

# ☆☆☆ FAMILY SECURITY MATTERS

ENGAGING AMERICAN FAMILIES IN OUR NATION'S SECURITY

## To The Families Of The Victims In Tucson

by [PETER GADIEL](#) January 17, 2011

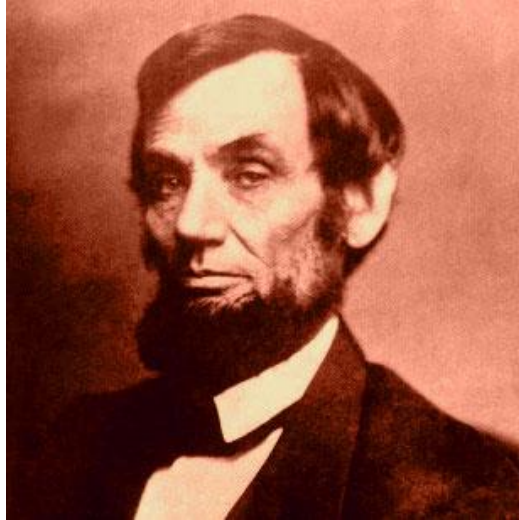


The public memorial services for the victims of Jared Loughner are over, and the public's attentions will now move to other matters. But for the families of the victims the pain of their loss is just beginning. None of the families of this monster deserved what has happened to them, but the families that will suffer the most are those of the two youngest victims, Gabe Zimmerman, age 30 and Christina Green, age 9.

As the father of a 23 year old son murdered on 9/11 I fully understand the hideous pain that their families are enduring. I only wish that I could offer them something that would help get through this awful tragedy.

In writing letters of condolence to families who lose a loved one I long ago gave up attempting to find my own words. The best I can do is to quote from a letter that Pres. Lincoln wrote to the daughter of a long time friend who died in action during the Civil War:

". . .In this sad world of ours, sorrow comes to all; . . .I am anxious to afford some alleviation of your present distress. Perfect relief is not possible, except with time. You cannot now realize that you will ever feel better. Is not this so? And yet it is a mistake. You are sure to be happy again. To know this, which is certainly true, will make you some less miserable now. I have had experience enough to know what I say; and you need only to believe it, to feel better at once. . ."



But Lincoln was writing of the death of a parent, and the natural order is that our parents, however beloved, will predecease us. We are, in a sense, prepared from childhood to face this loss, and as we age the pain of the loss of our parents is alleviated by the knowledge that we were granted their company for many years, and that their lives were lived in full.

In awful contrast, the loss of a child is a violation of the natural order; it is a shock and loss like no other. At the victim's first birthday, the first Thanksgiving, the first Christmas, after the death the pain will be renewed, as it will be at every birthday, every Thanksgiving, every Christmas, and in fact, virtually every minute for the rest of the parents' lives.

Sad to say, life will never be full again, nor will *complete* happiness ever be possible.

Nevertheless, Lincoln's statement is, in regard even to a parent's loss, somewhat correct. There can be a degree of happiness, certainly not what it should be but still, after the intervention of time, probably a great deal of time, even this pain recedes somewhat.

I sincerely wish that I could offer the Green and Zimmerman families more than these thoughts to reduce their suffering; I regret that I cannot.

*FamilySecurityMatters.org* Contributing Editor Peter Gadiel is the president of 9/11 Families for a Secure America and co-developer of *Illegal Immigration; A Game*.





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