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A Call for National Unity

Given the news of the horrific shooting in Las Vegas, I scrapped the planned October Newsletter.

The shooter planned the event very well, raining hundreds of rounds of bullets down on a defenseless concert crowd. It was a massacre unprecedented in American history. Many people ran towards the danger, trying to save or help others.

I had a flashback to Hurricane Harvey, where everyone also helped each other. Race was not an issue, there were victims of all colors and economic status working to save and provide for others.

The Harvey disaster, followed by the twin hurricanes Irma and Maria devastated Puerto Rico, an American territory. My heart goes out to these people in a special way. I served with Puerto Rican soldiers, who valiantly tried to teach me Spanish. They and their families were in harm's way.

On September 24, in Nashville, a Sudanese immigrant killed a woman, then entered a church and opened fire on attendees, injuring six people. He had previously attended the church before turning on the congregation. The incident was eerily similar to the one when Dylann Roof attended a prayer group at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church, then shot and killed nine wonderful people. Each victim

was educated and making great contributions to society, or young and full of potential. I posted a newsletter extra titled "[Racial Killing in South Carolina](#)." A family member sent a "thank-you" letter, and I fought back tears, that in this time of high stress and priorities, he took the time to say thank you. He is a person of high character and a gentleman of high integrity, and someone I admire.

One killing was white on black, the other black on white. Both were senseless. The focus must not be on the race of the shooters, but the victims, and the loss to society incurred by their deaths.

The dichotomy to our social condition is overwhelming.

America, divided by political, racial, economic, and educational status, seems destined for self-destruction. Opportunities are unequal for a variety of reasons. Politics has morphed into hate. Compromise is difficult. Instead of these tragedies drawing us closer together, they are fodder for the politicians and news media to further divide and fragment the American people.

The destruction of national symbols and football players kneeling for the National Anthem are cries for help. There is nowhere to vent the anger, but these actions, with unclear and fuzzy motives, serve no purpose. If I were dropped in a dark pit screaming for help, it would achieve the same result, that is, nothing. We can continue with conflicts imposed by politics, or rise above pain and distrust and try to solve the problems. There are opportunities and much work to do, but we need the unity of American purpose to get the job done.

Unfortunately, there is no functional structure to open meaningful dialog, and we apparently lack the national will to honestly address complex issues and develop actionable solutions. Instead, we antagonize each other. Americans, from a systems perspective, have trapped themselves in the concrete of institutionalized gridlock. America is wandering around in a desert of its own making, without direction or mission.

I pray it will not take North Korea exploding a hydrogen bomb on Alaska, LA, or San Francisco to understand that we are one family. United we can do anything, but divided, the great American experiment will fail, and freedoms will disappear. Currently we are our worst enemy

My prayers are for the victims and families of all of these disasters, and for our children and grandchildren who are counting on us to build a world that provides equal opportunities for all. I pray for the unity of Americans to the cause of freedom for everyone.



Best regards,

Wayne L Staley

Affinity Systems LLC

<http://www.waynelstaley.com/>

<http://www.competitiveamerica.us/>



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