



*The School for Ethics and Global Leadership*

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## SEGL HOMECOMING 2012: THE FISHBOWL DISCUSSION

Featuring Lt. Col. Jon S. Jackson



**THE CASE:** You are a seven-member Guantanamo Bay military panel trying to decide whether to accept a plea deal in the case of Omar Khadr, a Canadian citizen who has been held at Guantanamo Bay since 2002.

Khadr, the son of an alleged Osama bin Laden associate, was captured by U.S. forces in 2001 after a brutal firefight between U.S. soldiers, their Afghan allies, and a group of militants. After the battle, Khadr confessed to throwing a grenade that killed U.S. Army Sergeant Christopher Speer and injured another soldier. He also designed and set numerous roadside bombs and received weapons training from al Qaeda. He was 15 years old at the time.

The charges against him: murder in violation of the law of war; attempted murder in violation of the law of war; conspiracy; providing material support for terrorism; and spying.

The plea deal would transfer Khadr to his native Canada, where he would serve an 8-year prison sentence.

Khadr has become a cause celebre among human rights groups. They claim he is a child soldier who committed these acts under the influence of bad people. They argue that trying him as an adult is illegal under international law, and that many of the statements he made came after he was tortured and threatened with death.

On the other hand, a military appeals court has ruled him an “unlawful enemy combatant” and said that charging him with these crimes is appropriate. Khadr’s family has been called the “first family of terror” in Canada. According to court records, while in detention he “would recall his killing of the U.S. soldier and it would make him feel good.” He also admitted that he hated Jews and Americans.

Should you approve this plea deal? Is it ethical to send Khadr to Canada, out of the control of U.S. authorities? Is it right to set him free after “only” eight years?



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