From a mailing list

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Subject: Ramsey Clark on the Waco Anniversary

Remarks of former U.S. Attorney General, Ramsey Clark at the Mount Carmel memorial service for the Branch Davidians on April 19, 1995, the Second Anniversary of the final assault. All transcription errors, typos, etc. are mine.

[The moderator introduces Mr. Clark as a hero in the attempt to get hearings and full accountability for what the gov't did at Mt. Carmel]

Mr. Clark:

Of course the real heros are out here. [pointing to the field of wildflowers where the Davidian church once stood]

We meet on hallowed ground, because they dared to believe and keep the faith.

I feel greatly indebted to those who have brought us here, it is the only place to be today, physically. It is the only place, henceforth, to be in spirit if we want to save this country.

The idea of planting those crepe-myrtles over there, one for each soul who expired (...). And I hope we'll all come back and bring more with us, and always remember this event, when we can stand in the shade of those crepe-myrtles and breathe the fragrance of their blossoms.

We are told that the long struggle for freedom is between memory and forgetting. It is absolutely essential that we remember what happened here. Not enough has been said about those who gave their lives. They were religious people, they dared to live their faith.

I think of those on the Mayflower and those who died on the Mayflower, nearly a fourth of the number who started out. Because they dared to live their faith they wanted to be left alone. They couldn't find a place to be let alone without crossing a dangerous sea.
One of our great justices, Louis Brandeis, said that, "the right to be let alone is the most comprehensive of all rights, and the right most cherished by civilized people."

Was it too much that they wanted to be let alone? Of all the lies about the government's conduct the first question is, "Why were they here in the first place?" They had no right, no business here.

Every other lie is subsidiary to that.

We have to try to understand what happened.

In fact, my sermon today will come from the gospel according to St. David Koresh. It is the first line of poem he completed, that was to be the preface for the work underway, that he hoped to be the ultimate expression of his religious faith. There's a line that seems so very apt to this time and place, "Search for the meaning here, search for the meaning here."

There were three general acts of our government that were criminal in their conception and their execution.

(...)

Women and men in a church center. [The government] planned and executed a paramilitary attack, no other explanation of what happened is possible. And we know it, and we watched it. And then we watched the long lonely days in which our government deliberately afflicted, in violation of all humanitarian law, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, cruel, degrading and inhuman punishment on all the occupants of that church. Thinking of every way they could to torment them out of their minds, and out of their faith, and admitting it in their reports. There's no need to recount all of their cunning or all their violence. And finally the grand plan was simply to destroy the church. Two years ago today, armored vehicles battered at the building for six hours, flooding it repeatedly time and again with gas.

I wonder if there was a storm at sea when the Mayflower crossed that was nearly as threatening or horrible to its occupants as those hours to the men, women and children in the church here.

And the fire this time took the lives of all those who would not yield their faith.
You think what they suffered through all the days of torment and the hours of direct assault and violence. And they gave their lives. They gave their lives because they believed, they did have a cause, they were religious people and they ought to have been left alone. And they had done no wrong. And the government had no right to be here.

It is for us, the living, to see that they have not died in vain. Let me tell you it is not enough to say that we failed - the struggle goes on. And we can yet see the fruits of their struggle and the good of their lives. It's imperative that you and I persevere relentlessly until every person in prison is free, and out of prison, their innocence established. Until there is a Special Prosecutor, and prosecutions of the people who violated the rights of this Church and its members, and took their lives.

The integrity of the Constitution and the laws of the United States depend on our doing that. We cannot run away from it, there must be accountability. Those people would be alive, they would be praying right now. And it would be a better world except for the mad violence of our government agents, and we are responsible for their conduct, and we have to hold them accountable. The truth must come out.

The great hope for the civil actions is not money. Our materialism is one of the great flaws of this society. We measure everything by the almighty dollar. But these plaintiffs don't want money. They want the truth to prevail, they want principles of law to tell the government, "Thou shall not violate the rights of the people to be let alone. You cannot murder your own citizens with impunity, you will be held accountable."

And finally on this hallowed ground there has to rise the monument chosen by the members of the church. The church goes on. I hope it will be a living monument, another church in which music and love and children laughing will come forth. I hope it will be on this site, and I hope it will tell the governments of the world to renounce violence against their people. To respect all of their rights, the first being the right to be let alone. And that the people will assume the responsibility for seeing that governments serve, and not destroy their purpose and lives.

Let us go forth from here committed to see that these beautiful souls shall not have passed in vain. Thank you.