

## Team Obama Justifies the Killing of a 16-Year-Old American

by Conor Friedersdorf via sal - The Atlantic *Friday, Oct 26 2012, 1:19am*

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Cornered by reporters with video cameras, former White House Press Secretary Robert Gibbs, a senior adviser to President Obama's reelection campaign, attempted to defend the kill list that the Obama Administration uses to determine whose body should next be blown apart. American drone strikes have resulted in hundreds of dead innocents in the last four years, even as the program has killed a number of high-level al Qaeda terrorists. There are two remarkable things about the ensuing exchange, which eventually turns into a discussion about a dead 16-year-old kid -- see video:

First, it's vital for the uninitiated to understand how Team Obama misleads when it talks about its drone program. Asked how their kill list can be justified, Gibbs replies that "When there are people who are trying to harm us, and have pledged to bring terror to these shores, we've taken that fight to them." Since the kill list itself is secret, there's no way to offer a specific counterexample. But we do know that U.S. drones are targeting people who've never pledged to carry out attacks in the United States. Take Pakistan, where the CIA kills some people without even knowing their identities. "As Obama nears the end of his term, officials said the kill list in Pakistan has slipped to fewer than 10 al-Qaeda targets, down from as many as two dozen," the [Washington Post](#) reports. "The agency now aims many of its Predator strikes at the Haqqani network, which has been blamed for attacks on U.S. forces in Afghanistan." The vast majority would never make their way to New York or Washington, D.C., and the Obama Administration would never agree to rules that permitted only the killing of threats to "the homeland."

The second notable statement concerns the killing of 16-year-old American citizen Abdulrahman al-Awlaki.

Tom Junod gives the [back story](#):

He was the son of Anwar al-Awlaki, who was also born in America, who was also an American citizen, and who was killed by drone two weeks before his son was, along with another American citizen named Samir Khan. Of course, both Anwar al-Awlaki and Samir Khan were, at the very least, traitors to their country -- they had both gone to Yemen and taken up with Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, and al-Awlaki had proven himself an expert inciter of those with murderous designs against America and Americans: the rare man of words who could be said to have a body count. When he was killed, on September 30, 2011, President Obama made a [speech](#) about it; a few months later, when the Obama administration's public-relations campaign about its embrace of what has come to be called "targeted killing" reached its climax in a front-page [story](#) in the New York Times that presented the President of the United States as the last word in deciding who lives and who dies, he was quoted as saying that the decision to put Anwar al-Awlaki on the kill list -- and then to kill him -- was "an easy one." But Abdulrahman al-Awlaki wasn't on an American kill list.

Nor was he a member of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula. Nor was he "an inspiration," as his father styled himself, for those determined to draw American blood; nor had he

gone "operational," as American authorities said his father had, in drawing up plots against Americans and American interests. He was a boy who hadn't seen his father in two years, since his father had gone into hiding. He was a boy who knew his father was on an American kill list and who snuck out of his family's home in the early morning hours of September 4, 2011, to try to find him. He was a boy who was still searching for his father when his father was killed, and who, on the night he himself was killed, was saying goodbye to the second cousin with whom he'd lived while on his search, and the friends he'd made. He was a boy among boys, then; a boy among boys eating dinner by an open fire along the side of a road when an American drone came out of the sky and fired the missiles that killed them all.

How does Team Obama justify killing him?

The answer Gibbs gave is chilling:

ADAMSON: ...It's an American citizen that is being targeted without due process, without trial. And, he's underage. He's a minor.

GIBBS: I would suggest that you should have a far more responsible father if they are truly concerned about the well being of their children. I don't think becoming an al Qaeda jihadist terrorist is the best way to go about doing your business.

Again, note that this kid wasn't killed in the same drone strike as his father. He was hit by a drone strike elsewhere, and by the time he was killed, his father had already been dead for two weeks. Gibbs nevertheless defends the strike, not by arguing that the kid was a threat, or that killing him was an accident, but by saying that his late father irresponsibly joined al Qaeda terrorists. Killing an American citizen without due process on that logic ought to be grounds for impeachment. Is that the real answer? Or would the Obama Administration like to clarify its reasoning? Any Congress that respected its oversight responsibilities would get to the bottom of this.

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*Of course, we all should have known, becoming a selectee Wall St lackey president (with an extra-judicial kill list) serving the plutocrats and Pentagon, which has more illegal civilian deaths and war crimes on its hands than all the nations of the world combined, this century, is being a "responsible" father and puppet leader! Now why couldn't we see that clearly?*

**And Team Romney -- two sides of same coin**

<http://tinyurl.com/8ol2dhx>

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Jungle Drum Prose/Poetry. <http://jungledrum.lingama.net/news/story-200.html>