

**The Rev. Elizabeth McMaster
Los Alamos NM 87544**

I am very concerned over the tenor of the Monitor's lead editorial ("Our View" Sept. 18). It begins by saying "In the anxious fog of retaliation..." What retaliation? Against whom? Whom are we fighting? Before we get in over our heads in a war with untoward consequences, might we just step back a bit and take a rational look at the many causes of this terrible attack and the myriad of responses we might choose to make? More than the killing of so many (over 5,000 at latest count), more than the lost and injured, more than the pain that engulfs us, I worry that retaliation seems uppermost on what we hear of the Administration's thinking, of what the media is spouting. Violence has never begotten more than increased violence. We have been jarred into the realities of today's world--a world in which the majority of the world's people live and have lived for a long, long time. We need to see and take responsibility for the part we have played in all this. We do not have clean hands--and it is not the hateful, spiteful rhetoric of Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson that has led us to this abysmal situation. But we are not clean. We have taken the lives of other innocents the world over and we must, if we are truly what we say we are--the citadel of democracy and the world's leading power--we must find ways to create paths to peace. We must be part of a world wide effort to ease suffering and bring peace and justice to all the nations.

Please, please, Monitor Editors, do not fall prey to the easy path of revenge. You have a responsibility to this community to set a model of sanity and responsibility. Do it.