At the Center of the 9/11 Story

Anwar al Aulaqi, the first and only known American citizen targeted for assassination by the Obama administration, is believed to be "at the center of the 9/11 story."

On March 25, 2010 Harold Hongju Koh, the Legal Adviser to the U.S. Department of State, addressed the Annual Meeting of the American Society of International Law in Washington, D.C. In his talk entitled, "The Obama Administration and International Law," he attempted to justify the assassination of persons, including American citizens, without any legal process whatsoever.

the United States is in an armed conflict with al-Qaeda . . . in response to the horrific 9/11 attacks . . .

a state that is engaged in an armed conflict . . . is not required to provide targets with legal process before the state may use lethal force.

precision targeting of specific high-level belligerent leaders . . . during an armed conflict is not unlawful, and hence does not constitute "assassination."

Never mind that in 2004 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in the Hamdi v. Rumsfeld that a U.S. citizen, alleged to be an "enemy combatant," has due process rights. Despite Mr. Koh's claim that such killing is not "assassination," words retain their meaning: assassinate -- to kill by treacherous violence. For example, "a deadly airstrike" on December 24, 2009, which the Yemen Observer said destroyed Mr. Aulaqi's house, reportedly killed more than 30 people (source: Robert Mackey, New York Times).

To the extent that credence is given to Mr. Koh's conclusions, based as they are on the presumptions that designations equal actualities and that suspicion equals guilt, our language becomes defective, our law perverse and our society degenerate.

Two weeks after Mr. Koh's talk the identity of the first United States citizen to be so targeted for killing was reported, first by Reuters, then by the New York Times on April 6, 2010 and in the Washington Post the next day.

The Washington Post

Muslim cleric Aulaqi is 1st U.S. citizen on list of those CIA is allowed to kill

By Greg Miller
Washington Post Staff Writer
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A Muslim cleric tied to the attempted bombing of a Detroit-bound airliner has become the first U.S. citizen added to a list of suspected terrorists the CIA is authorized to kill, a U.S. official said Tuesday.

Anwar al-Aulaqi, who resides in Yemen, was previously placed on a target list maintained by the U.S. military's Joint Special Operations Command and has survived at least one strike carried out by Yemeni forces with U.S. assistance against a gathering of suspected al-Qaeda operatives.

Because he is a U.S. citizen, adding Aulaqi to the CIA list required special approval from the White House, officials said. The move means that Aulaqi would be considered a legitimate target not only for a military strike carried out by U.S. and Yemeni forces, but also for lethal CIA operations.

Anwar al Aulaqi is not under indictment, nor otherwise criminally charged. Recently, leaked State Department documents have revealed that the strike (or strikes) was carried out by US forces, not by Yemeni forces. His significance to the 9/11 attack (see next page) was not mentioned.
The staff of the 9/11 Commission conducted an interview with a Passaic County [NJ] detective, who was a member of the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force [JTTF]. The detective had investigated the alleged 9/11 hijackers and persons who had facilitated their activities. [Interview with JTTF Member #11, Nov. 6, 2003, 9/11 Commission Staff Memorandum for the Record, t-0148-911MFR-00353]

Note in the second paragraph (below) from page 3 of the above 9/11 Commission memorandum: that the detective stated "his belief that Aulaqi was at the center of the 9/11 story;" the lengthy redaction following that statement; the detective's hesitancy to discuss the matter any further (even with the 9/11 Commission staff assigned to investigate the 9/11 plot); and the concern of attendant FBI Special Agent Hank Allison for "the relevant sensitivities."

Nine years after the fact it was learned, "Al-Qaida operative and American-Muslim cleric Anwar al-Awlaki attended a Pentagon luncheon several months after the 9/11 attacks, Pentagon officials told NBC News on Wednesday," October 20, 2010. Whether due to ignorance or to a “relevant sensitivity” the 9/11 Commission did not report al Aulaqi’s Pentagon luncheon in its “authoritative” final report.

US Attorney General Eric Holder told ABC News on December 21, 2010 that al Aulaqi is “an extremely dangerous man . . . He would be on the same list with bin Laden . . . He's up there. I don't know whether he's one, two, three, four -- I don’t know.” When asked whether the United States preferred to kill or to capture and prosecute Aulaqi, Holder replied: “Well, we certainly want to neutralize him. And we will do whatever we can in order to do that.” Of course, were he to be killed, his knowledge of the 9/11 attacks would die with him.

Please support a genuine 9/11 investigation and the full, uncensored release of all 9/11-related documents.