

## On 9/11 Anniversary, Remember Legacy of Those Lost

Written by Sen. Charles Grassley  
Thursday, 08 September 2011 07:50

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by U.S. Senator Chuck Grassley

A decade after vicious terrorist attacks killed thousands of innocent people and caused immeasurable grief to victims and survivors, America has shown the world that 9/11 may have changed life as we knew it, but it has not changed America's commitment to freedom, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

The national tragedy tapped an overwhelming sense of solidarity and sacrifice among Americans from across the country. Consider the selfless acts of courage and patriotism from the moment the hijackers commandeered three airplanes on that clear September morning 10 years ago: from the passengers aboard United Flight 93, to the first responders who reported to the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, and the heroes who serve on the front lines from within the nation's military and from behind-the-scenes in our intelligence and counterterrorism operations. Thanks to the allegiance of public servants and private citizens, our men and women in uniform and our captains of commerce and industry, the United States of America continues to serve as a beacon of hope, freedom and opportunity to the rest of the world. Those who sought to undermine the exceptionalism of the American people underestimated the resiliency of the American people.

Just consider the recent protests across the globe, where after decades of oppression, the people of Tunisia, Egypt and Libya have thrown out autocratic regimes in the pursuit of self-government, economic opportunity, higher standards of living and personal freedoms. The 10th anniversary of 9/11 offers Americans and our friends around the world the opportunity to embrace the common threads that tie us together.

For more than two centuries, the United States has attracted millions of newcomers to live and work in the land of opportunity. Generations of Americans have scaled the ladder of economic and social mobility, enjoyed the freedoms of press, speech and religion, and embraced the ups and downs of entrepreneurship, risk-taking and innovation. Unleashing the power of the individual has served as a catalyst for economic growth and prosperity for the last 235 years.

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Along the way, the United States evolved as an economic, cultural and military leader in the world. The 9/11 terror attacks dealt a devastating blow to America and all of humanity. And yet, 10 years later, America still stands as the shining city on the hill. Despite the economic downturn, America still bears the promise of better days ahead. Despite high unemployment and unprecedented public debt, the American Dream still serves as the magical elixir that ultimately defines the nation's resiliency and bone-deep belief in the goodness of America.

That bone-deep belief in the goodness of America flows through the veins of those called to serve their country in the U.S. military, including one of Iowa's own hometown heroes who lost his life in the line of duty this summer. Jon Tumilson enlisted in the Navy after graduating from high school in 1995. A 35-year-old Navy SEAL from Rockford, he was one of 30 Americans killed in one of the deadliest attacks on U.S. forces since 9/11. Barbara and I were able to pay our respects to this fallen Navy SEAL at his funeral in August. The long-time Iowa Hawkeye football and wrestling fan left behind family members and loved ones, including his beloved Labrador retriever named Hawkeye. The black lab led family members into the school gymnasium for the service and proceeded to lie next to the casket of his owner. They say a picture is worth a 1,000 words. The image of Tumilson's dog lying next to the flag-draped casket brought three words to mind; loyalty, loss and love.

Let's honor the memory of the many Iowans who've died in military service since 9/11, and all the soldiers and veterans who have served their country to protect U.S. national security and preserve our American way of life.

May their sacrifice remind us of their bone-deep belief in America's goodness. As policymakers return to Washington, D.C. and Americans observe the 10th anniversary of 9/11, let's keep their legacy and love of country close to mind as we work to put America back on the right track towards economic growth and prosperity.

Friday, September 2, 2011