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Moussaoui Attorneys to Duck Death Penalty with "Attention Whore" Defense

ALEXANDRIA, VA- In their closing arguments on Monday, court-appointed defense attorneys for confessed Al Qaeda conspirator Zacarias Moussaoui pleaded with the jury to save their client from the death chamber, not because his involvement in the deadly attacks was not sufficient to warrant the ultimate penalty but because Moussaoui simply wants it too much. The would-be hijacker has stated on several occasions that he should be put to death for his part in the 9/11 plot and has made a slew of anti-American statements in an attempt to goad the jury into recommending his death, but lawyers now question whether all of this springs from a genuine desire to sacrifice his life for a cause or just a childish need for attention.

"As you have no doubt read and heard, Zacarias Moussaoui wants to die," said lead defense lawyer Gerald Zerkin. "Great. We get it. My client's repeated requests for the death penalty have punched right through the floor of 'creepy' and into the dank sub-basement of 'annoying.' As jurors it is your Constitutional duty not to reward him for being an insufferable twat."

Indeed, Moussaoui seems to revel in the spotlight, and according to those who knew him, the French-born terror enthusiast has been like this since adolescence. Depending on which psychological evaluation you trust, he is either suffering from severe depression or desperately wants you to believe that he is. According to courtroom testimony, Moussaoui attempted to seek counseling on several occasions but until 9/11 no one took his subtle cries for help seriously. For example, when he put "lethal injection" at the top of his online wish list, most folks understood it to mean something to do with gay sex. After several confusing and awkward encounters, Moussaoui says he gave up and joined Al Qaeda.

All of this has led trial watchers to the prevailing theory behind Moussaoui's situation and why he didn't quite "make it" to the big event on the eleventh of September, 2001. In allowing himself to get caught in the months before the attack, he managed to survive the terrible event and position himself to soak up the infamy he seems to enjoy so much now. The only proper solution, according to the defense, is to lock him up for the rest of his life in a dark cell with no access to the media.

"If Mr. Moussaoui truly does crave martyrdom as badly he claims, putting him to death would only play into his plans," argued Zerkin. "In essence, by sentencing my client to death, the terrorists win. You have a choice: to let him die alone in obscurity or give him the ill-gotten attention he so badly wants. It's up to you."

In addition, what sort of message would a death sentence send to other attention-starved jihadists? *Go ahead, attack American citizens and they will lavish you with attention and grant you the 70 virgins you've dreamt of since the onset of puberty.*

Zerkin warned that if jurors return a 'death' verdict, every MySpace cam-whore and LiveJournal goth sympathy junkie in the world will emerge from the dark recesses of the Internet with their minds set on committing acts of 9/11-style villainy on American soil. The resulting waves of trendy terrorism and counter-trends could take decades to root out.

Like an ornery 4-year-old with a penchant for acting out, Zerkin argued that Moussaoui deserves nothing less than a time out- for the rest of his natural life.

When the Justice Department had their final say last week, they posited the argument that Moussaoui's bluff is double-sided, that his death wish is so false that it becomes true and then false again. While that line of reasoning will most likely confuse jurors (and perhaps the lawyers themselves), they may find some success if they can manage to

convince the panel that the death penalty is the surest way to get Moussaoui to shut the hell up once and for all.
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