

# SEMANTIC GENOCIDE

Three Native Sons  
Discuss

'Operation Geronimo'

Three Essays about the cultural ethnocide of America's Original Peoples

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## SEMANTIC GENOCIDE: Three Native Sons Discuss 'Operation Geronimo'

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**Concerning Geronimo:  
Examining The Psychological War Being Waged Against  
American Aborigines in the 21st Century**

*Please Be Aware:*

This publication contains the images and names of deceased persons.

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SEMANTIC GENOCIDE: Three Native Sons Discuss 'Operation Geronimo'

# 1

## Vagabond Beaumont A Rejection Of American Mythology (Part One)

*May 14, 2011*



*"Whether it was intended only to name the military operation to kill or capture Osama Bin Laden or to give Osama Bin Laden himself the code name Geronimo, either was an outrageous insult and mistake. And it is clear from the military records released that the name Geronimo was used at times by military personnel involved for both the military operation and for Osama Bin Laden himself.*

*Obviously to equate Geronimo with Osama Bin Laden is an unpardonable slander of Native America and its most famous leader in history.*

*And to call the operation to kill or capture Osama Bin Laden by the name Geronimo is such a subversion of history that it also defames a great human spirit and Native American leader. For Geronimo himself was the focus of precisely such an operation by the U.S. military, an operation that assured Geronimo a lasting place in American and human history."*

**- Harlyn Geronimo**

*Geronimo's great-grandson, Senate Commission on Indian Affairs for a hearing on racist stereotypes of Native Americans, May 5, 2011*

The US militaries use of the famous Apache warrior “Geronimo” as the code name in the military operation “to capture and or kill” Osama Bin Laden is a continuation of the Manifest Destiny theory that was first put forth in the US in the 1840's. The theory of Manifest Destiny dictated that it was the destiny of the US to expand across the North American continent. It was this thinking of Manifest Destiny that brought about the US – Mexican War in 1846 that led to the annexation of northern Mexico to the US. With the success of Manifest Destiny in the North America it was expanded. It was Manifest Destiny that declared to the European powers in the 1840's that European imperialism would not be tolerated in the “American backyard” of Central and South America.

It was Manifest Destiny that led the US into war with Spain in 1898 and brought Puerto Rico, Guam and the Philippines under US colonial rule. It was Manifest Destiny that justified the overthrow of Queen Lili'uokalani in 1893 that eventually led to Hawaii becoming a state. If you think that Manifest Destiny somehow ended in the beginning of the 20th century then look at the recent wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and Libya. In the minds of people who were the victims of this US Manifest Destiny there is a chasm of difference between Osama Bin Laden and “Geronimo” but in the minds of the US military it's just the same old imperialist story.

It's difficult to disassociate what this country did to the Native Americans with this hunting and assassination of Osama Bin Laden since in the minds of the those who are eager to continue their Manifest Destiny adventure they are the same thing. This latest military operation by the US is an effort to further solidify it's mythology of American frontier justice. The hunt for Osama Bin Laden fits a classic motif in American mythology. Osama Bin Laden is a uncivilized brown savage, hell bent on not allowing Americans to spread their hegemony. There is only one way to deal with this brown savage and that is to hunt him down and meet out some American frontier justice. Think back to former President Bush's language with wanting to ‘smoke them out of hiding’. The US militaries use of “Geronimo” as the code name in the military operation “to capture and or kill” Osama Bin Laden is a continuation of the Manifest Destiny theory.

The parallels could be not drawn more clearly by the US military in it's use of this classic American mythology. Osama Bin Laden was the “Chief” architect of the US attack on 9/11 and he was in “wild lawless enemy Injun territory” (Pakistan) surrounded by non-white vicious fanatical “Injun warriors” who would “fight to the death” rather than be captured. So the US military made it plans to go into “Injun enemy territory” and either “smoke him out” or “take him out”.

In the over 160 years of this Manifest Destiny a mythology has developed to help sell imperialism as freedom, a mythology that goes back to the equating Native peoples as “savages”, Mexicans as “savages”, Puerto Ricans, Cubans and Philipinos as “savages” that all need saving, that all need to be freed from themselves because they are incapable of doing it themselves. This mythological narrative seems to have changed very little for the US military. The Afghans needed saving from the Taliban, the Iraqi's needed saving from the Saddam Hussein, the Libyans need saving from Quaddafi.

You can see the continuation of the narrative. The fact that the sitting US president is a Black man who's father was of African descent (which add it's own surreal texture when one thinks of European imperialism and it's brand of violence in Africa) is of no consequence to the continuous shaping of this expansionist mythology. For us as victims of this American mythology, it makes a world of difference. In our minds President Obama should have spoken

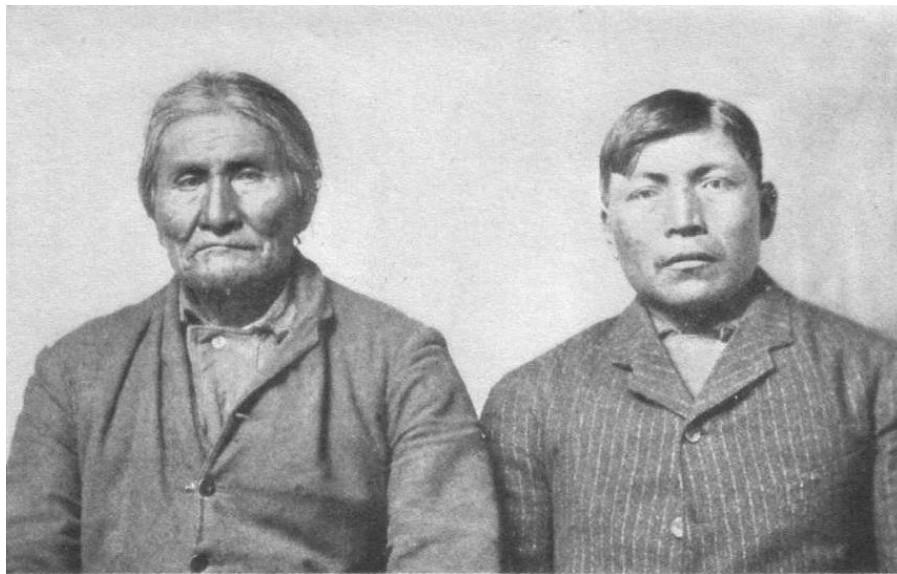
up and out against the equating of someone like Osama Bin Laden with “Geronimo”.

Geronimo was an Apache war chief whose original Chiricahua name was Goyathlay.

Mexican and US troops led expansionist raids on the Apache tribes in an effort to colonize their lands. Geronimo fought back against this expansion into his peoples lands.

He gained a reputation amongst the Mexican and US troops as fierce, intelligent, fearless warrior who attacked despite overwhelming odds against him and escaped both certain death and certain capture on more than one occasion. Geronimo and his tribe refused to recognize either the US or Mexico as having any jurisdiction in Apache lands and they were among the last Native peoples to acquiesce to US expansion in the American West.

Geronimo was labeled “the worst Indian who ever lived” because of his defiance. The credit to his capture and surrender in 1886 goes to General Nelson A. Miles who sent Captain Henry Lawton to bring back Geronimo. The same General Nelson A. Miles who years later would personally lead the attack on Spain in Guanica, Puerto Rico during the Spanish – American War. However it was Lt. Charles B. Gatewood who pursued Geronimo with a tenacity and a harassment that wore Geronimo and his tribe down. It was Lt. Gatewood who negotiated Geronimo’s surrender and brought him back to General Nelson A. Miles for official surrender.



GERONIMO  
Apache War Chief

ASA DEKLUGIE  
Official interpreter for Geronimo. Son of Whoa, chief of the Nedni Apaches. Chief elect to succeed Geronimo at the latter's death

Geronimo’s being “the worst Indian who ever lived” is what makes him a hero for Native peoples, it makes him a hero for those of us who oppose this Manifest Destiny that has taken on a new form in this war against terrorism. To equate Geronimo to someone like Osama Bin Laden only makes sense to those who are locked into the Manifest Destiny theory of the US. It also falls into another mythologic motif that former President Bush so aptly put when he said “You’re either with us or you are with the terrorists” which leaves little room for those of us for are neither with the US or the terrorists. This lack of space for dialectic thinking, this either-or posturing is a classic means of polarizing in an effort to divide and conquer. It removes the threat of critical thinking since to be critical would mean to be with “the terrorists”. It simplifies

the affects of whatever means justifying whatever ends whether that be the attacks on the US on 9/11 or the recent death of Osama Bin Laden.

On one hand Osama Bin Laden was a hinderance to US plans for US neocolonialism in Afghanistan, Iraq and other countries throughout the resource rich Middle East and North Africa. On the other hand the threat of Osama Bin Laden was just what the US needed to justify it's involvement in that part of the world. As much of a thorn in the side that Osama Bin Laden may have been to US neocolonial interests in the Middle East he was not a hero for people who are looking to stop this ongoing Manifest Destiny. This continuation of that American mythology that polarizes dissent to American hegemony with Osama Bin Laden as "Geronimo" was used as a means to dilute the resistance of Geronimo and others like him. It was a two fold attack on "terrorism on US interests" and "resistance to US interests". The two are not the same unless of course you believe "You're either with us or you're with the terrorists" and for those of us who are with neither are now put in a position of having to explain our way out of such polarities.

The diluting of our mythology of resistance, that includes hero's like Geronimo, was attacked with Osama Bin Laden. "Operation Geronimo" was not just a military operation it was also a psychological operation on the alternate mythology of resistance that is necessary to have as a counter story to their story as oppressors, as an ongoing resistance to their ongoing violence, as a counter history to the history as temporary victors . The US military may have renamed or claimed to have always called the military operation to capture Osama Bin Laden "Operation Neptune's Spear" but the wound to our resistance remains. The result of that wound is that in the minds of many, the mythology of resistance to US hegemony from anyone who "is not with us" is now "with the terrorists". Those of us who are of a third mind need to recognize and reject this new continuation of American mythology.

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[Part Two may be found further down in this document.]

## 2

Simon Moya-Smith

# **American Indians condemn "Geronimo" code name**

Where does it end?

*May 4, 2011*



As American Indians we unfortunately expect to be belittled and dehumanized at every turn. We expect to attend schools where the mascot is an Indian named Savage. We expect cutting cultural appropriation by wannabe Indians, but what I, a Lakota, couldn't have anticipated (partially) was the ignorance and naiveté of President Barack Obama – a minority, his administration and the U.S. military.

It was released recently by CNN that the military code name for the now-dead terrorist Osama bin Laden was, sadly, Geronimo, a highly revered historical figure in the American Indian community.

"We've ID'd Geronimo," said one Navy SEAL. A short time later, Mr. Obama and his cohorts nestled in the situation room received confirmation that "Geronimo" was, in fact, dead.

Take a look, folks. This is the foul face of ignorance.



"It's another inference of how people can be racist toward Indian people," said Ray Ramirez of the Native American Rights Fund in Boulder, Colo. "This is blatant racism."

Ramirez said although the connection made between bin Laden and the honored Apache warrior is brazen, it's nothing new.

"When insurgents leave an area, (the military) will say 'he's gone off the reservation'," he said. "I really don't know what it's going to take to change things."

Immediately upon learning of the nefarious bin Laden-Geronimo link, I wondered what other races of people would sit idly by as such an audacious affront debased one of their honored and respected ancestors.

I thought, would the black community have risen and revolted if Osama's code name were "Malcolm X"? Would have the Hispanic community taken to the streets had bin Laden been referred to as "Caesar Chavez"? Would have white people tore down the dome of the U.S. Capitol had they learned Thomas Jefferson was the chosen code name for such a putrid person as Osama bin Laden?

No. Each would have naturally cursed Mr. Obama and his administration. Likewise, the Bill O'Reilly's and Rev. Al Sharpton's of the nation would take to the screen and radios lambasting Obama and the government for its unabashed ignorance.

I suppose, though, since, according to the U.S. Census, American Indians make up only one percent of the population there was no real concern that we'd rise and revolt. We're too busy with our casinos anyway, right? Lord, I hope that's not what people really think.

"This is hurtful," said Tessa McLean, a University of Colorado Denver political science student and member of the Anishinaabe Nation. "So now we're not only mascots, we're likened to terrorists, too?"

McLean continued somberly by stating she was disappointed that such a progressive-appearing president like Obama would be so inconsiderate and ignorant to the feelings of Indian people.

"It's one thing for someone like Rush Limbaugh to say something like this, but for President Obama to approve of the use of Geronimo's name in this context is outrageous," she said.

Robert Chanate, of Lakewood, Colo., and member of the Kiowa Nation, said he agrees that the use of Geronimo's name in reference to bin Laden is outrageous, and adds that the link between the two is largely erroneous.

"I think the comparison is inaccurate," he said, "because in the case of Geronimo he was fighting against the invasion of his home, his people and his land, as opposed to bin Laden who was raging a religious war against the United States."

"(Osama) bin Laden's and Geronimo's perspectives were much different from one another," Chanate added.

So the battle for our dignity continues. We're not a people only of the past, regardless what Hollywood or museums would say on the matter. We're a people still living, even if we're not

entirely kicking.

First Nation leaders and American Indian councils across the country have been firing off press releases to Washington condemning the use of an honored Indian warrior's name whose only crime was protecting his people and way of life from an unrelenting U.S. government.

So I pose the question: Would you tolerate such an offense were it your people's iconic figure used to label such a vile person like Osama bin Laden? Something tells me you wouldn't.

Still Not A Mascot, But A Fan of Geronimo and His Legacy,

- **Simon Moya-Smith** © *This work falls under a traditonal copyright 2011*

Follow him at: [www.Twitter.com/IAmNotAMascot](http://www.Twitter.com/IAmNotAMascot)

# 3

## TheAngryindian

### Concerning Geronimo:

Examining The Psychological War Being Waged Against  
American Aborigines in the 21st Century

*May 12th, 2011*



*'In New York, Simone de Beauvoir went for a walk with Richard Wright and was rebuked in the street by an old lady. Sartre said: 'Here is the Jew, somewhere else is the Negro'. What is essential is a scapegoat'.*

**- Franz Fanon**

Within hours of the 'official' United States government-sanctioned press announcement that international terrorist Osama bin-Laden was killed by American commandos in a private residence in Pakistan, Native Americans across the United States cheered in commemoration of the event. Thousands of Indigenous Americans serve in the US military and as a community, we praised the news and gleefully added our voices to the national celebration of yet another successful operation in the eternal 'War and Terror'.

American Indians proudly stood shoulder-to-shoulder with our Euro-settler occupiers in celebration of the hard-hitting 'revenge' carried out against OBL. In fact, most Natives I heard on the street that evening were vocally proud of being 'American' and pointed to their American

flags. That is, until they found out that the US military brazenly code-named the western world's favourite Arab bogeyman 'Geronimo'. Then the laughter, the drinking and the sadistic patriotic fist-pumping ended. Full-stop.

In a not so subtle identification of the Saudi Islamic extremist Osama bin-Laden with the last American Aboriginal resistance leader to surrender to the US government, the hallowed name of 'Geronimo' served as the code-word for the military operation dispatched to deal with the world's most wanted terrorist. Reportedly, they got their man, and US corporate news agencies happily sold us a triumphant story about how the staff at the White House was notified of the OBL 'hit' with a brief message saying, 'Geronimo-E KIA'. The 'E' representing 'enemy' and the 'KIA' for 'killed-in-action'. That is, if the story, or stories, that we are being told by White House officials are even true to begin with. The official story of what really happened, and to whom, continues to spin out of control. And as of this writing, President Obama has authoritatively declared that the US government will not release any new data about the operation. OBL is history, the 'War on Terror' continues and the American neoliberal war machine rolls on. End of story.

Political dishonesty and slipshod propaganda blunders aside for a moment, let's return to the newfound anger and resentment simmering in mainstream Native America because US decision-makers chose to name-tag the world's most wanted Arab terrorist 'Geronimo'. I will not bother to go over the often emotional demands for an official apology coming from the political leadership of US federally-recognised Indian Country. Mostly because I do not see any point in it. I do not believe that US university-educated experts and analysts did not understand that using 'Geronimo' as a code-term for bin-Laden would be highly inappropriate and insulting to Native people. Of course they did. And that, I maintain, was the whole point.

We are after all talking about a Euro-settler country in the Americas, currently lead by a half-African head of state, that chose to [boycott the United Nations World Conference Against Racism](#) (WCAR) in order to protect another Euro-settler nation against legitimate charges of genocide against its captive Indigenous Arab population. This is the very same nation that says it is the bulwark of human freedom and expression while it grossly mistreats its own Aboriginal, African and immigrant populations via institutional racial profiling, ethnic segregation and religious prejudice. But the usual talking-heads that represent Aboriginal dignified disgust will gratefully accept the White man's empty apologies and his assurances that the government will try to 'do things better' in the future. Knowing full well that it was an intentional insult to our people and that there is more in the coming.

In the meantime, the rest of us will clap, sob and point our chins at the tele-screens, secure in the illusion that our patience and quiet dignity helped the White man 'understand who we really are' just a little bit better. As if 500 years of continuous and unwanted occupation wasn't enough to know about the peoples you have tried in earnest to wipe away from the face of the Earth.

I must confess that I cannot in good faith support a call for an apology over this specific infraction while Native people as a demographic still suffer from the burdens of European colonialism, territorial disenfranchisement and slow deliberate genocide every day in the US without a word of appropriate anger or condemnation from the Indigenous 'leadership'. To be brutally honest, what does it really mean when the representatives of colonised peoples can find the strength to complain about something like this, while at the same time, these very same 'leaders' actively support the political ideologies, policies and religion that led to the demise of not only the historical Geronimo, (Goyathlay, meaning 'The One Who Yawns') but the entirety of Indigenous North America? Just how serious are the demands for an official government

apology for this particular slander when other insults stare Native America directly in the face every day without much, if any, serious concerted community comment or resistance?

Objectively speaking, I am of the mind that their main intent was not to insult Native Americans, but instead to emotively identify a troublesome thorn in the side of US imperialism for those sent in to perform a highly specialised military operation. It was a monicker they assumed would be understood by all those involved and would make the mission 'visceral' for those who were charged with squeezing the trigger. Think of every US classic western film you have ever seen or heard of and I think you will get the idea. Everyone raised or educated in the US is aware of the name, if not the history, of Geronimo. And everyone should know that American Aborigines did not willingly relinquish their lands or their human rights. We fought back, but no one cares enough to consider why our resistance was not only justified but necessary for our survival.

Only the disingenuous amongst us will attempt to deny the fact that the US government still regards the historical Goyathlay, and all other 'insurgent' Aboriginal resisters, as 'terrorists'. The 'Operation Geronimo' scandal certainly proves this beyond any reasonable doubt. And it is also abundantly clear at this juncture that the Europocentric colonialist is really the entity that is having a difficult problem with 'letting go of the past'. Native Americans did not make a connection between bin-Laden and Geronimo. The White power structure lead by a descendant of the peoples of Kenya did. And this case presents us with a Freudian slip that offers a monumental opportunity for Indigenous socio-political and historical clarity.

For Indian people in the United States, Goyathlay is one of the few examples of armed, Indigenous resistance we all acknowledge with some degree of sincere respect. His war of liberation and tit-for-tat ferociousness made it possible for the rest of us to survive. Had we not fought back, the Indian would have been exterminated completely. Far too many of us have learned to forget that our freedom was taken from us through violence and religion in the name of the claimed 'White Right' of Manifest Destiny. It is pointless to argue otherwise and entirely revisionist and racist to try. Why are intelligent people supposed to accept that the highly educated upper-caste establishment minds that shepherd government policy had absolutely no idea that Indigenous Americans would be greatly offended by such a blatant slur?

And given the current state of unbridled and socially accepted White racist whining observed in mainstream American popular media, why should we be surprised by such shenanigans? Psychological disparagement for sport is a functional part of ethnic oppression. But it is only a factor within the equation. Colonialist attitudes and perspectives are the main operative dynamics here we should be paying attention to. This is why I question the drive for just an 'apology'.

Of course some sort of acknowledgement of this 'cultural respect error' is due, but what is to be gained by receiving a government and/or military apology for a colonialist innuendo that we all know was consciously chosen to drive home a clear and unambiguous message to the oppressed peoples of the world? We are all only trying to fool ourselves in refusing to understand that in tagging OBL as 'Geronimo' they were actually coming clean about how they really view the current US occupations in Arabia. And more importantly, how they still view the Original Peoples of the Americas.

And if Natives don't see [the underlying seriousness of what the US has done in re-naming OBL 'Geronimo'](#), many non-Indians do. Respected political analyst Prof. Noam Chomsky of MIT recently penned a brief statement on the killing of OBL and made it perfectly clear that the

mentality behind the naming of the operation is no different now than it was during the 'Indian Wars' of the early Euro-settler expansionist period. As he writes in a recent edition of the journal [Guernica](#):

'Same with the name, Operation Geronimo. The imperial mentality is so profound, throughout western society, that no one can perceive that they are glorifying bin Laden by identifying him with courageous resistance against genocidal invaders. It's like naming our murder weapons after victims of our crimes: Apache, Tomahawk... It's as if the Luftwaffe were to call its fighter planes "Jew" and "Gypsy."

Let's be serious here, if a race-baiting, conservative Mormon pundit can get away with calling the first African president of the United States an anti-White bigot during a primetime chat show without facing any consequences, why should American Indians think that they are immune from similar semantic victimisation? Besides, the average Native American should be accustomed to such slander, for we have been living with, and praising, institutional anti-Indian propaganda in one form or another for generations.

How many of the American Indians who are currently upset with the Obama administration over this issue have Chief Wahoo baseball caps in their closets? How many Native American households will observe Thanksgiving Day this year? How many 'Indians' will cheer the Washington Redskins next season and how many more will volunteer to serve in a military or PMC force that is violently robbing another Indigenous population of their lands, lives and natural resources?

Too many. So the reader must forgive me if I find it all extremely hypocritical, if not demented, for Indian Country to express righteous resentment over this situation so long as a majority of Aboriginals in the US consciously support the false legitimacy of their own ethnic, territorial and cultural extinction. And this includes US Indigenous support for the destruction of other, usually equally defenceless, Indigenous peoples identified by the powers that be as 'the enemy'.

Are those upset with 'Operation Geronimo' and its connections to OBL as equally perturbed when 'Geronimo' was being yelled as [US paratroopers jumped out of warplanes during World War Two](#)? How about when the Apache leader's name is sung in praise of today's wars? The lyrics of 'Down From Heaven' claim to salute and invoke the Indian hero by shouting his name over and over again as soldiers leap into the killing fields:

**Down from Heaven comes ELEVEN  
and there's HELL to pay below  
shout "GERONIMO" "GERONIMO".**

**Hit the silk and check your canopy  
and take a look around  
The air is full of troopers  
set for battle on the ground**

**Till we join the stick of ANGELS  
killed on Leyte and Luzon  
shout "GERONIMO" "GERONIMO".**

**It's a gory road to glory  
but we're ready here we go  
shout "GERONIMO" "GERONIMO".**



This dandy little imperialist ditty has been around since the 1940's and it goes a long way in explaining why something like 'Operation Geronimo' could happen in 2011. The motivational cry 'Geronimo' may no longer be used by US paratroopers as they jump, [but the 'motto' and 'spirit' of Goyathlay](#) according to military recruiters and historians is close to the heart of every American soldier.

And without a doubt, the United States Military has dexterously misappropriated far more than its fair share of Indigenous culture, always under the auspices of 'honouring' this continent's First Peoples in pursuit of their imperio-colonial wars of aggression. Many Indians take pride in these detestable practises under the belief that any acknowledgement, no matter how demeaning, is better than no acknowledgement at all. A perspective I doubt the real Geronimo would appreciate.

The political and cultural acquiescence central to such perspectives, in terms of actual socio-political value for Indigenous peoples, is of course subjective to how far Natives are willing to ignore their own integrity. This is the crux of the issue. The illusions of the Master Race should not be confused with the realities of the Indian in America. At some point we must be willing to deconstruct our personal and communal position in terms that make sense without worrying about how the occupier might feel when faced with his own negative history.

Being regarded as a 'special' people means absolutely nothing while standing on the soup line or freezing in the cold of winter, asking and praying for what is yours by birthright and international as well as constitutional US law. We hate to admit that we are beggars in our own lands but what else are we? To argue that Indians are in control of their destiny is to argue a fallacy of the greatest dimension. The fairy tales spun by the Great White Fathers in Washington DC are not true. And we all know them to be untrue.

And still, American Indians are doggedly patriotic and defensive of the United States although we have absolutely no legitimate reason to be. We are the direct physical and psychological victims of violent European settlement in the Americas and we still endure an unrecognised genocide that whittles away at what is left of our peoples without mercy. And still, far too many of us act as if the White man did us a favour by invading our lands and wiping out our peoples in the name of 'advancement'.

So given these cultural and political realities, why should any Indian in the US be surprised that the Obama cabinet would dare use the name of Goyathlay with such colonialist vain? The expressions of shock and dismay we are witnessing should be a wake-up call to Indian America. The US does not care about us much less respect us. And calling Osama bin-Laden 'Geronimo', no matter what the excuse, is clear proof of that.

Now that we understand exactly how they really feel about us, what next? What does a colonised people do when faced with such an existentialist conundrum? After 500 years of perpetual anti-Indigenous genocide, I ask, what next? And with all due respect I also ask our Native veterans, is this what you were fighting for? Is this what your unswerving loyalty to our invaders has come to signify in the end when they can so callously play such semantic ju-jitsu with our heroes and our history? Indigenous communities in both urban and reservation Indian Country are chock-full of vets the US simply forgot about once they did not need them any longer.

Occasionally, when recruitment numbers are low, the PR folks will haul out their history books to illustrate how the American Indian 'warrior tradition' has complimented US 'esprit de corps' and generously provides young Indians with a fun way to 'stay Native'. Of course they never mention in any detail the horror that was the US Army and the Euro-settler 'irregulars' who made the abuse and killing of Indians a customary national pastime. That part of the story gets muddled within a fog of White supremacist hypocrisy and theological dissonance.

Don't get me wrong. I am in complete agreement with the grievances raised by the Native community and our supporters on this issue. But only in so far as they are appropriate responses to a blatantly racist and colonialist vilification concocted to send a message to the world. 'Asking' the dominant power structure for an apology is not the same thing as demanding one. If the long-suffering diasporic Jewish community, in all of its grand colonialist denial, will not allow themselves to be ethnically or politically denigrated, I fail to see why American Aboriginals, (and American Africans for that matter) should be 'respectfully silent' about how we are traditionally and institutionally treated.

Are we no less deserving, and no less capable, of this very same instinct for self-preservation and human dignity than anyone else? We are the victims of a European Christian-sponsored genocide and the supposedly 'civilised' world works very hard to consciously ignore the fact that our 500 year long human-rights crisis has never ended. Until this is admitted as an empirical reality by American Indians who accept Europocentric hegemony as wholeheartedly as they accept the Judeo-Christian Gospel, the mistreatment of the Indian will continue above and below the radar. Unabated by notions of fair play or common sense.

As difficult as this is to admit, the fact remains that the Indian is his own worst enemy. Principally because he has been taught to be. As survivors of genocide, readjustment schools and territorial displacement, Aboriginals in the Americas bear an unseen and unacknowledged post-traumatic stress disorder that we have been trained to ignore. And regrettably, too ashamed to admit even to ourselves.

Many of us have simply rationalised our incessant victimisation as the way of the world and we do the best that we can with what little we have. Whether urban or reservation, our people have learned to make do with almost nothing and we irrationally accept this because we do not feel that we deserve any better. Our leaders will always deny this, but the prevailing attitude is thus: there is nothing that we can do other than bear the pain gracefully and persevere in dignified silence.

The 'Noble Savage' phenomenon is a universal one and is not limited to the Americas. Apartheid-era South Africa was not upheld by White Power per se, but by the dedicated service of Indigenous police and military recruits who were willing to torture, main and kill their own people for the benefit and pleasure the invader. The organised Indigenist body known as the Ejército Zapatista de Liberación (The Zapatista Army of National Liberation) representing Indigenous nations based in the Mexican State of Chiapas are mistreated by Mayan, not European soldiers. And we should never forget that Gandhi's followers were beaten and jailed by other, equally-oppressed Indian nationals who actively participated in reinforcing the British Crown's claim to own the entire country.

These are not examples of mere differences of opinion. They are cases of collusion, plain and simple. The Native American who speaks positively of his 'American-ness' is identifying himself with the civilisation that has brought death and destruction to his world. This individual does not think of himself as an 'Original Human Being', he thinks that he is an 'American'. And



worse, he does so without fully understanding what that name really means, where it was stolen from and who it truly identifies. And as can be expected, the Euro-settler society labours day and night to maintain this confusion.

Having said that it is critical to point out that there are numerous Indigenous anti-defamation and anti-colonialist activists out there diligently defending our humanity and still others working to create sustainable systems of cultural and spiritual regeneration to guarantee an Indigenous future. But I challenge, no, I defy the reader, to identify a mainstream organisation of committed Native Americans articulating a sound, progressive programme of independent American Indigenous politics that is universally supported by the community. Aside from the example of AIM, Aboriginals in America have not really been represented on the International level as other Indigenous Diasporas have.



We have no governments-in-exile such as the Central Tibetan Administration, the Federated Shan States or the West Papuan government in exile. Sure, there is a sincere, definitive voice of autonomous Indigenous liberation in Indian Country, but you would never know it listening to our leaders and community news media. Truth be told, Indigenous North America is a very conservative culture and dissenting viewpoints are often communally marginalised. And for all practical intents and purposes, perspectives that can be interpreted as not being respectful, socially distasteful or broadly detrimental to the group are simply not heard much less respected as expressions of credible opinion.

In and of itself this isn't necessarily a bad thing, but colonialism makes great use of the positive to bring about the negative. Colonialism is as much psychological as it is physical. The chief instruments of colonialist disorder, racism and religion, have manipulated these qualities to accommodate the concepts, fantasies and superstitions of the Europocentric worldview. Holding a Bible in one hand and a weapon in the other, The European has made his presence known by trampling through our minds as well as our lands. And the marching has yet to stop.

This explains why the government can hold the Church Commission hearings and uncover a

covert government policy of Native American sterilisation through its Indian Health Service (IHS) and still command the respect of the Indigenous Community after doing absolutely nothing to address it much less to stop it. This also goes a long way in explaining why American Indian Movement leader Leonard Peltier can sit in a White man's gaol under highly questionable circumstances without any noticeable support from Native America's mainstream political leadership. Because to acknowledge Peltier is to acknowledge the American Indian Movement and in recognising AIM we would have to discuss what caused AIM to be in the first place. It forces these issues into the open and into the international community and this is what the settler society and their pro-assimilationist Native clients wish to avoid at all costs.

When serious discourse is heard, the usual response to questions surrounding the more anti-human aspects of the 'Conquest of Paradise' is to pretend that they were never asked at all. And when Native Americans do ask for anything it is only to 'get along'. To be accepted into the Euro-settler social structure as 'equals' knowing from the start that authentic equality will never be attained as long as the Indian remains Indian. This is the price of entry. For the settler and the displaced alike, the revisionist view of American history is the orthodox and only widely accepted view. And Natives have been taught to be just as 'American' as everyone else.

In all seriousness, I see this latest US government/Indigenous public relations fracas as an unwelcome distraction from other issues Indian Country REALLY needs to be shouting from the rooftops about. Such as, why are Native Americans serving in the United States military in the first place? The patent answer to such inquiries is poverty and the continuation of the 'warrior' tradition, but it goes much deeper than just that. The Euro-settler domination of Indigenous peoples in the Americas is so complete that [American Indian children dream of being like the cowboys who kept the 'Bad Indians' in line or 'on the reservation'](#). Imagine, if you will, a playground populated by Ashkenazim Jewish children playing 'Nazis and Jews' and I think you'll get my point.

An ugly image, isn't it? But it is merely one of many symptoms illustrating the substantial mental and cultural damage done to the Indian in the Americas. And like any battered population, we are not clear as to what freedom means for us any more. Focused on survival, we have lost our bearing as to who we are in relation to the rest of the international community. Elsewhere, other similarly oppressed peoples burdened by occupation and ethnic discrimination speak uncompromisingly of their basic human and political rights to self-determination.

We have forgotten how to argue for these elemental factors that define what makes a people and/or a nation. We should be asking ourselves as a community why it is much easier to find educated Native Americans willing to defend the State of Israel's presumed 'God given right to exist' than the American Indian's right to exist at all. These individuals will defend their position by wielding UN Resolution 242 like a bludgeon while ignoring the numerous treaties agreed to between the United States and the First Nations governments they recognised legally as sovereign entities. The intellectual cowardice in such positions is clear if only we are willing to look.

If there are distinctions to be drawn between the genocidal Zionist state and the circumstances of the Indian in the Americas let them centre on the question of the Palestinian right to exist in their own lands as a free people. If the American Indian cannot understand and relate to that fundamental dynamic, then the question of Indigenous American survival in the 21st century is already answered for us. We have accepted our own extinction.

Indubitably the liberatory value inherent within such positions for Indigenous Americans

effectively amounts to just a fraction more than zilch. And the real question as to why the US/Aboriginal dispute is so different from other situations bears some investigation. The base absurdity of what is considered politically 'Correctly Indian' and respectable as opposed to what is deemed 'Incorrectly Indian' and disrespected is firmly rooted in the monopolised ability of the invading occupier to define the colonised population's view of reality.

Indigenous American conservative folks who take issue with such questions need to pause for a moment and ask themselves why. More to the point, they really should be asking why such inquiries are habitually condemned and popularly dismissed as spiteful 'reverse-racism' by both the White settler establishment and the mainstream American Indian society alike. While a host of historical examples and political circumstances could be itemised to underscore the point being made, it is important to pay attention to the fact that the accepted voices of political Indian America in no way represent an Indigenist alternative to the Eurocentric status quo.

On the contrary, Indigenous leaders in the United States, as opposed to say Canada, Mexico or Palestine, uniformly speak in tones that respect and reinforce the perspectives of their occupiers. Instead of raising issues such as genocide, racism and national independence, American Indians wax philosophical about the Native and his significant contribution to the 'making of America'. Rather than risk incurring the wrath of the White man, we talk of abstruse concepts like 'Indian-ness' and the Sacred Hoop as the community promotes the latest tribal business venture that will only benefit a very limited cluster of the community. And in the case of the tobacco and casino businesses, these vices only intensify both the colonialism and the health quality of Native people already suffering from routine medical neglect and abject poverty.

However, this does not mean that we do not have any real control over how our lives and futures are directed. Within the conceptual model of the First World, Indigenous peoples are perceived as monolithic, unsophisticated throwbacks only suitable for grunt industrial labour and the colonialist state's international tourist trade. Indigenous nations of the Americas are no different than other colonised nations in that we remain trapped within a vicious cycle of colonialist exploitation and negation.

We are despised at every level by the settler-class, yet more often than not, we are necessary, if not vital, to the constructive functioning of the settler system. Deep down inside they truly hate us, but at the same time, they know full well that they cannot possibly survive without us. Colonialism, no matter where it takes place, is by its very nature an existentialist trap that disturbs both the invader as well as the occupier. How far will each go to in order to maintain a sense of equilibrium?

It is sheer intellectual cowardice to not wish to associate the history of European intimidation of the Native in the Americas with the Indian's perpetually depressed condition. For more than five centuries we have been intentionally starved, forced to live in barren, often inhospitable conditions far removed from our ancestral lands. We have stood helpless as our leaders and spokespersons were killed so we would finally consent to European authority without debate or delay. The deliberate political framing of Indigenous political and societal opinion can be directly traced to the beginnings of the federal Indian reservation system, a xenophobic policy of Aboriginal liquidation that continues shamelessly into the present-day.

Missionaries brainwashed our people into stoically accepting the inevitability of European domination. The dilemma created within the Indian psyche is no accident and this explains in great detail why the US political and military establishment can regard its Indigenous population

as a gaggle of dimwits that can handle being blatantly insulted. They fully understand that the historical damage done to American Indians is by now instinctive, self-perpetuating and permanent.

We largely refuse to acknowledge this psychological dynamic and I maintain that is a major part of the 'Operation Geronimo' problem. In rejecting a more pragmatic, albeit painful political analysis of our true situation along the established terms used by every other people in the world, we leave ourselves vulnerable not just to insult, but to the very same violent ethnic-conflicts that engulfed us in the not so distant past.

This is not an exaggeration. Simply review the recent histories of Darfur, East Timor, the former Republic of Yugoslavia and present-day Occupied Palestine to understand where I am coming from. Indigenous peoples in the United States, for the most part, do not believe that they are connected to these international concerns. And because of this, we often do not completely realise that when we are being insulted as a demographic these particulars make our lives, and our very survival, much more difficult. It allows the occupier to falsely justify his discriminatory claim to power and domination over lands, resources and peoples that are not really his own.

The atrocities of the European invasion have left an indelible wound within the psyche of the American Indian. And the human damage is made much more visible each time we humbly appeal for equality from a system we know is firmly dedicated to sustaining Indigenous American socio-political inequality.

The heralded 'Clash of Cultures' unleashed a predatory blitzkrieg of genocide that altered the course of the Americas forever. Indigenous nations-states, economies and agriculture were liquidated to make way for White settlers and zealous clerics in search of souls to enslave. From the islands of Argentina to the crest of what is present-day Alaska State, the true, unadulterated story of how the Americas became 'White' has yet to be written. So far we are laboured with a 'Colonialiser's Narrative' of determinedly narrow focus totally centred upon the results of Euro-settler invasion rather than its causes.

Where does this leave the Indian after the shock of 'Operation Geronimo'? It leaves us nowhere if we are not willing to critically analyse this situation and move past the embarrassment of being crudely connected in spirit to a Wahhabist, anti-American Saudi religious extremist by a hopelessly racist and revisionist White American society. We need to understand why this happened without being emotional.

Moreover, if we really respected Geronimo we would respect what he stood for. He taught us that being an ideal, stoic 'American Indian' is no different than being a victim and that acknowledging the sad truth of our present situation is not a weakness but a source of strength. The historical Goyathlay spoke the truth about colonialist power in terms that colonialism understood. This is why he is remembered.

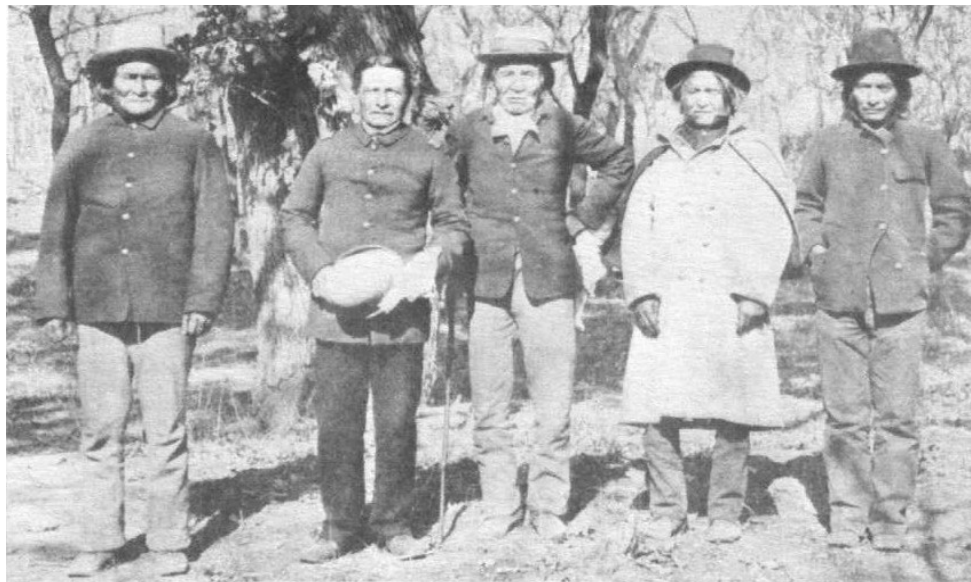
And this is exactly why his name was co-opted by the Obama administration to identify the ghost of their number one enemy. Imperialism, like colonialism, is a bitch. And Arabs and other Indigenous communities living under foreign occupation have quite a bit to be sore about. The Arab world remembers when former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright told a CBS news programme that Clinton administration policies and sanctions that were directly responsible for the deaths of more than 500,000 innocent Iraqi Arab children, 'Were worth it'.

Arabs with televisions are aware, even if we are not, that the wanton destruction brought upon

them by white phosphorus, (also known as 'Willy Pete') cluster bombs and other US weapons of mass destruction, such as depleted uranium, is responsible for the alarming rise of cancer cases and infants born with horrifying birth defects in Iraq and Afghanistan. Anyone who reads a newspaper in the Arab world is conscious of the continuous drone attacks that rip apart the peace and security of defenceless Indigenous peoples unlucky enough to be identified as 'insurgents' by the 'action intellectuals' of the west. And as quiet as this is being kept, OBL, if you accept the current story, was tracked, located and treated with 'extreme prejudice' in Pakistan, a taxpayer-supported US ally against terrorism, not in the two countries named above.

Native Americans are adamant in their assertion that there is absolutely nothing about the mass-murdering Osama bin-Laden that even remotely comes close to being analogous to the Indigenous struggle waged by Geronimo and his people. But what we think does not matter. But the White people who make decisions in US government and military affairs apparently do see a connection between them and we all should be asking ourselves why.

The historical Goyathlay was a spiritual and intellectual leader who was forced into war when his entire family was killed by the Spanish colonial army of Mexico during his absence. Before that there is the fact that as soon as European settlers began making themselves known in Chiricahua Apache country they began collecting Indians for use as slaves and souls to convert for the Mother Church along with all of the land. Goyathlay was not driven to fight the White man of Europe by religious zealotry or the goal of spreading Apache domination internationally through perpetual conflict for private profit. Indigenous Americans fought for their survival and for independence from European encroachment and genocide.



GERONIMO   NANNE   OZONE   CHIHUAHUA   LOCO

Apparently the US government seems to want the people of the world to believe that any and all opposition to their particular form of Europocentric hegemony is essentially the same, both past and present. The historical, geographic and cultural particulars do not matter.

If they really wanted to use a code-word that would accurately reflect a historically appropriate rebellious figure, they could just have easily used the nickname of Avraham Stern, or 'Yair'.

Avraham Stern was a Polish-born extremist who founded the underground Zionist terrorist organisation [Lochamei Herut Yisrael](#), ('Fighters for the Freedom of Israel') or 'Lehi' in British-occupied Palestine. They were also known to the Indigenous Arab population and US and British authorities as [the infamous 'Stern Gang'](#), responsible for the assassinations of UN diplomat Folke Bernadotte, British minister of state Lord Moyne and for their involvement in the bloodbath that took place at Deir Yassin.

Along with the Haganah and the Irgun, Lehi was an organisation of militant Zionists hell-bent on securing a Europeanised Israeli state (Eretz Yisrael) [by using armed force to destabilise the The British Mandate of Palestine](#). Lehi articulated itself as an organisation keen on '...demonstrating its desire for freedom through military operations' and in an article from their propaganda newspaper 'He Khazit' presented the following quasi-theological apologia in favour of the use of indiscriminate violence in order to pursue their political agenda:

Neither Jewish ethics nor Jewish tradition can disqualify terrorism as a means of combat. We are very far from having any moral qualms as far as our national war goes. We have before us the command of the Torah, whose morality surpasses that of any other body of laws in the world: "Ye shall blot them out to the last man." But first and foremost, terrorism is for us a part of the political battle being conducted under the present circumstances, and it has a great part to play: speaking in a clear voice to the whole world, as well as to our wretched brethren outside this land, it proclaims our war against the occupier. We are particularly far from this sort of hesitation in regard to an enemy whose moral perversion is admitted by all. [Culled from Wikipedia article: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lehi\\_\(group\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lehi_(group))]

Stern also attempted to align Lehi with the decidedly Judeophobic government of Adolf Hitler's Nazi Germany. He offered to side with the fascists against the United Kingdom in Palestine in return for Germany's assistance in helping the Zionists remove Britain from the region. We hear a great deal about the Grand Mufti of Palestine and his support for European fascism, but we hear little of Stern and his followers who were willing to do anything, even work hand-in-hand with the German Nazi Party, to create a Jewish State in a land that was really not their own.

Eventually Stern's frenzy of terrorist activity made him public enemy number one and he successfully evaded capture until British authorities located Stern's last hiding place and executed the Jewish radical while he was handcuffed behind his back. At this point 'Yair' had alienated himself from more moderate-acting Zionist leaders who differed with him only in terms of his extremism, not in terms of his Europocentric and ultimately ethnocidal anti-Arab politic. Avraham Stern is fondly remembered today as a founding warrior hero who is memorialised every year in grand ceremony by the political and military elite of the State of Israel.

He was also an unrepentant terrorist and Jewish religious extremist who was guilty of some of the more insidious public disturbances occurring against the English government presence in Palestine. But in today's political current, historical Israeli Jewish extremism is an allowable commodity, generally because it represents White supremacist state-power in the 'democratic Middle East'. And although Yair was as violent and as racist as they come, no one within a position of moral responsibility [anywhere in the western world would deny today's Israelis their 'right' to respect and honour their Machiavellian terrorist madman](#).

When examined from this perspective it seems clear that Stern's name would have made a much more suitable subject for a OBL code-word than 'Geronimo', even down to how he was 'removed'. Goyathlay on the other hand was never captured, he surrendered. And the



authorities did not assassinate him, he died in their custody from neglect after years of trying to find a way to live with some dignity as a celebrity prisoner of the United States Army. He also, unlike Yair, always understood that his struggle as an Indian was not isolated as evidenced by this statement he made about witnessing other Indigenous People at the World's Fair:

'There were some little brown people at the Fair that United States troops captured recently on some islands far away from here. They did not wear much clothing, and I think that they should not have been allowed to come to the Fair. But they themselves did not seem to know any better...I do not know how true the report was, but I heard that the President sent them to the Fair so that they could learn some manners, and when they went home teach their people how to dress and how to behave'. [Geronimo's Story of His Life, 1906]

The Zionist movement in British Occupied Palestine was only concerned with their own survival and had no concern at all for the area's native population. The Jewish claim to Palestine ended when the European imperial power of Rome ejected them after the First Roman-Jewish War in the year 70. The Native American claim to 'America' enjoys a much more legitimate argument than any European Zionist mandate. Principally because American Aborigines have never left the continental United States, Canada or Mexico en masse. We may have lost our respective ancestral territories, but as a demographic we are essentially on home-ground. European Jewry can never make that claim. Instead, they employ a wide and conflicting array of explanations, some ethical, others ridiculous and at least one religious, to lend some sort of validation to the Ashkenazim claim to Arab Palestine. The human and land rights of Indigenous Americans be damned.

In re-naming OBL Geronimo the US is making it clear that [our history of occupation and genocide is something for us to be ashamed of](#). Most of us learn this abhorrent lesson in self-hatred during our formative years, 50% by way of our environment and another 50% by way of the US popular culture. This is the real crisis, not just this particular episode of anti-Native disrespect. Yes, the government unfairly misused the name of an Indigenous hero, but they only did so because we allowed them to. If the US Military had the unmitigated gall to proclaim that the late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. would have approved of the current US occupations in Iraq and Afghanistan, why would they not misuse the name of Geronimo? We have allowed them to do so for so long at this point, claiming hurt feelings now only shows just how desperate we are to be accepted by the White man on his terms.

American myth-makers have, as a general rule of thumb, portrayed the Indian in US media as either the faithful sidekick of the White man or his natural enemy without any respect to the atrocious reality of the one-sided nature of the relationship. The story of Goyathlay challenges this illusion and reminds us that real Americana is more [George Lincoln Rockwell](#) than [Norman Rockwell](#). And the sooner we learn that lesson, the better. With all due respect to Jay Silverheels, the Lone Ranger's cinematic 'Good Indian' majordomo Tonto did far more damage to Indigenous American self-respect than the 'Billy Jack' series ever did.

At least the wannabe film-Indian, like Goyathlay, told the White man where to go.

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# Final Words

## Vagabond Beaumont A Rejection Of American Mythology (Part Two)

*May 17, 2011*



*"Puerto Rico has a history that is very heroic and prolific. Naturally, as a colony, there exists a history of double interpretation; the colony, and the history of the anti-colonial struggle. In reality, the colonial history does not apply to us. It is more fitting for the colonizer. Ours, the only one, is the anti-colonial history because it is the history of our native people who survived and are in constant battle to defeat the powerful colonial forces. It is the history of puertorriqueñidad."*

**- Comandante Filiberto Ojeda Ríos**

Imperialism is an ideology and an ideology needs a mythology to shape its culture. It's the creation of an American mythology that cloaks US imperialism both abroad and domestically in a desire to "spread democracy" or "freedom" to those who are supposedly "struggling" to be free. It's an American mythology that trumpets the hard won freedom from the British empire and mumbles the fact that it was only for white land owning men. It's the American mythology that leads people to believe that Abraham Lincoln fought the Civil War to free the slaves. It's American mythology that justifies war in Afghanistan to free women from the Taliban.



When the dust settles on the fallen American empire and archeologists sift through the rubble they'll find that nothing has shaped American culture more than imperialism and that the mythology that was been built up to support that ideology was it's greatest export. The difference between US imperialism and other empires is that it's mythology is constructed around the deception that it's "bringing democracy and freedom" to the world. It's a mythology shaped around the idea that "US democracy" is democracy perfected and because the US built this perfected democracy from the ground up it is burdened to build US democracy for other nations and peoples around the world.

In affect US imperialism is a continuation of the European ideology of the White Mans Burden that justified the colonization of Africa, Asia and the Americas as well as the attempted genocide of those peoples. The White Mans Burden to educate and elevate non-whites to "civilization" is the template for US imperialism's desire to "nation build" in non-white countries like El Salvador or Nicaragua or Guatemala or Vietnam or Korea or Somalia or Libya. US imperialism will bring democracy and freedom to our little lost brown brothers. It's this thinking that has justified the wholesale destruction of nations in an attempt to bring freedom and democracy. The whole of US imperialism can be summed up in one statement during the Vietnam War, "It became necessary to destroy the town, in order to save it". Whereas other empires had no clothes, were naked in their aggression, US imperialism clothes its ambitions in "nation building". Meet the new imperialism, the same as the old imperialism.

In the wake of the US attacks on 9/11 the US government went into it's shallow bag of tricks and dusted off the old divide and conquer techniques it had been using since the 1840's. One of the greatest ramifications to come out of the US attacks on 9/11 was the redefining of terrorism to encompass all forms of violence against empire. It also did wonders for the evolution of the American mythology in creating a firm foundation for US imperialism's credentials in the eyes of the world as judge jury and executioner of democracy. This American mythology that began some 160 years ago with Manifest Destiny was a foundation and the US attacks on 9/11 allowed the US to build on that mythology by becoming the defenders of democracy as it was defined by US imperialism. In defending US imperialist defined democracy it had the privilege of also defining its enemies. It gave US imperialists the latitude of labeling all those who fought against democracy, as it was defined by US imperialists, as terrorists. In essence if your struggle didn't synch up with US imperialism then you were labeled a terrorist.

Former president Bush defined this new American mythology in one short mantra "You're either with us or you're with the terrorists" this was the theme of the new Manifest Destiny in the age of terrorism, condensed into a soundbite. This put struggles like that of Northern Ireland with Britain, the Basque with Spain and the Palestinians with Israel between rock and a hard place. The machine of American mythology had now incorporated and equated anyone who was not "with us" as "with the terrorists". The struggles for freedom and democracy in Northern Ireland and in the Basque country and in the Palestinian territories didn't fit the criteria of US imperialism and so they were relegated to being "terrorists". The fact that that there is a a world of difference between the terrorist attacks on 9/11 in the US and the struggles for self-determination in Ireland, the Basque country and Palestine was of little concern to anyone outside of those struggles. The good will and sympathy that the world had for the US after the terrorist attacks on 9/11 allowed the US to strip away dialectical critical thinking on these struggles. There was now only the polarities of "us" and "them".

As the US feasted upon it's new found ability to turn the whole world upside down. The bones of it were thrown to countries like Britain, Spain and Israel. The ability to take the US imperial definition of democracy and terrorism as their own and apply it to their own imperial quandaries

was a godsend to them. In Ireland the IRA felt the world looking at their actions for self-determination through the prism of the post US 9/11 terrorist attacks, as defined by the US. The ETA of Basque (a clandestine Basque separatist group) also felt the affect of this new “terrorist” paradigm. While Hamas in Palestine got the rudest awakening to the new parameters of democracy.

The IRA announced that it would put it's arms aside because of the US terrorist attacks on 9/11, fearing that the world equate the tactics of their struggle with the US terrorist attacks on 9/11. Spain used the newly defined “with us” or “with the terrorists” paradigm as an excuse to go on massive raids rounding up and arresting hundreds of Basque independence sympathizers which decimated the ETA both financially and in terms of recruitment.

Hamas set aside armed struggle to politically campaigning for power in the Palestinian territory, winning that political power in an overwhelming mandate, only to find that their democracy was one that didn't fit the definition of either Israeli or US imperialists. Putting Hamas and the Palestinians backs against a different wall and leaving them with few choices in defending themselves.

These are the unrecognized and unspoken affects of the American mythology in the post US 9/11 terrorist attacks, as that mythology adapts itself to a new zeitgeist where people are rising up and taking the freedom that was always theirs as they're doing in Iran, Algeria, Egypt, Syria and Yemen. It's this adaption of American mythology that further buries the naked imperialism of the US in regard to the small Caribbean nation of Puerto Rico. While the US can pretend to negotiate peace between its British ally and their Northern Irish problem and condemn the ETA for their “terrorist” tactics against their Spanish ally and feign a neutrality in negotiating a solution between their Israeli ally and the Palestinians, the US has quietly done its best, to keep the dirty little secret of a colonial relationship it has forcibly maintained with Puerto Rico for well over a century, out of the limelight in all of these situations.

The story of Puerto Rico's colonization goes back to 1493 with the Spanish. In 1898 it went from negotiating its autonomy from Spain to being a colony of the US the after the Spanish – American War. So while the new American mythology postures itself as the generous harbinger of freedom and democracy to Iraq and Afghanistan it harbors its own colonial dilemma. What the US doesn't want you to know is that there has always been a strong and often times violent resistance to US colonialism in Puerto Rico. A resistance it labels “terrorism”.

If there is any doubt as to how the US equates those fighting for freedom and justice with terrorism, as it has in Northern Ireland and in the Basque country and in the Paletinian territories look at the how the recent capture or kill operation on Osama Bin Laden is eerily similar to another operation that took place in 2005 with Puerto Rican independence leader Comandante Filiberto Ojeda Rios. Filiberto is considered the founder of the armed underground clandestine movement to free Puerto Rico from US colonial rule. He was the leader of the EPB (Popular Boricua Army) also known as Los Macheteros.

On September 23rd of 1990 while awaiting trial for the \$7 million Wells Fargo robbery of 1985 and he cut off the the electronic shackle on his ankle to live a life of clandestinity. While in clandestinity Filiberto mocked the FBI, CIA and other law enforcement agencies by giving television, radio and newspaper interviews. While these law enforcement agenices searched the 100 by 35 mile island of Puerto Rico for him, Filiberto was creating a mythology of resistance by living clandestinely in the open. He published articles in newspapers and issued statements on the ongoing Puerto Rican colonial condition from clandestinity. He lived among

his people as he evaded the most powerful law enforcement agencies in the world. In doing so Filiberto was creating an alternate mythology to the dominant American mythology. It was a Puerto Rican mythology of resistance that could be used to shape a culture of resistance to the culture of imperialism.

In 2005 the FBI found Filiberto and they set up an operation to capture or kill him. Hundreds of FBI agents surrounded his house. Filiberto defended himself in a shoot out that ensued and Filiberto was wounded but the FBI refused to give him medical attention and let him bleed to death for over 24 hours. The fact that this took place on September 23rd, a day that Puerto Ricans celebrate an armed uprising against Spanish colonial rule that led to the abolition of slavery and 15 years to the day that he had escaped did not go unnoticed by Puerto Ricans. Former Puerto Rican political prisoner and prisoner of war Dylcia Pagan said it best when she said "...this is not just an attack on a leader of our movement but an attack on our very Puerto Rican-ness".

When Osama Bin Laden was killed by the US government the similarities to the assassination of Comandante Filiberto were numerous. In the case of Pakistan the government was unaware of the operation on Bin Laden using the excuse that to do so might tip Bin Laden off to the operation. In Puerto Rico the FBI gave no warning to the colonial government of the island on their attack plans on Filiberto out of the same fear that doing so would compromise the operation. Both situations ended in what can only be described as murder. The latest story now, is that Bin Laden was unarmed and shot in the head. Filiberto was armed but wounded and unable to continue being a threat but the FBI saw fit to wait for him to bleed to death. The US equated the actions of these men because that is the paradigm of the new American mythology.

However just like there is a chasm of difference that exists between equating Bin Laden with Geronimo as the US military did in their operation to capture and kill Bin Laden, there is an equally large distance to between Comandante Filiberto and Bin Laden. That chasm of distance between Geronimo and Filiberto as freedom fighters and Bin Laden as terrorist is something that the new post 9/11 American mythology can choose to bridge. What we need to recognize is that, it is a bridge to far. What we need to do is reject the polarity and reclaim the dialectic. What we need to do is reject the development of this new American mythology with a counter mythology. One that doesn't equate freedom fighters with terrorists.

**- vagabond** © *This work falls under a traditonal copyright 2011*

For a quick background on the life of Comandante Filiberto Ojeda Rios and hear his views on the colonial situation in Puerto Rico, check out the series of YouTube videos FILIBERTO: THE CLANDESTINE INTERVIEW



SEMANTIC GENOCIDE:  
'Three Native Sons Discuss 'Operation Geronimo''



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