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### Free Mark Lankford Defense Project-End of Decade Report

As we embark upon the second decade of the 21st Century, we can look back on these 10 years with mixed emotion. We are all a decade older, but we have survived to read this report. The latter certainly outranks the former. I can look back with some reason to hope for the future of our race, for even though we still have a penchant for solving disputes with violence e loud voices, too many times based on religious differences, some positive movement has transpired.

With the election of Barack Obama to the economic implosion caused by those inebriated with financial power, we have ridden the proverbial roller-coaster of emotion. The struggle to overcome these age-old propensities is alive e well, with some progress noted. I fully understand the position of the cynic, the warrior, the pacifist e the elitist. Xenophobia in all its mutations runs through the veins of us all, whether we acknowledge it or choose to cover it as one would a blemish. Even though we know the differences we see each day are reason to rejoice, (for this is what makes life so very interesting), we still harbor a certain fear that emanates from our primitive brain. This is the deadbeat father of insecurity, hate, jealousy, petty argument e those hell-bent on instilling fear in the hearts of the masses. All this in the name of difference e variety!

At the end of the Clinton presidency, which we referred to as the "Bridge to the 21st Century", we were hopeful that humanity would make great strides, for the sake of us all. Bush was "elected" e then we had the unprovoked attacks on the World Trade Center in 2001. Of course, this led to military conflict, with an amorphous enemy that possessed no State or land. We humans are not equipped to engage in a war in which there is no counterpart that can surrender e the hostilities then terminate. This is not within our experiential history, therefore all those expounding on how such a campaign should be waged are voicing opinions "without portfolio". We should simply state that this is all being done by the seat of our pants and pray for the best.

As the Iraqi portion of the military mission slips into its final stages, the Afghan imbroglio heats up. There is an historical well of conflict information concerning Afghanistan, none of it in the asset column of the ledger for the outsiders. I understand all facets of this difficulty, where we know young e old will lose their lives. Tribalism mixed with strong belief cannot be defeated with sheer force. It has never been successful e I do not believe it ever will. When we are challenged on what we perceive as an assault on our belief system, our ancient leanings e those we embrace as "brothers e sisters", nothing other than obliteration will be successful. A more insightful method or approach is needed e I believe Obama will, after these initial posturings, make the wisest choice. We must acknowledge that he was dealt a very bad hand. As we Texans say, you play the hand you're dealt e let the chips fall where they may.

The worldwide economic meltdown is slowly being repaired, with mixed results. This cycle of greed leading to collapse must come to an end. Short term profits at the cost of long term prosperity is insanity e has gone on for far too long. A little reform will get exactly what it sounds like, a little. You would not put a little bandaid on a mortal wound, but this is the analogy that best describes what we are observing in the financial reform arena. Tough problems demand tough medicine. The needs of the many are not being met due to the greed e lust of the few. I don't need to tell anyone that this seems to occur every time we hear that old saw "let us fix it, for we know, better than anyone, all the ins e outs." Yes, the fox knows all the entrances to the henhouse!

I began this decade @ 44 e on Death Row. I am no longer slated for

termination, but the system in Idaho deserves no credit. Just the opposite. Idaho violates its own laws e then wonders why it gets no respect. Its own citizens, who have suffered great economic declines, need to get with the program. Beauty may be only skin deep, but stupid is to the bone! I will win this case (again) e it will be sooner than the first illegal e unconstitutional conviction. Check the Website for updates e status reports. I begin 2010 with a hearing in Grangeville, which is a place you do not want to visit. Do I possess hope that a brighter future is in store for us? Of course. It is up to each of us to make a difference each day, somehow. Even in the attenuated world in which I reside, I do this. ONWARD!

I am still hopeful that I can resume my art e get the book configured in my mind. I have the outline, but it has no ending. This entire situation may be seen as of little import to most, which is understandable. Yet, we cannot make little islands of human misery e turn a blind eye to them. We can't do this e be considered psychologically, religiously, ethically or intellectually stable creatures. To come face to face with this is uncomfortable, but to do nothing is despicable.

I have lost my mother, Gretchen Eileen and my brother, Robert James, in this past decade. This omits aunts, uncles, cousins, etc... This is difficult e I feel it deeply. An even worse hurt comes from those in my family that chose to lie e abandon me. They must look at themselves, which is self-initiated punishment. I choose to no longer engage in their epic dysfunction. We do not get the choice when it comes to the family in which we are born. Otherwise, we would all be princes e princesses. Yet, our global family can make up the differences, if we only allow love to come into our lives. WE ARE ONE BIG FAMILY, so we should treat one another as loved ones, not aliens, which I referred to earlier. WE CAN OVERCOME.

If we fall, let us not wallow. Get up, shake it off e continue on your way. If you encounter another that has fallen, assist them as best you can. It is not incumbent on what you may "get in return", for to be of service is its own reward. We cannot lose this imperative value, even if we do not see it much each day. This is not something we should feel only around Christmas or whatever celebration you prefer, for anyone can do that. It should be a daily regimen, a PART of you. Sorry if this sounds preachy, but someone needs to say it. Yes, I like Katy Perry e Lady Gaga! :-)

Let's make this next decade the best ever. Let your lights shine e relish the opportunity to do something for someone else. I am so often asked how I can forgive my brother, other family members e the Idaho "justus" system. I reply simply: I am a real Christian, so I view it as I don't have the choice. Nor do I wish to have the choice. To repay hate with hate leads to everyone hating everyone else. I would prefer that we all love one another, to share a kind word with someone that needs one (who doesn't) e to step into the breach when we see someone in need, especially the little ones.

Don't eat too much e don't make an ass out of yourself. Good advice. Keep smiling, even if you have no good reason to smile. Lighten someone's load. Stay strong, as a matter of course. Don't harshly judge your fellow earthlings, for this method of living will boomerang on you. Believe fiercely, speak wisely e love softly. Thank you for your love e support. I hope to one day be in the position to reciprocate, even though I realize you support e love without condition. No one said it would be easy, but easy never leads to real inner growth.

I close with hope, where so little exists. The snow that I see on the mountains depict the beauty we all possess inside our souls e spirits. I look forward to continuing to be your friend over the next decade e beyond. Stay in touch e I look forward to hearing from you as soon as possible. Adios! MHL

Opast's e Dear, [Signature]