

## 9/11 JUSTICE Was it Khalid Sheikh Mohammed or Osama Bin Laden who was behind the 9/11 attacks?

By [Yamin Zakaria](#)

Global Research, May 06, 2012

[radicalviews.org](http://radicalviews.org) 6 May 2012

Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [Law and Justice](#), [Terrorism](#)

*The US-led coalition went to war, and in the process killed almost a million people, in order to capture Osama bin Laden, who allegedly masterminded the 9/11 attacks from the caves in Afghanistan. To avenge the killing of innocent civilians, by killing many more innocent civilians is a perverse notion of justice. If dispensing collective punishment is the policy, then it makes little sense to talk of innocence or guilt. Thus a suicide bomber is no different to those dropping bombs from a distance, both dispensing collective punishment on a community.*

Yet there was constant talk of guilt, and everybody pointed the finger at Osama Bin Laden. He was conveniently killed, instead of being captured and put on trial - which would have provided the perfect opportunity to discover who was telling the truth. Of course, that is assuming he was going to be given a fair trial, rather than one based on 'evidence' acquired from water-boarding and other forms of torture that are regularly used by the Americans, euphemistically called "enhanced interrogation".

Today we hear Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and others are being tried as the masterminds behind the 9/11 attacks. The Pentagon has already said Khalid Sheikh Mohammed admitted he was responsible "from A to Z" for the 9/11 attacks. In that case, chasing Bin Laden for 9/11 was a lie, unless one can provide clear evidence that Osama Bin Laden liaised with Khalid Sheikh Mohammed to plan the 9/11 attacks or he was ordered by Bin Laden to do so. It would be interesting to hear what Khalid Sheikh Mohammed said about the role of Bin Laden in planning the 9/11 attacks.

Everyone knows the maxim - innocent until proven guilty; it is implied that the process is carried out through a court of law that is fair. Accordingly, the Taliban at the time offered to hand over Bin Laden to a neutral court that would offer a fair trial. The Americans were not interested, and preferred the cowboy 'justice' of water-boarding in the hellish dungeons of Guantanamo Bay or Abu-Ghraib to get their evidence. Indeed, official documents have shown that Khalid Sheikh Mohammed was subjected to water-boarding - or simulated drowning - 183 times in 2003 [1].

The limited access given to the legal representative of the defendants and the secret nature of the 'evidence' presented along with the 'evidence' obtained from torture makes this legal process a laughing stock. Even the former chief US prosecutor at Guantanamo Bay has denounced the military trial as unfair, simply because the world will never see any trial as legitimate where evidence was obtained through torture [2]. This farcical trial serves one purpose - that is to pretend that the US has been civil and upheld the values it preaches to

other countries.

To be fair, the current US President did suggest trying Khalid Sheikh Mohammed in a normal city court in New York, but met resistance. Some residents objected, saying the security hazard and the disruption the trial would pose to city life would be too much to bear. What security hazard, given that Al-Qaeda is almost finished, and the US has ample resources at hand? Or do they think Al-Qaeda men will appear like X-Men with extraordinary powers? Isn't justice more important than minor inconvenience to city life?

Even the US President knows that Guantanamo Bay is an embarrassment, especially if you want to lecture other nations like China, Iran, Sudan, and North Korea. One of his pre-election promises was to close down the prison, but he failed due to so much opposition from within; it reconfirms the perverse nature of the American mindset when it comes to the notion of justice.

Yamin Zakaria ([yamin@radicalviews.org](mailto:yamin@radicalviews.org))

[www.radicalviews.org](http://www.radicalviews.org) , <http://yaminzakaria.blogspot.com>

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