

# NEWSLETTER ON KILLING OF OSAMA BIN LADEN

Compiled by Dick Bennett, May 3, 2011

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VETERANS FOR PEACE Board of Directors Endorses David Swanson's Position On  
The Killing of Osama Bin Laden, May 2, 2011

“Killing Resolves Nothing” By David Swanson, author of *War Is a Lie*

<http://warisacrime.org/node/57708>

The plane I was on landed in Washington, D.C., Sunday night, and the pilot came on the intercom to tell everyone to celebrate: our government had killed Osama bin Laden. This was better than winning the Super Bowl, he said.

Set aside for a moment the morality of cheering for the killing of a human being -- which despite the pilot's prompting nobody on the plane did. In purely Realpolitik terms, killing foreign leaders whom we've previously supported has been an ongoing disaster.

Our killing of Saddam Hussein has been followed by years of war and hundreds of thousands of pointless deaths. Our attempts to kill Muammar Gaddafi have killed his children and grandchildren and will end no war if they eventually succeed. Our attempts to kill Osama bin Laden, including wars justified by that mission, have involved nearly a decade of senseless slaughter in Afghanistan and the rest of the ongoing global "generational" war that is consuming our nation.

The Taliban was willing to turn bin Laden over for trial both before and after September 11, 2001. Instead our government opted for years of bloody warfare. And in the end, it was police action (investigation, a raid, and a summary execution) and not the warfare, that reportedly tracked bin Laden down in Pakistan. After capturing him, our government's representatives did not hold him for trial. They killed him and carried away his dead body.

Killing will lead only to more killing. There will be no review of bin Laden's alleged crimes, as a trial would have provided. There will be no review of earlier U.S. support for bin Laden. There will be no review of U.S. failures to prevent the September 11th attacks. Instead, there will be bitterness, hatred, and more violence, with the message being communicated to all sides that might makes right and murder is the way in which someone is, in President Obama's words, brought to justice.

Nothing is actually resolved, nothing concluded, and nothing to be celebrated in taking away life. If we want something to celebrate here, we should celebrate the end of one of the pieces of war propaganda that has driven the past decade of brutality and death. But I'm not going to celebrate that until appropriate actions follow. Nothing makes for peace like ceasing to wage war. Now would be an ideal time to give that a try.

Our senseless wars in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, and Libya must be ended. Keeping bin Laden alive and threatening, assisted in keeping the war machine churning its bloody way through cities and flesh for years. No wonder President Bush was, as he said, not interested in tracking bin Laden down.

Ending the wars was our moral duty last week exactly as this week. But if the symbolism to be found in the removal of a key propaganda piece can be combined with the recent overwhelming U.S. support for ending the wars, to actually end the wars, then I'll be ready -- with clean hands and with no nasty gleam of revenge in my eye -- to pop open the champagne.

But let's return to the morality of cheering for the killing of a human being. A decade ago that would not have seemed as natural to a U.S. airline pilot. The automatic assumption would not have been that there could be no dissenters to that celebration. A decade ago torture was considered irredeemably

evil. A decade ago we believed people should have fair trials before they are declared guilty or killed. A decade ago, if a president had announced his new power to assassinate Americans, at least a few people would have asked where in the world he got the power to assassinate non-Americans.

Is it too late to go back 10 years in time in some particular ways? As we put bin Laden behind us, can we put the degradation of our civil liberties and our representative government, and our honesty, accountability, and the rule of law behind us too? Can we recover the basic moral decency that we used to at the very least pretend and aspire to?

Not while we're dancing in the street to celebrate death.

Imagine the propaganda that the U.S. media could make of video footage of a foreign country where the primitive brutes are dancing in the streets to celebrate the murder of a tribal enemy. That is the propaganda we've just handed those who will view bin Laden as a martyr. When their revenge comes, we will know exactly what we are supposed to do: exact more revenge in turn to keep the cycle going.

An eye for an eye makes the whole world blind, but the blind people think that they still see. The world looks to them like a Hollywood adventure movie. In those stories, killing someone generally causes a happy ending. That misconception is responsible for piles and piles of corpses to which more will now be added.

## 9/11: WE HAD AN ALTERNATIVE TO VENGEANCE AND INVASION

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**1 Victims' Family Members React to the Killing of Osama Bin Laden** New York May 2, 2011, -- In the wake of the official announcement that Osama Bin Laden, the leader of Al Qaeda has been killed, September 11th Families for Peaceful Tomorrows released the following statement... [Read More »](#)  
[w.911stories.org](#) [Read More »](#)

### Is This the Way We Protect Civilians?

September 11th Families was founded on the premise that civilian casualties are wrong; in all armed conflict, throughout all of history, regardless of attempts at justification. Our loved ones were civilians killed on 9-11. Somewhere, someone thought it justifiable that our family members be killed...

### Anti-Muslim Protesters Jeer at a Benefit Raising Funds for Women's Shelters.

PT joins with many others to condemn the behavior of Orange County, CA protesters who insulted

and jeered a group of Muslims that were holding a dinner in the Yorba Linda Community Center to raise money for women's shelters, to help relieve homelessness and hunger in the U.S...

### **This is My Son's America, Too**

I am, as much as anyone else in America, acutely aware of the need to prevent future attacks. My American Muslim son Salman Hamdani was among the nearly 3,000 Americans of diverse ethnicities, faiths and political perspectives who died in those terrorist attacks...

### **Peaceful Tomorrows Joins Call for Accountability for Torture**

New York, NY, Feb. 8, 2011 - Today, Peaceful Tomorrows joined a national effort to reach out to the people of Spain, whose courts are considering prosecuting six Bush administration lawyers under international law for their role in developing the legal justification for torture...

### **The Biggest Hero**

**by J.W., age 9.**

My dad is my hero. His name is [T.W.]. He was a New York City Firefighter in Squad 288 in Queens, New York. He died in the 9/11 tragedy. He and 18 other men in his firehouse raced to the World Trade Center to try to save lives and property. This is what they did every day. My Dad risked his life for more than 25,000 people, and he helped save mostly everybody in the Twin Towers. He was very strong and brave, and I've always looked up to him...

### **Are American Muslims being Radicalized, Representative King?**

Mr. King's planned hearings... [and] accusations bear no basis in reality. For instance, since 2002, the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), has clearly condemned violence with open letters in major newspapers both local and national, announcements on TV and radio and worked with Mosques around the country to develop interfaith forums...

[Peaceful Tomorrows Brochure](#) [pdf]

["What's Next?" Resources for Action](#) [pdf]

[Afghan Portraits of Grief](#) [pdf]

[Steps to Peace](#) Streaming Video [15 mins]

[Steps to Peace](#) Song, by Derrill Bodley [mp3]

[Art of Being Kind](#) by Kristina Olsen Tynes [mp3]

**Policy:** This website contains news and information related to the mission and goals of Peaceful Tomorrows. We highlight the major projects currently undertaken by our organization, print essays and speeches made by 9/11 family members of our group, and post photo galleries of activities of our members around the world.

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## Keith Olbermann, "Special Comment: The Death of Bin Laden"

FOK News Channel

Keith Olbermann comments on the politics of the death of Osama bin Laden. Olbermann talks of the end of Sarah Palin's presidential hopes, and the air being sucked out of Peter King's anti-Muslim congressional hearings. Keith also points out that the search for Bin Laden began and ended with Democratic presidents.

READ MORE <http://readersupportednews.org/off-site-opinion-section/133-133/5818-special-comment-the-death-of-bin-laden>

Julian Borger, "Is the World a Safer Place?" *Guardian UK*

Julian Borger writes: "Bin Laden's end comes at a time when al-Qaida's influence is on the wane in the Arab and wider Islamic world. It has been conspicuous by its absence in the Arab Spring. To most of the revolutionaries in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya, Bin Laden was irrelevant."

READ MORE <http://readersupportednews.org/opinion2/289-134/5815-is-the-world-a-safer-place>

Barry Lando | "Osama bin Laden: Everyone's Missing the Point"

Reader Supported News

Barry Lando concludes: "The same corrupt Saudi regime that fueled Bin Laden's outrage is still in power, still backed by the United States. Indeed, they have been doing their utmost to tamp the spreading revolt, spending millions to bribe Yemen's tribal leaders, dispatching their troops to Bahrain to help crush the uprising of the Shiite majority in that country. Indeed, that brutal repression may radicalize thousands of young Shiites, generating hosts of new recruits for al Qaeda or other extremists Islamic groups - even as the corpse of Osama bin Laden lies somewhere at the bottom of the sea."

READ MORE <http://readersupportednews.org/opinion2/289-134/5812-osama-bin-laden-everyones-missing-the-point>

"The War Is Over. Start Packing!"

No doubt there will be a window of relief now, in which many will be willing to give the U.S. the benefit of some doubt about its future plans. But if the war continues as it has, public opinion will soon ask, "We got our man. Why are we still there?"

<http://www.truthout.org/war-over-start-packing/1304352151>

Amanda Terkel: "Mission Accomplished: Is It Finally Time To Leave Afghanistan?"

Amanda Terkel rounds up responses from those questioning the logic of remaining in Afghanistan following bin Laden's death.

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/05/02/bin-laden-reactions\\_n\\_856320.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/05/02/bin-laden-reactions_n_856320.html)

END OF NEWSLETTER ON KILLING OF OSAMA BIN LADEN