

THE BRONX
Journal

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Editorial

A YEAR ago, this nation watched in horror as two hijacked planes rammed into the World Trade Center and sent the twin towers - and so many of our dreams - crashing down. We watched the smoke slowly clear and rescuers search fruitlessly for signs of life. For months, we watched the rubble carted away, leaving nothing but a mammoth crater. More recently, we saw several plans proposed to rebuild the place called Ground Zero, but they seemed to spring more from a draftsman's table than from the heart.

We have now endured what seems like an eternity since that dark sunny day, and today's somber anniversary is an occasion for us to remember the men and women who died, to comfort their loved ones anew, and to look forward with a new resolve. Many observers describe Sept. 11, 2001, as the defining moment of our lifetime, but that must not be so. We must not be defined by the tragedy itself, but by how we have responded and how we will continue to respond.

What stands out a year later is the magnitude of our losses that day, the thousands of good people from all walks of life who were murdered so senselessly. In the face of evil, good has stood out.

There's talk now of an eternal flame, a memorial wall, and other heart-felt tributes for all those who perished at Ground Zero -and that's as it should be. But if we truly want to honor their memories, that must be just a beginning. Ultimately, the measure of our nation's worth is not whether we get back up after we're knocked down, but whether we stand taller.

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Billy Collins is a Distinguished Professor of English at Lehman College

Yesterday, I lay awake in the palm of the night.
A fine rain stole in, unhelped by my breeze,
And when I saw the silver glaze on the windows,
I started with A, with Ackerman, as it happened,
Then Baxter and Calabro,
Davis and Eberling, names falling into place
As droplets fell through the dark.

Names printed on the ceiling of the night.
Names slipping around a watery bend.
Twenty-six willows on the banks of s stream.

In the morning, I walked out barefoot
Among thousands of flowers
Heavy with dew like the eyes of tears,
And each had a name -
Flori incribed on a yellow petal
Then Gonzalez and Han, Ishikawa and Jenkins.

Names written in the air
And stitched into the cloth of the day.
A name under a photograph taped to a mailbox.

On September 11th
As the first anniversary of the horrific attack on our nation approaches, I go back to your tasteful coverage of this tragedy in your November issue. I hope this September you'll will help us commemorate this dark moment in our history with the same compassion and professionalism.

Roberta Peterson

National Summit on Cuba

You are cordially invited to participate in The National Summit on Cuba will demonstrate, for the first time, the remarkable breadth of support that exists throughout the United States for creating a more sensible policy toward Cuba. The event is being cosponsored by the American Farm Bureau Federation with more than five million members in 50 states, Americans For Humanitarian Trade With Cuba, and supported by to USA Engage coalition comprising more than 600 major American corporations. Summit logistics are being handled by the World Policy Institute. The Summit will come at a critical

time in the embargo debate, as elected officials will vote to lift restrictions on Americans' freedom to travel to Cuba, to make food and medical sales to the island more practical, to dismantle aspects of the highly problematic Helms-Burton legislation and other Cuba-related issues as part of the overall Autumn Appropriations debate.

At the National Summit on Cuba, the audience is an important part of the event. As in a convention, the Summit will showcase delegations from each state comprised of reputable corporate, government, religious, medical, labor, port, agricultural, Cuban American and other community leaders. The audience will carry Important local perspectives that will educate members of the Administration and Congress on how different policy approaches might better serve our national interest at large.

Other Activities

Public Opinion Polling on American attitudes toward the embargo.

A full-page ad in a major U.S. daily newspaper quantifying American support for free travel and food and medical trade as a matter of U.S.

national interest coordinated by Americans For Humanitarian Trade With Cuba

Reception Summit night for Summit Attendees and Speakers.

Leading pro-engagement Cuban American groups host a Lobby Day the day after the Summit and Capitol Hill Panel on the changed dynamics of this important community with several planes arriving from Miami, New Jersey and delegations from other states blanketing The Capitol. Bipartisan Congressional Breakfast hosted by Me American Farm Bureau with U.S. Senators and members of the House Cuba Working Group.

Pedro A. González,
Publisher La Nación Cubana

Letters to the Editor must include your name, address, and telephone number so we can verify your comments. The letters may be edited to conform to space limitations. Readers may also send comments via e-mail to: tbj@lehman.cuny.edu



TOM TOLES

Commentary

The Names

Monogram on a torn shirt,
I see you spelled out on storefront windows
And on the bright unfurled awnings of this city.
I say the syllables as I turn a corner -
Kelly and Lee,
Medina, Nardella, and O'Connor.

When I peer into the woods,
I see a thick tangle where letters are hidden
As in a puzzle concocted for children.
Parker and Quigley in the twigs of an ash,
Rizzo, Schubert, Torres, and Upton,
Secrets in the boughs of an ancient maple.

Names written in the pale sky.
Names rising in the updraft amid buildings.
Names silent in stone
Or cried out behind a door.
Names blown over the earth and out to sea.

In the evening - weakening light, the last swallows.
A boy on a lake lifts his oars.

A woman by a window puts a match to a candle,
And the names are outlined on the rose clouds -
Vanacore and Wallace,
(let X stand, if it can, for the ones unfound)
Then Young and Ziminsky, the final jolt of Z.

Names etched on the head of a pin.
One name spanning a bridge, another undergoing a tunnel.
A blue name needled into the skin.
Names of citizens, workers, mothers and fathers,
The bright-eyed daughter, the quick son.
Alphabet of names in green rows in a field.
Names in the small tracks of birds.
Names lifted from a hat
Or balanced on the tip of the tongue.
Names wheeled into the dim warehouse of memory.
So many names, there is barely room on the walls of the heart.

Billy Collins is poet laureate of the United States. This poem was read on September 6 before Congress at its joint session in New York City.