

September 11th 2001

by Ian Kennedy

MINDFUL of our grief, we will first bury our dead;

MINDFUL of our grief, we will not rush to judgement or action, because we know from our own lives and the lives of others that the spirit of anger and vengeance makes for bad decisions, which is why the law does not allow the victim to decide the punishment of the perpetrator.

WE will, instead, pray for our dead;

WE will pray for those left alive, who might as easily have died, that they might not be touched by guilt;

WE will pray for the living whose lives have been changed by these deaths, which is a way of saying we will pray for the world;

WE will pray for our enemies, because that is what we have been taught to do, and now is not the time to suspend our belief in forgiveness;

WE will pray for peace, and we will not make war.

WE say this in the name of those who have died, because to do otherwise would be to desecrate their memory.

AND whilst we are nursing our grief, and burying our dead, and praying, we will take the counsel of friends and foes.

WE will be prudent and pragmatic and do everything we can to protect our people;

BUT we will not lash out, and we will not visit our grief upon the lives of others.

MINDFUL of our grief, we will play the long, patient, often ambiguous and contradictory game of peace, because that, too, is what we have been taught, and now - especially now - is not the time to discard our belief in peace.