

THE LATEST PROP FROM GITMO

I'm generally sympathetic with the complaints defense attorneys are making about the release of the latest diatribe from Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and friends. Much of the attention has focused on the question, "Why is the military judge in the case issuing orders in this case when Obama has halted all commissions?" perhaps not least because it recalls the actions of James Pohl, who refused to stay Rahim al-Nashiri's trial after Obama ordered all proceedings to halt.

But the complaints I'm most interested in have to do with the genesis of the document itself. What proof is there that all five detainees have signed this document, Adam al-Hawsawi's attorney asked, when all we've got is a typed English document.

"There is no evidence that Mr. al Hawsawi knew about, read or signed this document," Maj. Jon Jackson said in an email. "It is a typed message in English with no signature. I object to this highly irregular document release." Maj. Jackson said he was unaware of the statement until the military judge ordered copies sent to attorneys Monday.

And how is it that this document has been published so quickly, other defense attorneys ask, when their own filings still haven't been released?

Defense attorneys and civil liberties groups said that the speed with which Judge Stephen R. Henley, an Army colonel, released the statement after reviewing it March 5 was troubling. They pointed to an e-mail from the clerk of court for the military commissions to counsel on the issue, which said, "I have been asked by our . . . folks to

release the documents ASAP."

Defense attorneys said they are still trying to secure the release of pleadings they filed eight months ago.

The authorities at Gitmo would have you believe that the five 9/11 detainees charged with 9/11 wrote this ~~on March 1~~, got it translated into English and typed up and hand-classified Top Secret/SCI, then was given to the judge on March 5. And the judge reviewed it, reviewed its classification and deemed it unclassified, and then released it all by March 10. [Update: As drational points out, the first page of the diatribe itself has the date 2/24/09 in what appears to be the same hand as the TS/SCI classification—so this timeline goes back into at least February some time. He points out that the date probably refers to 12/1/08.]

I guess the Gitmo apologists can produce propaganda quickly when they feel the need.