

KIRK LIPPOLD, GITMO ARCHITECT, STILL MAKING TORTURE COOL

I previously wrote about Kirk Lippold earlier this month, when the Obama Administration dropped charges against Rahim al-Nashiri, the alleged mastermind of the Cole bombing. Just as a Bush Dead-End judge was forcing Obama's hand by refusing to put off al-Nashiri's trial, Lippold, former Commander of the USS Cole, hit the airwaves, bitching about how Obama was holding up justice for the families of the Cole victims.

Somehow, the news sources quoting Lippold never asked why (with one exception) he hadn't been bitching for the previous eight years, when Bush and Clinton failed to prosecute any of the Cole bombers.

Nor did the news sources quoting Lippold reveal something just as pertinent to his complaints that Obama was letting a Gitmo detainee free as his role as Cole Commander: Lippold was himself one of the architects of Gitmo policy.

With yesterday's release of Binyam Mohamed, Lippold is back, attacking Obama for making the country less safe.

This unprecedented release of an enemy combatant, who has already targeted the United States, clearly shows that despite the promises that President Obama made to keep this country safe, he may be putting political promises ahead of our national security. The laundry list of charges against Binyam Mohamed, many of which he has admitted to, makes it blatantly clear that it is not if he will attack the United States, but only when his attack will happen.

And, with the help of Military Families United

(which seems to have been set up to push Obama to be belligerent as possible and which seems to have been the catalyst behind Lippold's new chatty ways), Lippold's attacks are getting play.

Kudos to Carol Rosenberg, alone among journalists picking up Lippold's release, for identifying Lippold with his Gitmo role.

A Bush administration era architect of Guantánamo policy resurrected the dirty bomb allegation and accused Obama of "clearly taking actions that may endanger the United States and our national interests."

Retired Navy Cmdr. Kirk Lippold, whose destroyer the USS Cole was struck by suicide bombers in October 2000, said in a statement issued by the advocacy group Military Families United: "Americans must now be very watchful of every action the Obama administration takes in war on terror."

The AP, though, makes no mention of Lippold's role in designing Gitmo.

Some criticized Mohamed's release, saying Monday that no detainees should have been freed before their status was reviewed under an executive order Obama issued last month.

"President Obama ordered a 180-day review to determine the status of the detainees, so it's unclear to me why Mr. Mohamed has been released without such a review," said retired Navy Cmdr. Kirk Lippold who was in charge of the USS Cole when it was attacked by suicide bombers in 2000.

The Baltimore Republican Examiner, calls on Obama to ignore ACLU and instead listen to Lippold, even while it hides Lippold's own ties

to Gitmo.

Commander Kirk Lippold, the former commanding officer of the *USS Cole* stated that "[t]his unprecedented release of an enemy combatant, who has already targeted the United States, clearly shows that despite the promises that President Obama made to keep this country safe, he may be putting political promises ahead of our national security."

Obama needs to listen to the victims of terrorist attacks, such as CDR Lippold instead of the ACLU or Human Rights Watch, if he wants to keep this country safe.

Now even assuming the charge sheet against Mohamed—which relies on Abu Zubaydah's testimony made under torture as well as Mohamed's own tortured confession, and which was dismissed last fall—is true, he still has absolutely no connection to the Cole bombing (indeed, he arrived in Afghanistan in 2001, after the bombing).

Yet the same cannot be said of Lippold's own role in US treatment of Mohamed.

He recently served as Deputy Division Chief and Politico-Military Planner, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Directorate for Strategic Plans and Policy (J-5), War on Terrorism Division, where he was instrumental in crafting detainee policy for the war on terrorism during its initial stages following the 9/11 attacks.

Lippold was there, crafting detainee policy, before Mohamed was arrested and sent to Morocco to be tortured. Yet somehow that's not how the press wants to describe Lippold's stake in Mohamed's release.