

By Rev. William Alberts

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A [Boston Globe story](#) highlights Wellesley College alumnae Madeleine Albright and Hillary Clinton's return to the College for their 60th and 50th respective reunions. The story states that "their early days at Wellesley College were marked by uncertainty and feeling out of place." But they "overcame their trepidation and went on to illustrious careers including serving as the country's top foreign diplomat under different presidents." Wellesley College president Paula A. Johnson asked them questions for over an hour, with the audience giving "Albright and Clinton an enthusiastic reception, including three standing ovations." What created the enthusiastic response? Albright and Clinton "urged the audience to speak up and take action to protect democracy from the threat of fascism under President Trump." ("At Wellesley, Madeleine and Hillary Clinton encourage protest, political action.," By Laura Crimaldi, June 9, 2019)

"Speak up and take action to protect democracy." Okay. The country certainly needs to be protected from "the threat of fascism under President Trump." But such honoring of Madeleine Albright and Hillary Clinton's "illustrious careers" is quite a commentary on *The Boston Globe* and Wellesley College and the selective morality of many Americans. Trump can serve to distract attention from war crimes committed by other, *respectable*, U.S. political leaders, among them Madeleine Albright and Hillary Clinton.

Consider Madeleine Albright. The U.N. imposed draconian sanctions on Iraq, pushed by the U.S. and Britain after it invaded Kuwait. Before that, in 1989 Iraq was reported to have "one of the lowest infant mortality rates in the world, as well as universal, free healthcare and education." ("[Paying the Price: Killing the Children of Iraq.](#)" *johnpilger.com*, 1-15-05) Iraq's remarkable health was due to President Saddam Hussein nationalizing the country's vast oil resources, and investing certain of its revenue in the Iraqi people. This policy did not set well with Western oil corporations, which saw Iraq's bountiful oil reserves as a gold mine to be controlled and tapped.

The sanctions prevented Iraq from importing supplies of food and medicine and other necessities. A survey by two scientists, Drs. Mary Smith Fawzi and Sarah Zaidi, found that "as many as 576,000 Iraqi children may have died since the end of the Persian Gulf war because of economic sanctions imposed by the Security Council." ("[Iraqi Sanctions, Kill Children, U.N. Reports.](#)" By Barbara Crossette, *The New York Times*, Dec. 1, 1995)

In 1996, President Bill Clinton's U.S. Ambassador to the U.N., Madeleine Albright appeared on CBS's *60 Minutes* with reporter Lesly Stahl, who said, "We have heard that a half a million children have died [because of sanctions against Iraq]. I mean that is more children than died in Hiroshima. And – you know, is the price worth it?" Albright replied, "I think this is a very hard choice, but the price – we think the price is worth it." (["The price is worth it,"](#)

By Edward S. Herman,
msuweb.montclair.edu

) Evidently the harsh criticism she received led her to apologize for her words years later, but not for the brutal sanctions against Iraq she helped to enforce as America's U. N. Ambassador.

Edward S. Herman, now deceased American economist, media scholar and social critic, wrote that "the ratio of dead Iraqi children to deaths in the WTC/Pentagon bombings was better than 80 to 1," but "the mainstream media and intellectuals have not found Albright's rationalization of this mass killing of any interest whatsoever." Their interest is about "who" not "why." Herman asked, "Is it not morally chilling, even a bit frightening, that he [a liberal historian] and the great mass of citizen compatriots, can focus with such anguish and indignation on their own 6,000 dead, while ignorant of, or not caring about, or approving his (their) own government's ongoing killing of scores of times as many innocents abroad?" He also said, "Because the media make the suffering and death of 500,000 children invisible, the outrage produced by the intense coverage of the WCT/Pentagon bombing victims does not surface on their behalf. . . . The media . . . are not interested in root causes." Herman concluded, "This reflects the work of a superb propaganda system." (*Ibid*)

Evidently the Wellesley College president did not ask former U.S. Ambassador Madeleine Albright questions about the U.S.-driven U.N. sanctions and the deaths of over 500,000 Iraqi children. The "superb propaganda system" was obviously on display at Wellesley College — and in *The Boston Globe*.

Nor could Osama bin Laden's words penetrate America's "superb propaganda system." He wrote a "letter to America," in which, he cited the "whys" of the 9/11 attacks. Among the U.S. government's sins against Muslim nations: "You have starved the Muslims in Iraq, where children die every day," he said. "It is a wonder that more than 1.5 million iraqi children have died as a result of your sanctions, and you did not show concern. Yet," he continued, "when 3000 of your people died, the entire world rises and has not yet sat down." (["Full text: bin Laden's 'letter to America,'"](#)

The Guardian
, Nov. 24, 2002)

The U.S. government's answer to Osama bin Laden was to send a Special Forces team to silence him, killing him in his compound — as President Barack Obama, Vice President Joe Biden, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and others watched his assassination, and also the killing of three men and a woman, from the safety of the White House's Situation Room. Bin Laden's body was then dumped into the sea — to prevent his burial in a known grave where mourners could gather and be inspired to engage in more protests against U.S. imperialistic policies. (See [“Death of Osama bin Laden Fast Facts,”](#) *CNN Library*, www.cnn.com, April 18, 2019)

The assassination of Osama bin Laden is merely one example of The U.S. government silencing people who dare to expose America's war crimes. In an extensive *In These Times* article on [“The Crackdown on Chelsea Manning and Julian Assange Is About Protecting U.S. Empire,”](#) Chip Gibbons writes about the fates of whistleblowers Chelsea Manning and WikiLeaks publisher, Julian Assange: “army Intelligence analyst Manning shared massive troves of Iraq and Afghanistan War logs with Assange, who released them. Videos showed American soldiers' needless killing of Iraqi civilians, in what WikiLeaks called “Collateral Murder.” Gibbons cites American journalist Dahr Jamail's report from Iraq: “The WikiLeaks cables from Iraq displayed the brutality of U.S. policies that were ongoing throughout the occupation.” (May 14, 2019)

Chip Gibbons also quotes “Phillis Bennis, a Fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies.” She stated that “the Afghan War Logs ‘were crucially important,’ as they showed ‘Afghanistan was and is a real country where hundreds of thousands, millions of people with no connection to 9/11 would be killed or see their lives and families destroyed.’ ” Gibbons also pointed out: “The Guantanamo leaks revealed the U. S government knowingly held 150 innocent men.” (*Ibid*)

Mr. Gibbons states that “this massive insight into U.S. foreign policy apparatus showed ‘the world according to U.S. empire.’ But,” he said, “for much of mainstream U.S. media, there is little if any true reckoning with the civilian cost of war.” And “exposing the U.S. empire comes at a cost. . . . WikiLeaks is currently in the crosshairs of the U.S. government, because it challenged this secrecy head on.” (*Ibid*)

Chelsea Manning spent seven years in prison, before President Obama commuted her 35-year sentence. But she is back in prison for refusing to testify against Julian Assange. Assange himself is now in a British prison, after being hounded and spending seven years in refuge in

Ecuador's Embassy in London. The U.S. is eager to have him extradited, to face a number of charges under the Espionage Act, with his case possibly used to erode press freedom by criminalizing journalists who expose governmental crimes for the public good.

Enter Hillary Clinton. Her 2016 presidential campaign was victimized by WikiLeaks disseminating communications obtained from her campaign and the Democratic National Committee. Her response to Assange's arrest: "I think it is clear from the indictment that came out it's not about punishing journalism, it is about assisting in the hacking of a military computer to steal information from the United States government." (["Hillary Clinton says Assange 'has to answer for what he's done,'"](#)

By Julie Gallagher,
CNN

, April 12, 2019) Never mind that the "information" hacked was about the U.S. government's concealed war crimes.

Hillary Clinton also said about Julian Assange's indictment: "The bottom line is he needs to 'answer for what he's done.'" (*Ibid*) Clinton herself needs to answer for what she's done. In 2002, she voted to authorize the George W. Bush administration's falsely-based, unnecessary, illegal invasion of Iraq, and still needs to answer for contributing to that horrible, unending war crime. Obviously, Wellesley College President Johnson did not ask Clinton about the reported "4,500 American soldiers killed and thousands more permanently disabled, hundreds of thousands of Iraqi deaths; the destabilization of the region with the rise of ISIS; and a dramatic increase in the federal deficit, resulting in major cutbacks to important social programs." (["Clinton's Iraq War Vote Still Appalls,"](#)

by Stephen Zunes,
progressive.org
, April 14, 2016)

During her run for president in 2016, Hillary Clinton expressed regret for her Iraq war vote when New York senator. An obvious and strategically voiced regret, because the basis for invading Iraq, Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction, had long been proven a lie peddled by the George W. Bush administration. The reported reality then: "Clinton ignored information provided by U.N. inspectors, reports by independent strategic analysts, and articles in reputable arms control journals that challenged the administration's claims." (*Ibid*) The 2016 election demanded *moral hindsight* from Clinton.

Hillary Clinton's *immoral* "foresight" is seen in her response to Libya as Secretary of State. In the *Black Agenda Report*, Solomon Comissiong, educator and founder of the Your World News Media Collective, writes that Clinton and President Obama "orchestrated the destruction of what was once the African nation with the highest living standards – Libya!" Clinton especially "was a strong proponent and vocal cheerleader of the barbaric bombing of Libya, a bombing campaign that destroyed tens of thousands of civilian lives." As a result, "Libya continues to be submerged in a quagmire of slavery of Black Africans, civil war, death and destruction." (["How Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton Contributed to Libya's Slavery Crisis,"](#) Dec. 6, 2017) And Libyan refugees have flooded European countries.

Along with "bombing Libya into oblivion," Mr. Comissiong states that the Obama administration used "racist and terrorist rebel groups to do their dirty deeds on their ground." These groups "often targeted Black Africans for rape, torture and public lynching simply because they were seen as allies of Muammar Gaddafi – who had provided a safe haven for those same Black Africans." (*Ibid*)

Mr. Comissiong says that the justification for toppling President Muammar Gaddafi was based on a lie: "that he "was planning to murder Libyan civilians." His real sins included being "resistant to the United States' neo-colonial machinations with Africom," and calling for a United State of Africa. . . . just the kind of leader and (Libyan Jamahiriya) government the United States hates and loves to overthrow." Comissiong concludes "Both parties are unapologetic imperialists, hell-bent on global domination." (*Ibid*)

Hillary Clinton provides a window into her own soul in response to learning that Col. Muammar Gaddafi has been captured by rebel forces, beaten and sodomized by a bayonet. In a *CBS News* interview, she gleefully said, "We came, we saw, he died" – then raised her hands in laughter. (["Hillary's War Crime,"](#) By Paul Craig Roberts, *Foreign Policy Journal*, Oct. 24, 2016)

There are a number of respectable American war criminals – on both sides of the aisle. Former vice president and now leading 2020 Democratic presidential candidate, Joe Biden, along with 28 other Democratic senators, voted to authorize then President George W. Bush's criminal invasion of Iraq. There is Bush himself, who used his Jesus "changed my heart" profession of faith and lies about President Saddam Hussein having weapons of mass destruction to justify

his preemptive war against Iraq. And he is still respectable, with a library and museum named after him at Southern Methodist University, and dominant media covering his commentary on President Trump's falsehoods and nativism.

Add President Bush's still respectable Vice President, Dick Cheney, who also falsely charged Iraq with having weapons of mass destruction and was a strong advocate for war. Cheney later wrote a memoir, [*In My Time*](#), that was a #1 New York Times best seller.

Include respectable Gen. Colin Powell, Bush's Secretary of State, who lied to the U.N. about Iraq having weapons of mass destruction, thereby selling the U.N. Security Council on the case for war. His book, [*It Worked for Me: In Life and Leadership*](#), is billed as written by "one of America's most admired figures, reveals the principles that have shaped his life and career in this inspiring and engrossing memoir."

Then there is respectable President Barack Obama, whose use of drone warfare has killed countless civilians in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iraq, Yemen, Syria and Somalia. Obama also created a "kill list," giving himself the presidential authority to order the assassination of anyone without due process, including Americans, who are suspected of terrorism. Innocent children became victims of Obama's "kill list" and drone warfare. Sixteen-year-old American Abdulrahman, son of American Imam Anwar al-Awlaki, and the youth's teenage cousin and other innocent friends, were killed in Yemen by an Obama-ordered CIA drone strike, just two weeks after America-radicalized cleric al-Awlaki was assassinated and silenced in Yemen, also by a CIA drone strike. (See ["Obama Killed a 16-Year-Old American in Yemen. Trump Just Killed His 8-Year-Old Sister,"](#) By Glenn Greenwald, The Intercept, Jan 30, 2017)

Like George W. Bush's Presidential Library and Museum at SMU, Obama will have his Barack Obama Presidential Center near the University of Chicago campus.

President Donald Trump followed in President Obama's respectable footsteps, ordering a Navy Seal 6 commando raid in Yemen, that resulted in the killing of "30 people including 10 women and children," one of whom was "the 8 year-old daughter . . . of Imam Anwar al-Awlaki." (*Ibid*) Trump specializes in brutalizing powerless children and their families for political gain, hence his 2020 presidential campaign vow to deport "millions of illegal aliens." With Iran also in his psychopathic lying sights. The list of respectable America war criminals continues.

These respectable American war criminals reveal that many Americans live in an alternative reality, where their government's war crimes, if ever mentioned by mainstream media, are usually called "mistakes," and rarely investigated or persistently challenged. In calling America "the greatest nation on earth" and "the exceptional nation" and saying "Make American Great Again," Presidents Bush and Obama and Trump are attributing to America a moral superiority, which conveniently serves to cover up the U.S. government's imperialistic war crimes. A moral superiority which many Christians especially have been conditioned to believe because of their own exceptional Christian self-image. People need to be morally diminished to justify their subjugation.

Respectable American war criminals count on respectable people of faith. These political leaders could not get away with their war crimes and then be honored in high – and holy — places without the accommodation of people of faith. This is not to discount the immeasurable good works people of faith perform. But when it comes to speaking truth to the U.S. government's criminal global wars against so-called "terrorism," more often than not people of faith remain *respectable* chaplains of the status quo, rather than prophets of *all* the people. It is about power, not morality.

Rev. William E. Alberts, Ph.D., a former hospital chaplain at Boston Medical Center, is both a Unitarian Universalist and United Methodist minister. His new book, [*The Counterpunching Minister \(who couldn't be "preyed" away\)*](#) is now published and available on Amazon.com. The book's Foreword, *Drawing the Line*, is written by Counterpunch editor, Jeffrey St. Clair. Alberts is also author of *A Hospital Chaplain at the Crossroads of Humanity*, which "demonstrates what top-notch pastoral care looks like, feels like, maybe even smells like," states the review in the *Journal of Pastoral Care & Counseling*. His e-mail address is wm.alberts@gmail.com