

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 heroes 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 of 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.

