still, government organizations may create a needless fear of foreign students. Drolesky said the "INS classifies all schools simply as 'schools' - so rank research institutions like Texas A&M are lumped together with flight schools and other such training organizations. Because of this, students and scholars have been made to look as though they are among the most dangerous individuals entering the U.S." Drolesky said less than two percent of the 30 million temporary visas issued are student visas. It would seem logical then for the government to devote about two percent of its anti-terrorism resources to student visa holders. Instead, the Department of Justice chooses to execute new and bloated regulations such as the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS). According to the Department of Justice Web site, it will eventually be mandatory for schools to use SEVIS to "report pertinent information to INS" regarding foreign students. Still, SEVIS probably will not keep determined terrorists out of the United States.

By implementing more pointless bureaucracy into the student visa application process, the government negatively affects many critical aspects of

higher education. As Larry Bell told The Associated Press, "The greater impact . . . may be on the intellectual community . . . a lot of these people are involved in research projects that may have to be put on hold." Other than educating students, the main responsibility of many universities, including Texas A&M, is to conduct research. It would be a shame if research projects were put on hold or cancelled due to shortsighted actions by government.

The new enhanced security will also negatively impact the American economy.

According to The Associated Press, the 550,000 undergraduate and graduate foreign students contributed \$11 billion to the economy. In addition, Drolesky says multinational companies seeking to build partnerships in other nations may move their business if foreign students cannot study in the

The U.S. government has a responsibility to protect the public from terrorism, but it is wrong to focus so much unneeded attention on the hardworking international students who choose to study in America.

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