

VFW Wants 'Spirit of 9/11' Back

America's sense of unity and purpose unfelt since Pearl Harbor attack

Sep 08, 2011

On the eve of the 10th anniversary of the Sept. 11, 2001, attack on America, the new national commander of the nation's largest and oldest major combat veterans' organization is calling on all Americans to renew their commitment to country and to all those serving in uniform and in emergency services, as well as their families.

"Ten years have passed since our nation was viciously attacked," said Richard L. DeNoyer, who was elected Sept. 1 as commander-in-chief of the 2 million-member Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. and its Auxiliaries. "While our magnificent men and women in uniform continue to inflict tremendous damage on the enemy, most Americans have grown so complacent to the distant wars that they have forgotten about almost 40 successful or thwarted attempts on American soil over the past decade. That is a very dangerous mindset, because this war is far from finished."

DeNoyer, a retired Marine and Vietnam combat veteran from Middleton, Mass., said just because America is planning to redeploy the great majority of its forces from Iraq and Afghanistan over the next few months and years doesn't mean the enemy will stop trying to kill Americans.

"Bringing the troops home won't end the threat to Americans here or abroad, or to U.S. allies and interests around the world," he said.

"War has two sides, and this one is against an unconventional enemy of religious and ideological extremists who occupy no territory, wave no flag, and wear no uniform. They hide behind women and children inside churches and mosques. They use the U.S. Constitution and America's sense of fair play and justice as weapons against us. They strap

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explosives on the backs of children and the mentally handicapped and send them into civilian marketplaces. Only a fool would believe they wouldn't have killed 30,000 or 300,000 had they had the means 10 years ago."

The new VFW national commander was assisting veterans from their disability claims when 9/11 occurred.