

November 19, 2012

Every time on this terrible anniversary, in fact nearly the entire month of November, a painfully morose sensation comes over me. No, I didn't lose any family or friends to the monster Jim Jones and his gang of executioners on that day thirty-four years ago. What I did lose was my faith in justice, replaced by a dread that numbed me to the present. Evil continues to thrive in this world, in the midst of the beauty, and it makes this paradox called life all the more jarring.

How is it that some surviving members and relatives of the People's Temple can continue being so deluded they would memorialize monsters that exterminated over 900 men, women, children, and babies, right here in this sacred place where nearly half of the remains of those people lay? Why do they believe this notion of "closure" would possibly change one iota the reality of the worst cult nightmare come to life--that ended in a horrifying mass murder? And yet, shockingly, these members of the New People's Temple--including Jim Jones's own sons--are convinced that putting murderers on a memorial alongside their victims is the way to forgiveness.

Never been any names of assassins in history, to my knowledge, that have been inscribed next to those names of those they slaughtered. Haven't heard of Nazi SS names on Jewish memorials, or Stalin's gulag guards on prisoners' plaques, or Pol Pot's executioners' names besides their victims. And yet here we have the name of

the monster--along with his killing squad goons--  
memorialized with those people they murdered with such  
methodical, sadistic energy.

Today is a day to honor the victims, NOT the  
victimizers. This Jim Jones & His Executioners Memorial  
has NO place here or anywhere in the world. Let the real  
victims truly rest in peace, once and for all.

-- Tom Kinsolving