

President Obama and Common Sense

A few months ago I wrote an article for *Parade* magazine about what President Obama can teach America's kids. Basically, the piece told children that despite having no father present and a rather loopy mom, the president was able to prosper and achieve the most powerful position in the world. If young Barry Obama could overcome his rather chaotic upbringing (which included a stint in Indonesia), most American kids in difficult circumstances can do the same.

There is no question that President Obama is a brilliant man. After graduating from Harvard Law, he worked his way up the political ladder quickly using Chicago's south side as a launching pad. That's tough turf, so Obama had to combine book smarts with guile, which he did.

And so it is simply stunning to see how poorly Obama is faring in the common sense zone as president. The best example of his failure to anticipate trouble is how he's handling Khalid Sheik Mohammed. I remember sitting there with some friends in New York City last November when Attorney General Eric Holder announced that old Khalid would be leaving Guantanamo Bay and heading for the Big Apple to be tried by civilians instead of by a military tribunal. We looked at each other incredulously. Is President Obama joking? Doesn't he know how raw emotions still are in the city? And then the expense estimates began rolling in—it would take hundreds of millions of dollars to try Khalid and four other al-Qaeda thugs.

Then I was reminded that Congress had passed a law specifically allowing captured overseas terrorists to be judged by the military. Since a military trial would cost about \$39.95 a day (participants are already on the federal payroll), why on earth would anyone okay an incredibly

expensive dog and pony show for these murderers?

Remember, Khalid Sheik Mohammed has already admitted to planning 9/11 and given up his confederates in the effort, most of whom, upon capture, have confirmed Khalid was Mr. Big. Also, Khalid says he personally slit the throat of *Wall Street Journal* reporter Daniel Pearl. **He has admitted to doing this.** So why are we wasting time?

Attorney General Holder says it's because we want the world to see the U.S. justice system on display. Again, why? The people who hate us are not going to change their minds because a jury condemns the terrorists to death instead of three military officers. Do Holder and the president not get that?

Polls show that most Americans realize the Khalid decision is stupid, and now big-time Democrats like Senators Feinstein and Schumer have publicly told the president to wise up. And he has. Last Friday the White House announced it was looking at other venues. Swell.

But why was this deal allowed to get out of control? That is very troubling. If President Obama is so smart, why did he not realize the absurdity of the situation?

At this point, I simply don't know.