

WHAT MIKE FORGOT

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This is a reproduction of an exchange that took place on Facebook shortly after the death of General Suleimani, a leading proponent of terrorism.

Mike Wrote:

“I acknowledge you are separating the two events. From what I have heard, many in the administration are linking them. I have no doubt that he is a bad guy, and if we had declared war on Iran, he certainly would have been fair game. But we have not, and it makes it very hard for other countries to not consider the reverse as justified, or for us to argue that it is not if it happens. Certainly our troops have killed folks in the types of places you describe, presumably not by intent, but many non-combatants have died as a result of our actions. If a member of my family, a non-combatant, was killed by a member of the military of another nation, when there was no declared state of war, I do not think I would be forgiving. My memory would be long, and it would be hard for me to not extract revenge, in my own time and in the place and manner of my choosing, when they least expected it. If I, a pretty peace loving guy, know that I would feel this way, I have to imagine that others would as well. How many people have we created who are just biding their time to extract revenge upon members of a country they blame for the loss of ones they love.”

I created a new post on my own page:

Yesterday, a friend of mine posted something in the thread of a discussion that I felt deserved its own place in Facebook history. The point he made was valid. I’ve made the point myself in some of my essays. The way he made it, however, also validated the counterpoint.

During the discussion of whether or not the United States ought to have killed General Suleimani, my friend wrote this: “If a member of my family, a non-combatant, was killed by a member of the military of another nation, when there was no declared state of war, I do not think I would be forgiving. My memory would be long, and it would be hard for me to not extract revenge, in my own time and in the place and manner of my choosing, when they least expected it.”

After reading this, I concluded that my friend's memory might not be as long as he has claimed. Perhaps he's forgotten:

American Airlines Flight 11,

American Airlines Flight 175,

United Airlines Flight 93,

American Airlines Flight 77,

The Seizure of two riverine command boats by Iranian Navy in international waters,

TWA Flight 840,

TWA Flight 847, when Navy diver Robert Stethem was murdered and his body dumped on the runway,

TWA 841,

Pan Am Flight 103,

Journalist James Foley,

The Marine Barracks in Beirut,

The U.S. Embassy bombing in Beirut,

The Twin Towers,

The Pulse Nightclub,

The USS Cole,

Fort Hood (Nidal Hasan),

American Airlines Flight 444,

And most recently, the three sailors who died in Pensacola.

This is a short list. There have been hundreds of other attacks each and every year, many in places around the world where Americans vacation or do business, completely separate from what has been historically referred to as a war zone or combat zone.

The now deceased General may not have been directly complicit in each of these attacks. There is no way to tell. Before he was promoted to General, he was an operative under deep cover, but his job was the same.

And so to my friend and to all of you, my advice is to feel free to offer an opinion on the killing of General Suleimani, but please do not pretend we are not in a war.

We are in both a state of war and a state of denial.

To make matters worse, it is a war that cannot be won with guns and bombs.

EDITORIAL NOTE:

You cannot kill ideological hatred with a bullet.