

## David Ray Griffin

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### **Einschätzung des Geständnisses von Bin Laden**

#### **2. Has Good Evidence of Bin Laden’s Responsibility Been Provided?**

I turn now to the second point: the claim that Osama bin Laden had authorized the attacks. Even if it refused to give the Taliban evidence for this claim, the Bush administration surely – most Americans probably assume – had such evidence and provided it to those who needed it. Again, however, reports from the time indicate otherwise.

##### **A. The Bush Administration**

Two weeks after 9/11, Secretary of State Colin Powell said that he expected “in the near future . . . to put out . . . a document that will describe quite clearly the evidence that we have linking [bin Laden] to this attack.”<sup>19</sup> But at a joint press conference with President Bush the next morning, Powell withdrew this pledge, saying that “most of [the evidence] is classified.”<sup>20</sup> Seymour Hersh, citing officials from both the CIA and the Department of Justice, said the real reason why Powell withdrew the pledge was a “lack of solid information.”<sup>21</sup>

##### **B. The British Government**

The following week, British Prime Minister Tony Blair issued a document to show that “Osama Bin Laden and al-Qaeda, the terrorist network which he heads, planned and carried out the atrocities on 11 September 2001.” Blair’s report, however, began by saying: “This document does not purport to provide a prosecutable case against Osama Bin Laden in a court of law.”<sup>22</sup> So, the case was good enough to go to war, but not good enough to take to court. The next day, the BBC emphasized this weakness, saying: “There is no direct evidence in the public domain linking Osama Bin Laden to the 11 September attacks.”<sup>23</sup>

##### **C. The FBI**

What about our own FBI? Its “Most Wanted Terrorist” webpage on “Usama bin Laden” does not list 9/11 as one of the terrorist acts for which he is wanted.<sup>24</sup> When asked why not, the FBI’s chief of investigative publicity replied: “because the FBI has no hard evidence connecting Bin Laden to 9/11.”<sup>25</sup>

## D. The 9/11 Commission

What about the 9/11 Commission? Its entire report is based on the assumption that bin Laden was behind the attacks. However, the report's evidence to support this premise has been disowned by the Commission's own co-chairs, Thomas Kean and Lee Hamilton.

This evidence consisted of testimony that had reportedly been elicited by the CIA from al-Qaeda operatives. The most important of these operatives was Khalid Sheikh Mohammed – generally known simply as “KSM” – who has been called the “mastermind” of the 9/11 attacks. If you read the 9/11 Commission's account of how bin Laden planned the attacks, and then check the notes, you will find that almost every note says that the information came from KSM.<sup>26</sup>

In 2006, Kean and Hamilton wrote a book giving “the inside story of the 9/11 Commission,” in which they called this information untrustworthy. They had no success, they reported, in “obtaining access to star witnesses in custody . . . , most notably Khalid Sheikh Mohammed.”<sup>27</sup> Besides not being allowed by the CIA to interview KSM, they were not permitted to observe his interrogation through one-way glass. They were not even allowed to talk to the interrogators.<sup>28</sup> Therefore, Kean and Hamilton complained:

“We . . . had no way of evaluating the credibility of detainee information. How could we tell if someone such as Khalid Sheikh Mohammed . . . was telling us the truth?”<sup>29</sup>

They could not.

Accordingly, neither the Bush administration, the British government, the FBI, nor the 9/11 Commission ever provided good evidence of bin Laden's responsibility for the attacks.

## E. Did Bin Laden Confess?

**Some people argue, to be sure, that such evidence soon became unnecessary because bin Laden admitted his responsibility in a videotape that was discovered by the US military in Jalalabad, Afghanistan, in November 2001. But besides the fact that bin Laden had previously denied his involvement many times,<sup>30</sup> bin Laden experts have called this later video a fake,<sup>31</sup> and for good reasons. Many of the physical features of the man in this video are different from those of Osama bin Laden (as seen in undoubtedly authentic videos), and he said many things that bin Laden himself would not have said.<sup>32</sup>**

The FBI, in any case, evidently does not believe that this video provides hard evidence of bin Laden's responsibility for 9/11, or it would have revised its “Most Wanted Terrorist” page on him after this video surfaced.