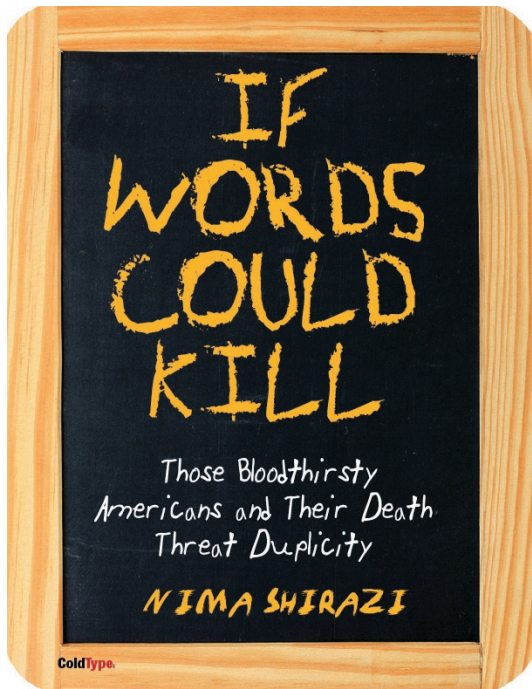


IF  
WORDS  
COULD  
KILL

Those Bloodthirsty  
Americans and Their Death  
Threat Duplicity

NIMA SHIRAZI



**NIMA SHIRAZI** is a writer and musician from New York City. His political commentary is published on his website, [Wide Asleep in America.com](http://WideAsleepinAmerica.com). His analysis of United States policy and Middle East issues, particularly with reference to current events in Iran, Israel, and Palestine, can also be found in numerous other online and print publications.

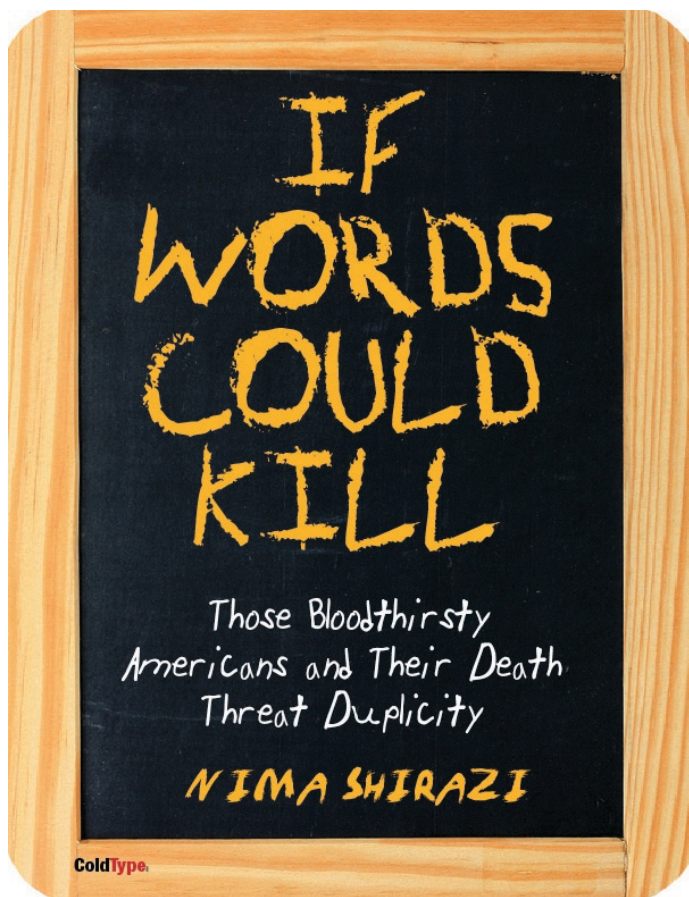
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*"I want people to see the truth...regardless of who they are...because without information, you cannot make informed decisions as a public." – Bradley Manning*

*"Assassination is the extreme form of censorship." – George Bernard Shaw*

**E**ver since WikiLeaks became a household name this past summer, following the release of 77,000 secret US documents relating to the ongoing occupation and destruction of Afghanistan, many American politicians and pundits have been calling for blood. Despite then-top military commander General Stanley McCrystal's own admission in March of this year, the US military in Afghanistan has "shot an amazing number of people" even though "none has ever proven to be a threat," the ire resulting from the

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**In their eternal allegiance to government secrecy, aggressive imperialism, and American exceptionalism, numerous WikiLeaks' critics have been outraged over the publication of U.S. government documents**

activities of WikiLeaks is directed at the whistle-blowers themselves, rather than at those actually implicated in war crimes as shown by the leaked documents.

In their eternal allegiance to government secrecy, aggressive imperialism, and American exceptionalism, numerous WikiLeaks' critics have been outraged over the publication of US government documents. While accusing WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange of everything from espionage to terrorism to treason (Assange isn't a US citizen), they hold him responsible for the deaths of both soldiers and civilians and have even publicly suggested and supported threats to assassinate him.

The US State Department claimed that the release of classified cables would "at a minimum...place at risk the lives of countless innocent individuals" and Attorney General Eric Holder stated his be-

lief that “national security of the United States has been put at risk. The lives of people who work for the American people have been put at risk. The American people themselves have been put at risk by these actions that I believe are arrogant, misguided and ultimately not helpful in any way.”

Defense Secretary Robert Gates has described these hysterical reactions to WikiLeaks release as “fairly significantly overwrought” due to the continuing slow and calculated release of over 251,000 previously secret and classified US diplomatic cables (fewer than 1,500 cables have been released so far). Still, there are increasing calls not only for Assange’s indictment, but also explicitly for his murder.

On November 29, Fox News’s Bill O’Reilly declared on air that those responsible for the leaked documents are “traitors in America” and that they “should be executed,” adding “or put in prison for life,” as a dismissive afterthought.

The next day, Bill Kristol, in a *Weekly Standard* article entitled “Whack WikiLeaks,” urged the United States government to “neutralize Julian Assange and his collaborators, wherever they are” and hoped for a glorious, unified bipartisan effort “to degrade, defeat, and destroy WikiLeaks.” One need only recall what Senator Lindsey Graham said in early November about “neutering” the Iranian government to get an idea of Kristol is talking about.

Sarah Palin chimed in on Facebook, writing that Assange “is an anti-American operative with blood on his hands” who should be “pursued with the same urgency we pursue al Qaeda and Taliban leaders.” This very urgency was mentioned in a presidential debate in October 2008 by Palin campaign opponent



**Manning has been locked up in Quantico or five months now, after spending two months detained in a military jail in Kuwait**

Barack Obama, who made the following promise to Americans: “We will kill bin Laden; we will crush Al Qaeda. That has to be our biggest national security priority.” One can assume that Palin meant that the WikiLeaks founder should be hunted with a similar kind of lethal force and not that he should simply be left alone to die peacefully from kidney failure in the mountains of Tora Bora nine years ago while his family was quickly placed under the protection of the FBI and flown to a secure location. But then again, it’s Sarah Palin.

On the same day, another 2012 Republican presidential hopeful wished for the assassination of Assange. Former Arkansas governor and Fox News host Mike Huckabee, speaking at The Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation & Library, told reporters, “Whoever in our government leaked that information is guilty of treason, and I think anything less than execution is too kind a penalty.” Huckabee, who was signing copies of his new children’s book, “Can’t Wait Till Christmas!” at the time, was presumably referring to US Army intelligence analyst Bradley Manning, who is accused of providing WikiLeaks with the classified documents and is currently being held in intense solitary confinement the brig at the Marine Corps Base in Quantico, Virginia. Manning has been locked up in Quantico or five months now, after spending two months detained in a military jail in Kuwait. Manning, like Assange, has not been convicted of any crime. Kids, Christmas, and Capital Punishment. Thanks, Mike!

Fox News national security analyst Kathleen McFarland urged the United States to declare WikiLeaks a terrorist organization, kidnap Assange, and try him in a military tribunal for espionage. Furthermore, McFarland, who served in

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the Pentagon under the Nixon, Ford and Reagan administrations and is currently a “Distinguished Adviser” at the Iran-hating/Israel-advocating think tank The Foundation for the Defense of Democracies, agreed with Huckabee that Manning should be charged and tried as a traitor for exposing American war crimes, criminal negligence, and diplomatic duplicity. “If he’s found guilty,” she wrote, “he should be executed.”

Also on November 30, the Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs (JINSA) – whose contradictory motto reads Securing America, Strengthening Israel – addressed the WikiLeaks release by musing whether the US government would “try to hang Manning from the nearest tree?”

In a post on the right-wing website Red State on December 1, a commenter by the moniker “lexington\_concord” fantasized about Julian Assange receiving the Abe Lincoln treatment. “Under the traditional rules of engagement he is thus subject to summary execution” he writes, “and my preferred course of action would be for Assange to find a small caliber round in the back of his head.”

The following day, *Washington Times* columnist Jeffrey Kuhner published a vitriolic attack on Assange, whom he accused of being “an anti-American radical who wants to see the United States defeated by its Islamic fascist enemies.” Other goals Kuhner ascribed to Assange included the humiliation of America “on the world stage, to drain it of all moral and legal legitimacy – especially regarding the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.” Kuhner wrote that Assange “is aiding and abetting terrorists in their war against America,” and suggested that the Obama administration “take care of the problem – effectively and permanently” by treat-



**If recent history is any indication, as an enemy combatant Assange would most likely be either murdered in his own country by U.S. soldiers and air strikes or kidnapped, tortured, and indefinitely imprisoned in inhumane conditions without charge or trial**

ing Assange as an “enemy combatant” and “the same way as other high-value terrorist targets.” It is no surprise, therefore, that Kuhner’s column was entitled “Assassinate Assange.”

Though it may seem strange that a Montreal native like Kuhner is disappointed that “America is no longer feared or respected,” he is not the only Canadian to harbor such violent visions of Assange’s murder. Tom Flanagan, a senior adviser to Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper, said plainly on the publicly-funded Canadian TV station CBC, “I think Assange should be assassinated, actually. I think Obama should put out a contract and maybe use a drone or something.”

Speaking with Chris Wallace on Fox News, former House Speaker and paid Fox News contributor Newt Gingrich said on December 5 that “Julian Assange is engaged in warfare. Information terrorism, which leads to people getting killed is terrorism. And Julian Assange is engaged in terrorism.” As such, Gingrich suggested, “He should be treated as an enemy combatant and WikiLeaks should be closed down permanently and decisively.” If recent history is any indication, as an enemy combatant, Assange would most likely be either murdered in his own country by US soldiers and air strikes or kidnapped, tortured, and indefinitely imprisoned in inhumane conditions without charge or trial.

On December 6, Fox News commentators Bob Beckel and Bo Dietl followed suit. Speaking on the Fox Business show “Follow The Money,” Beckel, who was a Deputy Assistant Secretary of State in the Carter administration and Walter Mondale’s 1984 presidential campaign manager, angrily wished for US Special Ops forces to kill Assange, declaring, “A

dead man can't leak stuff. This guy's a traitor, a treasonist [sic], and he has broken every law of the United States. And I'm not for the death penalty, so...there's only one way to do it: Illegally shoot the son of a bitch." Dietl, former NYPD detective and current Chairman of the New York State Security Guard Advisory Council, concurred with Beckel, saying, "this guy's gotta go." He then coined a brand new euphemism for assassination by suggesting that the United States should "immune him," before making a finger gun and childlike shooting sound.

But the public advocacy, even if merely rhetorical, for the assassination of Assange is by no means new.

This past summer, after the Afghanistan memos were released, neoconservative jingoist Marc Thiessen wrote in *The Washington Post* that "WikiLeaks is not a news organization; it is a criminal enterprise" which is responsible for "getting people killed." Thiessen continued,

"Assange is a non-US citizen operating outside the territory of the United States. This means the government has a wide range of options for dealing with him. It can employ not only law enforcement but also intelligence and military assets to bring Assange to justice and put his criminal syndicate out of business."

Intelligence and military assets don't sound too judicial. Thiessen also urged the government to "disable the system [Assange] has built to illegally disseminate classified information," apparently insinuating that *The Guardian*, *The New York Times*, and *Der Spiegel* should all be shut down and the internet turned off. If that's not what he meant, it doesn't make any sense.

On July 29, Right Wing News' John Hawkins posted an article subtly entitled "The CIA Should Kill Julian As-



**Not only are American citizens protected by the U.S. Constitution, non-citizens are protected as well**

sange," in which he wrote:

"In Assange's case, he's not an American and so he has no constitutional protection. Moreover, he's going to get a lot of people killed. Can we do anything legally about someone from another country leaking this information? Maybe not. Can we have a CIA agent with a sniper rifle rattle a bullet around his skull the next time he appears in public as a warning? You bet we can – and we should. If that's too garish for people, then the CIA can kill him and make it look like an accident.

"Either way, Julian Assange deserves to die for what he's done and he should be killed to send a message loud enough to convince other people not to publish documents like this in the future."

Hawkins couldn't be more wrong. Not only are American citizens protected by the US Constitution, non-citizens are protected as well. The Fourteenth Amendment holds that no state shall "deprive any person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws." Moreover, as Glenn Greenwald has pointed out, the principle that the Constitution applies both to Americans and to foreigners, was upheld and affirmed in an 1886 ruling by the Supreme Court on the case *Yick Wo v. Hopkins*. The Court's decision read:

"The fourteenth amendment to the constitution is not confined to the protection of citizens. It says: 'Nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.' These provisions are universal in their application, to all persons within the territorial jurisdiction, without regard to any differences of race, of color, or of nationality;

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and the equal protection of the laws is a pledge of the protection of equal laws... The questions we have to consider and decide in these cases, therefore, are to be treated as involving the rights of every citizen of the United States equally with those of the strangers and aliens who now invoke the jurisdiction of the court.”

Nevertheless, after this most recent WikiLeaks disclosure of secret diplomatic cables, Hawkins posted a follow-up on Townhall.COM called “5 Reasons The CIA Should Have Already Killed Julian Assange,” in which he repeated his claim that because “Julian Assange is not an American citizen...he has no constitutional rights,” concluding that “there’s no reason that the CIA can’t kill him.” Hawkins added that, even though Assange “may not be in Osama Bin Laden’s league, nor is he using the same methods,” WikiLeaks and Al Qaeda’s motivations are the same, namely, “to do as much damage to the United States as humanly possible.” Hawkins then suggested that “Assange is an enemy of the American people,” presumably not taking into account those Americans who may not want to be lied to about its own government’s war crimes authorized by its leaders and committed by its soldiers and intelligence agencies, in addition to the espionage emanating from its hundreds of embassies and consulates worldwide. Hawkins, blissfully ignorant about his own government’s actions, declares that “our country will be safer when he’s dead,” as “the first step towards convincing other nations that they can trust us again would be make this a better world by removing Julian Assange from it.”

After the WikiLeaks release of nearly 400,000 documents relating to the US occupation of Iraq this October, former State Department senior adviser and



**From the comfort of his computer keyboard, Jonah Goldberg once again courageously wonders, “Why wasn’t Assange garroted in his hotel room years ago?”**

Fox News contributor Christian Whiton urged Barack Obama to “designate WikiLeaks and its officers as enemy combatants, paving the way for non-judicial actions against them,” while warmonger extraordinaire Jonah Goldberg wrote an OpEd in the *Chicago Tribune* entitled “Why Is Assange Still Alive?” After opening with “a simple question: Why isn’t Julian Assange dead?,” Goldberg suggests that WikiLeaks “is going to get people killed” and “is easily among the most significant and well-publicized breaches of American national security since the Rosenbergs gave the Soviets the bomb.”

As such, from the comfort of his computer keyboard, Goldberg once again courageously wonders, “Why wasn’t Assange garroted in his hotel room years ago?” lamenting that Assange was not “a greasy stain on the Autobahn already.”

This violent talk of extrajudicial murder should come as no surprise to American audiences. Pundits and politicians have long looked to assassination as a legitimate tactic in dealing with undesirable or frustrating persons who either disobey imperial diktat or openly oppose American hegemony.

Back in 2006, Republican congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, who will chair the House Committee on Foreign Affairs come January, was caught on camera saying, “I welcome the opportunity of having anyone assassinate Fidel Castro and any leader who is oppressing the people.”

This past August, journalist Gary Baumgarten ruminated on what would happen in Iran if President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad had been assassinated. Two months later, far-right Knesset minister Aryeh Eldad called for such an assassination while Ahmadinejad was visiting Lebanon.

These are no idle threats. In early 2007, law professor Glenn Reynolds posited in a post on the right-wing website Instapundit that, with regard to alleged Iranian involvement in resistance activity in Iraq, the United States “should be responding quietly, killing radical mullahs and Iranian [sic] atomic scientists, [and] supporting the simmering insurgencies within Iran.” Reynolds continued,

“[T]o be clear, I think it’s perfectly fine to kill people who are working on atomic bombs for countries – like Iran – that have already said that they want to use those bombs against America and its allies, and I think that those who feel otherwise are idiots, and in absolutely no position to strike moral poses.”

The fact that not a single Iranian official in recent memory has ever threatened to build nuclear weapons, let alone use them “against America and its allies,” is beside the point. So is the fact that the United States has explicit laws against political assassination. The point is that Reynolds, a law professor, was calling for the willful murder of Iranians – government officials, religious leaders, scientists and academics – who have never been charged with or found guilty of any crime and who pose absolutely no threat to the United States or its citizens.

Less than a month earlier, in January 2007, a senior Iranian nuclear physicist and professor at Shiraz University working at the uranium enrichment facility at Isfahan, Ardeshir Hosseinpour, was found dead in his apartment. While some publications attributed his death to an explosion in his laboratory, other reports claimed he was assassinated by the Mossad, Israel’s foreign spy agency, using “radioactive poisoning.”

In addition, the day after Reynolds posted his assassination wishlist, a



**The fact that not a single Iranian official in recent memory has ever threatened to build nuclear weapons, let alone use them “against America and its allies,” is beside the point**

bomb explosion killed at least 18 members of Iran’s Revolutionary Guards in the southeastern Iranian city of Zahedan. Responsibility for the bombing was subsequently claimed by the Iranian separatist group Jundallah, which has carried out numerous terrorist attacks in the region and has financial ties to the United States. Since then, at least 164 Iranians have been murdered in similar actions undertaken by Jundallah, the most recent occurring Today, December 15, when at least 38 worshippers celebrating the holiday Ashura were killed, and over 50 wounded, in a suicide bombing outside a mosque in the city of Chabahar.

In November of this year, the US State Department finally designated Jundallah as a terrorist organization.

On September 22, 2010, twelve people were killed and at least 80 injured in a bombing at a military parade in the West Azerbaijani city of Mahabad in northwest Iran. The Kurdish separatist group Party of Free Life of Kurdistan (PJAK), which also has connections to the United States and Israel, may have been behind the attack.

Early this year, on January 12, 2010, Massoud Ali Mohammadi, a 50-year-old Iranian nuclear physicist and professor at Tehran University, was killed outside his home “when a bomb-rigged motorcycle exploded as he left for work.” The blast, which shattered nearby windows in northern Tehran’s Qeytariyeh neighborhood, was activated by a remote trigger. Ali Mohammadi was a lecturer and researcher with “no prominent political voice, no published work with military relevance and no declared links to Iran’s nuclear program.” The *New York Times* reported that Ali Mohammadi taught neutron physics and “was the author of several articles on quantum and theoretic-



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cal physics in scientific journals.” Experts agree the victim “was not involved in the country’s nuclear program,” that his writing, given its highly abstract nature, has “virtually no military applications and that “nuclear physicists interested in bomb-making would have no interest in these papers.”

But calls for the assassination of Iranian scientists didn’t stop there. This past July, former CIA operative, death squad and genocide enthusiast, and current neocon blowhard, Reuel Marc Gerecht penned an article for the *Weekly Standard* entitled “Should Israel Bomb Iran? Better safe than sorry.” In addition to advocating the illegal and immoral murder of thousands of Iranians because OF their country’s defiance of US and Israeli demands to relinquish its inalienable rights, Gerecht, a senior fellow at the Zionist Foundation for the Defense of Democracies, kvetched, “If the Israelis (or, better, the Americans under President Bush) had struck Iran’s principal nuclear facilities in 2003 and killed many of the scientists and technical support staff, Khomeini’s nuclear program likely would have taken years, even decades, to recover.”

On November 29, 2010, as American pundits and politicians were busy calling for the murder of Julian Assange, two separate but connected incidents occurred. Two of Iran’s top nuclear scientists were attacked on their way to work by “men on motorbikes who attached bombs to the windows of their cars” and then detonated them from a distance. One of the scientists, Dr. Majid Shahriari, a member of the nuclear engineering department of Shahid Beheshti University in Tehran, was killed. Shahriari had published dozens of esoteric conference reports and peer-reviewed articles on nuclear research and is said to have

**Two of Iran’s top nuclear scientists were attacked on their way to work by “men on motorbikes who attached bombs to the windows of their cars” and then detonated them from a distance**

managed a “major project” for the country’s Atomic Energy Organization. The *Guardian* reported that “Shahriari had no known links to banned nuclear work, but was highly regarded in his field.” His wife was injured in the attack. The other scientist, Fereydoon Abbasi, and his wife were also wounded.

“They’re bad people, and the work they do is exactly what you need to design a bomb,” an anonymous US official who assesses scientific intelligence told the *New York Times*. “They’re both top scientists.”

Both Dr. Mohammadi, who was assassinated in January, and Dr. Shahriari were associated with a non-nuclear scientific research unit known as Synchrotron-light for Experimental Science and Applications in the Middle East (SESAME) which is based in Jordan and operating under United Nations auspices.

The day after the attacks on Shahriari and Abbasi, Yossi Melman, the senior terrorism and intelligence commentator for the Israeli daily *Ha’aretz*, reported on the connection between the WikiLeaks diplomatic cable release, the assassination of Iranian scientists, and the appointment of a new head of the Mossad, all of which occurred the same day. Melman wrote:

“They are part of the endless efforts by the Israeli intelligence community, together with its Western counterparts including Britain’s MI6 and America’s CIA, to sabotage, delay and if possible, to stop Iran from reaching its goal [sic] of having its first nuclear bomb.”

Melman, who publicized the mysterious death of Hosseinpour in 2007, stated that, regarding the new attacks on Iranian nuclear scientists, “it is obvious...that Israel was behind it.”

Less than two weeks later, on Decem-

ber 12, the *Washington Post*'s new neoconservative, warmongering columnist Jennifer Rubin made a number of suggestions about how the United States should “deal” with Iran’s nuclear program. In addition to supporting Iran’s small opposition movement and beginning to “make the case and agree on a feasible plan for the use of force,” Rubin wrote, in back-to-back bullet points,

“Second, we should continue and enhance espionage and sabotage of the Iranian nuclear program. Every nuclear scientist who has a ‘car accident’ and every computer virus buys us time, setting back the timeline for Iran’s nuclear capability, while exacting a price for those who cooperate with the nuclear program. Think of it as the ultimate targeted sanction.

“Third, we need to make human rights a central theme in our bilateral and multilateral diplomacy regarding Iran.”

As Salon’s Justin Elliott summarized, “Rubin wants the United States to make human rights a central theme in its Iran policy – and to indiscriminately assassinate civilian scientists,” continuing that “even the US State Department referred to these attacks as acts of terrorism, which would make them antithetical to any serious concept of human rights.”

This is certainly not the first time Rubin, who has written that “nearly all wisdom” can be found in the Torah (and the first two Godfather movies), has contradicted herself within the span of a sentence or two. In her very first *Washington Post* blog, Rubin declared her ideological belief in “American exceptionalism, limited government, free markets, a secure and thriving Jewish state, defense of freedom and human rights around the world, enforced borders with a generous legal immigration policy, calling things by their proper names (e.g. Islamic fundamen-



**The United States currently has a specific program in place dedicated to extrajudicially murder U.S. citizens who do this exact thing**

talism), and recapturing vocabulary (a “feminist” is not the same as a pro-choice activist).” How one can believe simultaneously in “freedom and human rights” and a “secure and thriving” heavily-militarized and inherently discriminatory ethnocracy is unclear, unless of course the “world” doesn’t include Palestinians. Also, so long as things are being “called by their proper names” and vocabulary is being “recaptured,” writers like Rubin, Reynolds and Gerecht should undoubtedly be labeled as what they are: Zionist apologists who advocate the murder of innocent people to advance their own political and ideological agendas; in other words, they are proponents of terrorism.

Perhaps the single most striking aspect of these public death threats – whether clandestine assassination or carpet-bombing air strikes – leveled by notable American analysts and officials is that the United States currently has a specific program in place dedicated to extrajudicially murder US citizens who do this exact thing.

The Obama administration has authorized the targeted killing of Muslim cleric and American national Anwar al-Awlaki. Earlier this year, the *Wall Street Journal* reported that Awlaki “was the imam at a Virginia mosque attended by US Army Maj. Nidal Hasan, the suspect in the Fort Hood, Texas, shooting spree in November, and said in interview in the fall that he counseled Maj. Hasan before the attack. Investigators say he also had incidental contact with two of the 9/11 hijackers.” Nevertheless, the paper continued, “There is no indication Mr. Awlaki played a direct role in any of the attacks, and he has never been indicted in the US”

The *Times* (UK) reported in April that following “the Christmas Day airliner plot, US and Yemeni officials said that

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Mr al-Awlaki had met the suspected bomber, Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, who tried to ignite explosives sewn into his underwear.” Even though absolutely no evidence has ever been presented in a court of law to substantively link Awlaki with terrorist acts, an unnamed US official has told the press, “Al-Awlaki is a proven threat. He’s been targeted.”

So far, the only “proof” given are the words of the US government. On December 7, Reuters reported that “US officials have described al-Awlaki as having a leadership role in al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula...he has urged attacks on the United States in Internet videos and writings.”

Urging attacks in Internet videos and writings? Most of the staunch advocates of assassinating both Awlaki and Assange, not to mention encouraging an unprovoked American or Israeli assault on Iran, have strong connections – and career histories – with US government foreign policy and the military establishment. Their influence of public and official discourse cannot be taken lightly, nor can it be passed off as inconsequential or merely rhetorical. After all, this is exactly what preceded the invasion and occupation of Iraq – with many of the same cheerleaders we hear today.

So, if that’s all it takes to condemn people to death without a trial and authorize drones to bomb their alleged whereabouts, how should North Korea react to the call of the aforementioned Instapundit blogger Glenn Reynolds to “nuke ‘em. And not with just a few bombs,” in response to the current escalation of hostilities between North and South Korea? By this standard, at what point should the Washington punditry start watching the skies over the Potomac for signs of Iran’s newly-acquired UAV, the Karrar?



**How should North Korea react to the call of Instapundit blogger Glenn Reynolds to “nuke ‘em. And not with just a few bombs,” in response to the current escalation of hostilities between North and South Korea?**

Yet, wishful thinking or even vocal advocacy of violence, however abhorrent and appalling, is protected under the First Amendment. The Supreme Court, in 1969, addressed this exact issue in the case *Brandenburg v. Ohio* when it concluded:

“...the mere abstract teaching...of the moral propriety or even moral necessity for a resort to force and violence, is not the same as preparing a group for violent action and steeling it to such action...A statute which fails to draw this distinction impermissibly intrudes upon the freedoms guaranteed by the First and Fourteenth Amendments. It sweeps within its condemnation speech which our Constitution has immunized from governmental control.”

Recently, however, the United States hasn’t worried much about due process and proof of criminal action or direct involvement in terrorist activities before issuing death warrants. For instance, according to the FBI itself, Osama bin Laden is still not accused of participating in or planning the 9/11 attacks, yet he is still wanted “dead or alive” by our government in connection with that terrible act.

Back in October, Jonah Goldberg expressed some doubts about the efficacy of assassinating Julian Assange:

“Assange is essentially hiding behind his celebrity and the fact that it wouldn’t do any good to kill him, given the nature of the Web. Even if the CIA wanted to take him out, they couldn’t without massive controversy. That’s because assassinating a hipster Australian Web guru as opposed to a Muslim terrorist is the kind of controversy no official dares invite.

“That’s fine. And it’s the law. I don’t expect the US government to kill Assange, but I do expect them to try to stop him.”

According to Goldberg, the difference

between killing Assange and Awlaki is not just that it is illegal for the US government to assassinate people; rather, the difference is that one is an obnoxious white Australian while the other is a scary brown Muslim. While both damage the reputation and oppose the hegemonic domination of the United States using the power of words and the internet, the same rules don't apply to both of them. The murder of one (the US citizen, no less) is a no-brainer, while the murder of the other would be controversial. Still, in response to a FOIA request, the CIA recently refused to “confirm or deny the existence or nonexistence” of “current or previous plans to assassinate Julian Assange.”

During the 2008 campaign, presidential hopeful Barack Obama stated, “Today we are engaged in a deadly global struggle for those who would intimidate, torture, and murder people for exercising the most basic freedoms. If we are to win this struggle and spread those freedoms, we must keep our own moral compass pointed in a true direction.”

It is unlikely that, back then, Obama



**In response to a FOIA request, the CIA recently refused to “confirm or deny the existence or nonexistence” of “current or previous plans to assassinate Julian Assange”**

anticipated that in a mere two years, “those who would intimidate, torture, and murder people for exercising the most basic freedoms” would include himself, senior officials in his administration, and the bloodthirsty Beltway.

Wednesday, December 10, marked the 30th anniversary of the tragic assassination of John Lennon. As always, his words ring as true today as they did when he wrote them:

*I'm sick and tired of hearing things  
From uptight, short-sighted  
narrow-minded hypocritics  
All I want is the truth  
Just give me some truth  
I've had enough of reading things  
by neurotic, psychotic  
pig-headed politicians  
All I want is the truth  
Just give me some truth*

- Gimme Some Truth, 1971

Thanks to the courageous efforts of people like Bradley Manning and Julian Assange, we now all have a little more truth.

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