

## What Is An American?



In light of these tragic events, it has become important to remind ourselves and explain to the world what it means to be an American. We take immeasurable pride in who we are and what we stand for. We are the descendants of Minute Men, Doughboys and G.I.'s. People who will not start a fight, but will never run from one. When we fight we fight for justice and righteousness! We are unbeatable.

We are big city and small town people. We are descendants of the world. A nation of immigrants who have embraced freedom, democracy, and opportunity because in many cases, our ancestors did not enjoy the benefits of any of these things. We cherish these rights and wish that all in the world had them. That is why we will never allow anyone to take them from us.

We are strong and proud, some might say arrogant. We see ourselves as a self-made nation full of self-made people. We believe in our way of life. We do not believe that we are better than anyone, but we do believe that what we have is the best.

We are people who believe that one must be responsible for one's actions. We do not blame others for our failings and weaknesses. We are always looking to improve ourselves, to be better. We are not perfect.

We are patriotic. We are proud of the great accomplishments of so young a nation. We are always ready to defend what we believe to be right and just. We have given our blood for our country and other countries. We expect nothing in return. We see our duty and we do it.

We are a religious people. We are represented by all faiths, and we are accepting of all religious beliefs. We do have some who are intolerant, but the vast majority of Americans are moral, decent, children of God. We believe that God loves and cares. We believe that those that go before us are in the hands of God. We believe that religion is about goodness and life, not vengeance and death. We know that God and our beliefs will see us through the darkest of times.

We are first and foremost a nation and a people of peace and of liberty. We believe this to our core. It is a part of every one of us. We know that peace and liberty must be nurtured and protected. We know also, that sometimes peace and liberty must be defended. We have defended these rights for the world and ourselves many times in our brief existence. We will now do so again.

This is who we are. We cannot and will not be anything else. No words, action, or horrific deeds will change us. These acts only strengthen our beliefs and our resolve. We are Americans, we are relentless, we will make things right.

David A. Ring

October 3, 2001