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as I see it;
trying not to
offend
those who will
disagree."

The truth as I see it™

Idaho Common Sense™



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Move to the sound of the gun

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"Let's roll."

Response of Todd Beamer, one of the heroes of Flight 93, just before he and fellow passengers rushed the cockpit upon hearing that three other passenger planes had been used as weapons on 9/11.

Have you ever watched a sheepdog working with sheep? Lt. Col. Dave Grossman, author of the book "On Killing," discusses sheep and sheepdogs, drawing comparisons between sheep, sheepdogs and us.

The sheepdog herds the sheep, keeps them where they belong, makes them follow the rules, and nips at them when needed; all a bit irritating to the sheep. Moreover, the sheepdog is always nervous, always sniffing the air, always watching, always on the alert.

Why does he act like this? Because, unlike the sheep, the sheepdog is always looking for the wolf he knows is there, a constant reminder to the sheep that there are wolves out there who want to kill them. Sometimes the sheep so tire of this unending reminder they wish the sheepdog would just go away.

But, what happens when the wolf shows up, wanting to kill as many sheep as possible? The sheep turn and run as fast as they can; but not the sheepdog. He does not join the sheep in a mad dash for survival, even though he

could easily outrun the sheep, leaving them on their own.

No, he does not run. Instead, he turns and faces the wolf, prepared to die protecting the sheep. Odd behavior, especially since sheepdogs don't want to fight wolves, instinctively knowing they could die. Yet, the sheepdog is the first to take the fight to the wolf because he's a sheepdog and that's what sheepdogs do.

Lt. Col. Grossman suggests we are much like sheep and sheepdogs; neither is superior, each has value, and both are needed to make our society what it is.

Remember the terrorists flying planes into the World Trade Center towers? Most of us were thankful we were not on those flights; but a few of us wished we had been because we might have made a difference. The few who wanted to be on those flights are sheepdogs and that's what sheepdogs do.

Remember a few years ago the mass shooting at Trolley Square in Salt Lake City? A gunman opened fire in the mall and people were running for their lives.

That is, except for one man. That man was an off-duty police officer who, rather than run, turned and moved to the sound of the gun. Why didn't he run to safety? Why did he risk his life? Because he's a sheepdog and that's what sheepdogs do.

Our military personnel are also sheepdogs, always looking for the wolves in the world, always alert for evil, following the words of Flavius Vegetius Renatus, who in 375 A.D. said, "Let him who desires peace prepare for war." So, our troops, hoping for peace, prepare for war, accepting the reality there are wolves in the world and those wolves want to destroy us.

Some of us sheep do not understand this constant preparation for war, erroneously believing our troops are hoping for war, hoping for the opportunity to fight, hoping for the opportunity to kill.

Not so. More than the rest of us, they understand the reality of war, the carnage of war, the lives lost in war. No, they do not want a war. They do not want to have to fight the wolf any more than the sheepdog does. But, just like the sheepdog, they will fight, they will move to the sound of the gun.

We are lucky we have sheep and sheepdogs because both are important. Unfortunately, we sometimes forget the value of our sheepdogs. Sometimes they are an irritating reminder there are people who want to destroy us, making us wish our sheepdogs would go away. But without sheepdogs we would perish. Let's always appreciate them, those who move to the sound of the gun.

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