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NOTEBOOK

Police Officer Visits to Reassure a Queens Mosque

A couple of days after the attack on the World Trade Center, John Loud, second vice president of the Patrolmen's Benevolent Association, drove around Queens, looking for a mosque. He said he had been worried about Muslims in New York, and wanted to offer them comfort and reassurance. Turning onto 168th Street, he found the Jamaica Muslim Center, whose 2,000 members are mainly immigrants from Pakistan and Bangladesh.

Yesterday he went back to speak, at the mosque's invitation. "No one should feel bad," he said. "We are after evil. We are not after your religion. We don't want revenge; we want justice."

Later, he added: "Any religion that tells you to kill is not a good religion. Islam does not tell you to kill. Islam is one of the world's greatest religions."

When Mr. Loud mentioned his "missing brothers," he choked on the words and began to weep. Most in the crowd gazed at him in somber silence. Later, they called his words beautiful and comforting.

"He said what we want to hear," said Wadud Bhuyan. "We don't want them to get all the Muslims."

Led by their imam, the worshipers asked Allah to give them strength to overcome the grief, and to send the victims to heaven. After the prayer, mosque leaders distributed lunches of spicy rice and lamb. Some in the crowd offered a plate to a lone officer sitting in a police car guarding the mosque. *YILU ZHAO*

Fireworks Ban Is Lifted

Ending a nationwide ban imposed after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, the Federal Aviation Administration said yesterday that it would once again allow fireworks and searchlight displays, laser shows, model-rocket launches and the release of party helium balloons.

The announcement came none too soon for businesses that specialize in revelry, including Garden State Fireworks in Millington, N.J. August Santore, the company's chief executive, said the ban had resulted in a loss of several hundred thousand dollars.

Mr. Santore learned yesterday morning announcing that the prohibition had been lifted, but despite a flurry of telephone calls to customers, he said, it was unlikely that much business could be revived.

One customer, Rutgers University, canceled its football game and fireworks display last weekend. Though a game against Virginia Tech will be played as scheduled today, the university canceled the traditional pyrotechnic display that accompanies the team's arrival on the field, according to a spokesman, Mark Maben. Instead, he said, there will be a moment of silence and the singing of "God Bless America." *DEAN E. MURPHY*

Changing His Pinstripes

As if the city needed further evidence that life is truly upside down, Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani said last night that he would attend a Mets game. Yes. He said he wanted to thank them for wearing Fire Department hats, and to show that all partisan bets were off, even in baseball.A reporter could write here now that the mayor is a rabid Yankees fan, but that would insult the reader.

Of course, not everyone shares his spirit. He tried to give Attorney General John Ashcroft a Mets towel, but Mr. Ashcroft refused, as he hails from St. Louis. The mayor managed to fob off the item on the head of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Robert S. Mueller III. *JENNIFER STEINHAUER*

TV Reception Problems

Seconds after the attack began at the World Trade Center, six of the city's eight major television stations, whose broadcast antennas were on the 300-foot mast atop the north tower, lost their signals. That left the 4.5 million people in the region who do not have cable unable to receive WNBC, WABC, WNET, WPIX, WNYW and WWOR.

Three hundred antennas were destroyed on the north tower mast, including transmitters for four FM radio stations — WKCR, WPAT, WNYC and WKTU — all of which quickly found temporary solutions.

Executives at WABC, WNBC and WPIX scrambled to get antennas onto the Alpine Tower Company's mast in Alpine, N.J., on the Hudson River.

But signals still cannot reach much of Brooklyn, Queens and the East Side of Manhattan because the Alpine mast is only 920 feet above sea level, about half the height of the north tower mast. WCBS and WXTV have been able to stay on the air because of antennas at the Empire State Building. *JAYSON BLAIR*

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