

*The Daily Pilot newspaper sent a reporter to Piecemakers to interview Marie and write an article about why we have the American flag hanging upside down. The Letters to the Editor about the article were angry because we have disturbed Costa Mesa's sleep. Below is Marie's response to the editor which was published as an article in The Daily Pilot, and a copy of the editorial.*

# Daily Pilot

Newport Beach and Costa Mesa, California

Published Tuesday, December 23, 2008

## **SOUNDING OFF: How did America get so disgusting?**

By Marie Kolasinski

Rumor has it that the city is up in arms over the Piecemakers' flying the flag upside down as a warning to the people of our country in distress. Mind you, they are not alarmed about the condition of this country but upset over being warned that this country is ready for its demise.

What has happened to the people who make up our nation? Have the good times and blessings put us into a deceitful stupor, or have we become so hardened toward reality and the truth, that we find comfort in looking through the rosy colored glasses of illusion supposing this is the way things really are?

"If you do not like it, go to another country," is such a worn-out crock of garbage. I am glad George Washington did not feel this way. I am appreciative of all the other great people who were brave enough and wide awake enough to detect the enemy with a measuring rod of truth and justice. Truth and justice are a condition of the heart and the hearts of God's people have waxed cold.

We do not need an atom bomb. We need God to come and cause us to repent or perish. Trust me. We will have one or the other. And the way things go depends on the way we go. Will we dare take the blinders off our eyes and see the things as they really are, or will we be faced with praying for the rocks to fall on us before we come to our senses?

Perhaps the flag flying upside down did shake the city from its slumber. As typical Americans, we look for a scapegoat for our paranoia and blame the Piecemakers much like Bush blamed Saddam for God's warning us with the destruction of the towers. We have a replay of the towers burning to the ground 2,000 years ago, and when Jesus was asked what sin the people committed to be killed in that tragedy, He replied simply, "Unless you repent, you will all likewise perish." He did not play a "Where's Waldo" game, trying to find the terrorist.

When we have a country where the government owns the businesses, as we do in America, we need a change. When we have taxes taken from the people to make them part of the corruption going on, we need a change. When we see our prisons filled with

people who are no more corrupt than every government worker, we need a change. When we see the church as corrupt as the government, we need a change. When we see a dictator in our country who is going to change the world much like Hitler intended to do, we need a change. Yes, we are a sad, disgusting example of a Christian country and God has let us hang ourselves. So perhaps it would be a good idea to take our flag and burn it, as it no longer carries the message it was intended to carry.

MARIE KOLASINSKI is from Costa Mesa.

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## EDITORIAL:

### **American flag represents our freedoms**

We at the Daily Pilot certainly don't like to see the American flag flying upside down. In front of our building in Costa Mesa, it flies upright, fluttering gloriously in the breeze.

However, it's important to note that the flag, materially speaking, is not worth much.

Instead, its worth comes from what it symbolizes, which is our freedom and way of life in America. In fact, it is the most revered secular symbol in our society (the cross is the most revered religious symbol).

Because of this, we support the right of the Piecemakers — a religious sect that operates a business in Costa Mesa — to fly the flag upside down, despite the fact that it incenses many, including one veteran who took down the flag several times, only to see it replaced by another.

Marie Kolasinski, the 87-year-old founder of the Piecemakers, stands by her decision.

"We're a nation in distress," she said, citing the loss of American values. "We've lost those, and I'll be damned if I fly it now."

Kolasinski, whose rustic store sells arts and crafts, has a history of controversy, and is no shrinking violet when it comes to voicing her opinion.

Let's be clear: We do not like seeing the flag flown upside down.

But we support this woman's right to do so. And lest we forget: The flag represents the rugged, individual freedoms upon which this country was founded. And those freedoms may be disagreeable or even offensive, yet they are still protected, for the most part, by our founding documents, particularly the 1st Amendment to the Bill of Rights, which imbues all individuals with the right to express themselves.

When we look at the flag we would all do well to remember what it stands for, and why it is such a revered symbol.

And we should be careful about impinging on others' freedoms to display it as they choose, according to their sensibilities, which may be different from our own.