

## Tom Brokaw: Not the Greatest Witness To History

by Sharleen Leahey

Recently I watched portions of NBC anchorman Tom Brokaw's farewell TV special, "Witness to History". The last segments of the program detailed the attacks by Saudi dissidents on American targets during the late 1990s, the 911 attacks on NYC and Washington in 2001, and the subsequent Bush/Cheney propaganda campaign which preceded the US invasion of Iraq. In conclusion Brokaw stared into the camera and asked a rhetorical question: how can our nation resolve the current cycle of violence engulfing the Middle East?

After 25 years on the job, a viewer might expect this prominent reporter to offer some critical analysis, perhaps some insightful perspective. Instead he shook his head and declared that he just has "no answers" about how to resolve what he described as a perplexing dilemma of two opposing forces locked in violent conflict. Never once did Brokaw cast a critical eye toward our support for Israel's illegal occupation of Palestine and Middle East dictatorships like Saudi Arabia and Egypt which oppresses millions of ordinary Arabs. Nor did he mention our current Administration's disdain for international law in its illegal and brutal invasion and occupation of Iraq, a sovereign country which posed no threat to the security of our nation. No, Tom just took a pass, sighed and said that he still can't fathom why we can't seem to resolve our differences with the Arab world.

This empty offering from one of corporate media's most famous anchors just reinforces what critics of corporate mass media have been saying for years: the more you watch . . . the less you know. Perhaps Tom should have spent some time listening to the many independent journalists, authors and activists who appear on Amy Goodman's "Democracy Now!" on WBAI each weekday morning . . . or Bill Moyers' TV program "Now" which broadcasts every Friday and Sunday night on PBS' Channel 13. Maybe he should have spent some time listening to Randi Rhodes or Mike Molloy on *Air America* (1190 am). If he was more informed he could have ended his program with some intelligent, enlightening commentary worthy of a journalist celebrating his 25th anniversary.

Oh Tom, one more thing. With all due respect to our fathers and grandfathers who fought fascism in World War II, it is my humble opinion that the "Greatest" Generation is yet to be. The greatest generation will be the one which finally says NO! to the empire builders and war profiteers (like Halliburton and your boss, General Electric) and finally establishes a culture of peace upon our beautiful blue planet.

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