

Explosion Raises Questions about Ourselves

Faceless cowards. The tragedy in Oklahoma City raises many questions about the state of our nation. All of us have been horrified at the grotesque images of the senseless disaster and our image of the unscathed heartland has been shattered.

The first issue to come to mind is how can anyone convince themselves that by blowing up a Federal building, full of women and children, any reasonable bit of progress can be accomplished?

Such a sinister plot could only bring additional hostile action against the perpetrator, and whatever cause they stood for. The arrogance and violence of this action makes one question the increasing portrayal of violence in our news, movies and games. Have we become so desensitized that pockets of our own society could commit a crime so unthinkable and heartless?

We must examine our own re-

Moderately Speaking

DAVID KANAAN

sponsibility as entertainer or reporter and cradle some wisdom as to what we portray in our movies and selective news. I'm not saying that our own television and news provided the fuel for these incidents, but it certainly didn't condone peace. We have to analyze why something like this is happening in our world, and what causes people to feel so betrayed by our government as to do something so insane.

The Arab enigma.

The scene was a call-in talk show on a news network. The players were the usual, a mediator, as well as a psychologist taking calls on the bombing. An innocent voice made sure her call got through to the show by repeating 'Hello' many times, and she finally started to speak.

"... you know, I just can't believe this happened," her voice quivered, "... I mean at first I thought it was the Muslims, but

when I found out it was white people, I mean Americans, I just couldn't believe it."

The psychologist, holding back tears himself, answered, "I couldn't agree with you more."

This incident was one of many that instantly looked to blame 'Arab groups or, at least, point out that horrific acts such as this could only be committed by Muslims.' Understanding that a lot of press has been given to bombings in the Middle East by terrorist groups there, I still can't believe how an entire people, the Arabs, are blamed as the naturally inclined terrorist. Even as the FBI were showing sketches of the white male suspects, a chorus of reporters asked over and over, "Were they Muslim?" or "Are you sure they're not Arabs?" despite evidence pointing towards an American group, such as the anniversary of the Branch Davidian explosion in Waco, Tex.

Let me set something straight. I was raised in a Muslim household, as were many other Amer-

icans. Nowhere in any form of the religion does it condone killing innocent people. Believe it or not, the vast majority of Muslims and Arabs, in the states and overseas, have only sadness and disgust at the acts of these terrorist groups.

Unfortunately most of the United States does not see this element as often Arabs are portrayed as the heartless terrorist and antagonist on film and in the news.

Can you think of one movie, or news feature that only portrayed Arabs in a positive light?

The sad thing is that for years the Arabs and Muslims have been victims to similar bombings and terrorism. They too have seen mothers, daughters and infants die for what seemed to be senseless reasons. These acts are done by cowards who misuse religion as a powerful tool of hate and revenge, and do not represent the will of their own people. Saying that these groups represent the Arabs in general would

be akin to saying that neo-Nazi groups represented all Americans.

Go get 'em, Bill.

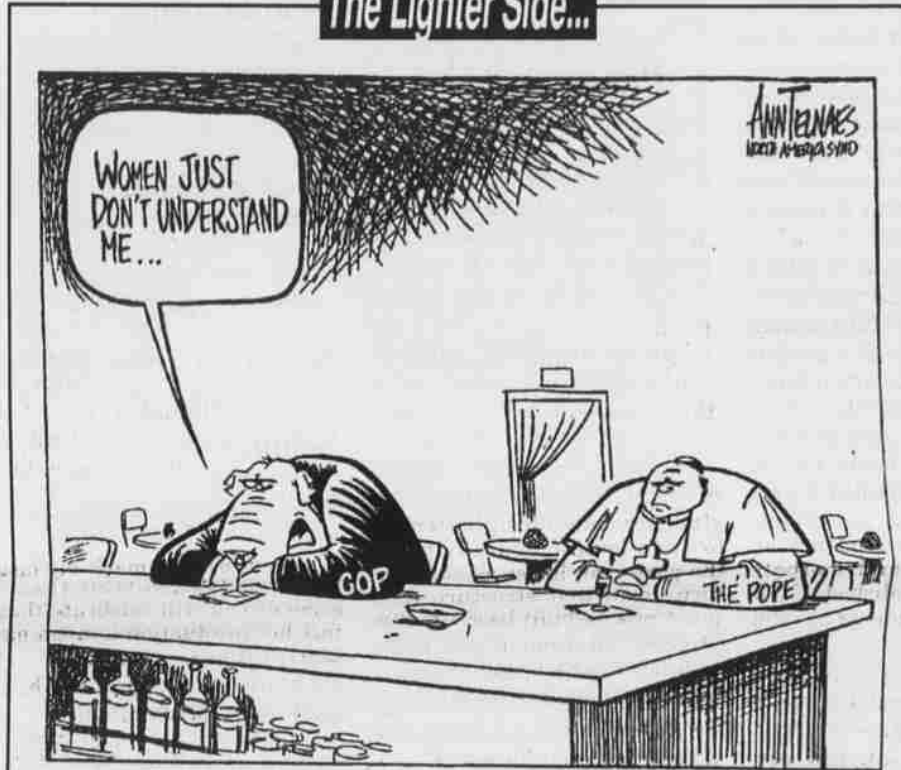
Our President and Attorney General seem to be handling things tough, and that is important. We have to show the world that America won't stand for this. The apprehension of the criminals and their swift trial and death (be it in prison, or otherwise) is imperative. We can't let this disaster, or the disasters like that at the World Trade center disaster, become common place.

We must remember this tragedy and the pain it created. Hopefully it will make our own nation think twice about our own bombing and our role as world policeman.

If one associates with rotten fish he is bound to stink himself. Is it really worth it if we bring home their violence and pain?

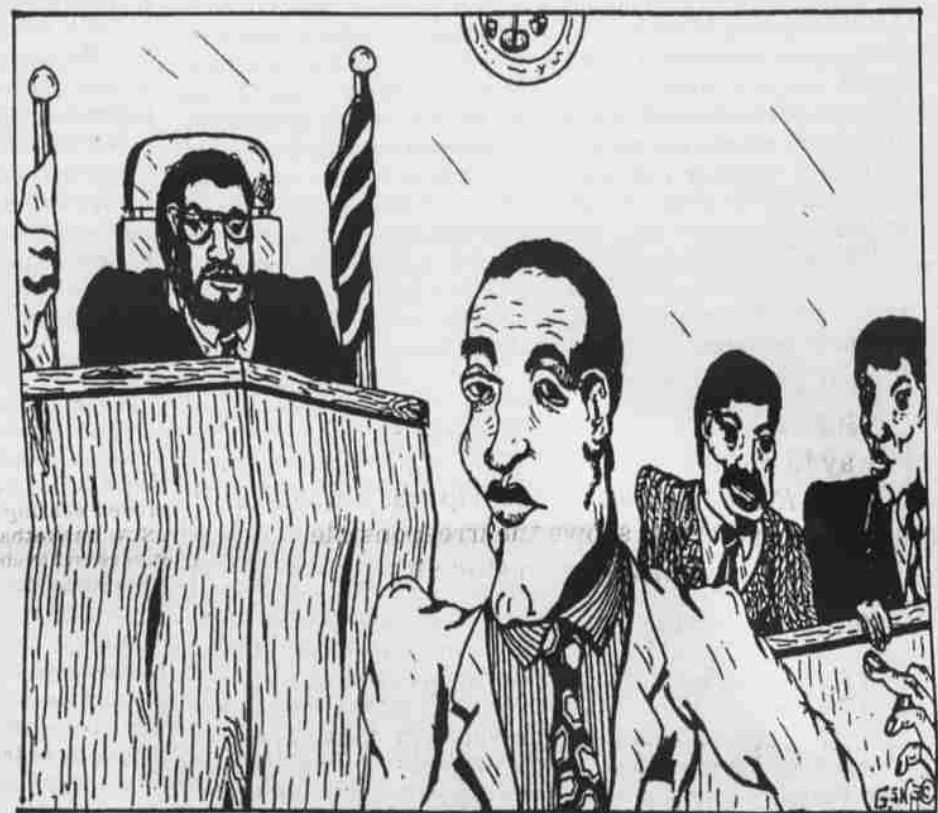
—David Kanaan is an opinion columnist at The Rebel Yell.

The Lighter Side...



Some-where, Out-there

By Gene Redden



I said show the finger O.J., not give it to them!!!

Even If Acquitted, O.J. Won't be Free

Many have called the O.J. Simpson case, "the trial of the century." I call it the murder case that just keeps killing.

O.J. Simpson probably will never be executed if found guilty. But even if the jury acquits him

or is hung, Simpson will emerge damaged beyond repair. He will be broke, and a pariah in the worlds of sports endorsements, broadcasting and movies — which made him rich and famous before the brutally slashed bodies of his wife Nicole and her friend Ron Goldman were found.

Mark Fuhrman, the detective who allegedly found the blood on Simpson's Ford Bronco and the "bloody glove" on Simpson's property, might find his future fatally circumscribed. Despite the view of some that Fuhrman has won a courtroom duel with F. Lee Bailey, Fuhrman might have dug himself into a black pit of perjury when he testified flatly that he had not used the word "nigger" during the last 10 years, or that racism and hatred of romances between black men and white women never influenced his police work.

The whole Los Angeles law-enforcement establishment has been dealt some crushing, if not mortal, blows by evidence of sloppy, suspicious work that is likely to leave millions of people believing it has engaged in a tunnel-vision effort to convict Simpson.

Millions of Americans are lashing trial Judge Lance Ito as a weakling who tolerates a circus, and as a former prosecutor with a policewoman wife who blinks at atrocious police and prosecutorial activity. Appeals courts will decide whether Ito "got killed" professionally by this trial.

Guest Commentary
CARL ROWAN

Perhaps Faye Resnick, Nicole Simpson's "friend" and current best-selling author of a sleazy book about Nicole was in a "dead end" life before this trial, but courtroom claims about her use of drugs and her overall level of morality and credibility could cause her to wish she were dead.

Then there's the dogged prosecutor, Marcia Clark, victim of the anger of an ex-husband who accuses her of child neglect because she is working so desperately to win a conviction in the most publicized murder trial in history. Not only could she lose sole custody of their children, but she has become the target of trigger-tongued right-wingers who say a woman's place is with her children and her cooking pots.

And how pathetic the symbol of the living dead, attorney Robert Shapiro, who sits through every trial moment like a zombie. He manages only an occasional show of life, as when he undercut Bailey and told the news media that the issue of race should never have been injected into the defense.

Lastly, let me say that this case has become a dagger in the heart of the American media — the supermarket tabloids, the New York tabloids, the dailies that supposedly ponder what's "fit to print," the television stations and networks that rush to spread every rumor and innuendo. The media offenders won't die, but those who value press freedoms and protections tremble from an overdose of irresponsible behavior.