

Review: Responsibility for attacks of September 11, 2001

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June 27, 2011

## **REVIEW**

On May 5, 2011, CBC Television's The National said Osama bin Laden had "killed 3,000 people" during the attacks of September 11, 2001, so-called 9/11.

The complainant, Barry Shainbaum, wrote that night to say the "blame on bin Laden is not based on facts" and that bin Laden had not been linked empirically to the 9/11 attacks.

The executive producer of The National, Mark Harrison, wrote back June 6, 2011 to say "exhaustive United States government and independent investigations have concluded the Al-Qaeda leader was responsible." Videotaped messages from bin Laden supported that conclusion.

Shainbaum wrote June 12, 2011 to say Harrison had not cited any specific references of such conclusions. "Therefore, he provides no details for journalistic inspection." He asserted that a message purportedly by bin Laden in 2004 had been discredited and that the CIA had created a fake bin Laden video at one point.

[CBC Journalistic Standards and Practices](#) call for accuracy: *"We seek out the truth in all matters of public interest. We invest our time and our skills to learn, understand and clearly explain the facts to our audience."*

## **CONCLUSION**

In the days following 9/11, United States intelligence linked the 19 men involved in the hijacking attacks on the United States as members of Al-Qaeda, whose leader was Osama bin Laden. Although he initially denied his involvement, in 2004 he was seen in a video acknowledging his role.

In the video, he noted first thinking about the attacks on the Twin Towers in 1982 after viewing an attack on Lebanon. "While I was looking at these destroyed towers in

Lebanon, it sparked in my mind that the tyrant should be punished with the same and that we should destroy towers in America, so that it tastes what we taste and would be deterred from killing our children and women.” In the video, bin Laden threatened further measures in retaliation.

International intelligence agencies have since validated the video as featuring bin Laden.

There was no violation of CBC Journalistic Standards and Practices.

Kirk LaPointe  
CBC Ombudsman