

KSM WAS LYING ABOUT OBL'S LOCATION WHILE HIDING THE COURIER WHO COULD LOCATE HIM

I apologize for yet another post on why the torture apologists claims that torture got us Osama bin Laden are wrong.

The debate is now manipulating the question at issue, suggesting that the fact Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and Abu Faraj al-Libi provided tidbits (or, according to several reports, unconvincing denials) that led to OBL equates to us needing torture to get that intelligence. Particularly given that CIA used the denials of KSM and al-Libi as indications they were hiding something, it's unclear why a denial without coercion would have served differently.

But there are two points that seem key in assessing the torture question. First, both KSM and al-Libi had critical intelligence they withheld under torture. KSM knew of Abu Ahmed's trusted role and real name; al-Libi knew Abu Ahmed was OBL's trusted courier and may have known of what became OBL's compound.

And neither of them revealed that information to the CIA.

They waterboarded KSM 183 times in a month, and he either never got asked about couriers guarding OBL, or he avoided answering the question honestly. Had KSM revealed that detail, Bush might have gotten OBL 8 years ago.

And just as importantly, the whole time KSM was shielding Abu Ahmed's true identity while being waterboarded, KSM was also lying to the CIA about where OBL was. When asked what things he lied about under torture at his 2007 CSRT hearing, KSM specifically said he first said he

didn't know of OBL's whereabouts, and then confirmed false locations for him, in response to the torture.

President [of the Tribunal]: What I'm trying to get at is any statement that you made was it because of this treatment, to use your word, you claim torture. Do you make any statements because of that?

[snip]

KSM: I make up stories just location UBL. Where is he? I don't know. Then he torture me. Then I said yes, he is in this area or this is al Qaida which I don't him. I say no. They torture me.

So at the time when KSM was guarding crucial information about Abu Ahmed and with it OBL's location, he was making shit up to get the torture to stop.

As I understand the torture apologists' arguments, the whole point of it (aside from generating propaganda and making chicken hawks excited) is to get crucial intelligence quickly, to skip the laborious process of acquiring a mosaic of information and developing deep knowledge of an organization over years—that is, to skip the process that has now resulted in the death of OBL. But instead of skipping that step, we got denials and—in the case of KSM—disinformation. And only now, eight and six years later, we're only now becoming aware of the intelligence these men had that would have led to OBL had our interrogation been more successful.