Guantanamo Prisoners, June 21, 2004, by J.B.Gerald

Summary

Guantanamo’s physical isolation, its jurisdictional confusion, and military policies regarding release of information, make Guantanamo a secret holding facility, with enough information about it released to media to frighten the public with evidence of severe injustice. Itself an instrument of psychological warfare, the prison terrifies the public and by the public’s cooperation, implicates the public in the prison’s crimes. Tactically it may be used as a tool preparing us for a wider war, and it is a likely cover for CIA and DIA covert recruitment and training operations.

Indications that torture is used derive from four sources: media coverage, lawyers for detainees; released detainees, and evidence in other detention centres of endemic military and covert policies of torture.

Of particular concern: the military’s lack of transparency provides opportunity for extreme torture, killing of prisoners, “suicides” by prisoners and disappearance of prisoners. This will increase the difficulty of American personnel in proving innocence of charges of war crimes at the facility.

Since the “war on terror” implies psychological warfare one might expect all facets of life at Guantanamo controlled to military purposes. The facts of Guantanamo’s environment for detainees are those which would break down prisoners to cooperate with military interrogation. Since results of torture as interrogation are not trustworthy, nor legal evidence, Guantanamo’s purpose may be the humiliation of a cultural group, personality destruction of selected individuals, terror, or recruitment.

What Happened ? Allegations :

1. The isolation of prisoners from their cultures, from their land of origin, from their families and people, and often from each other. “Incommunicado detention.”
2. Lack of habeas corpus.
3. Lack of legal representation or access to courts (Threat of a trial without rights).
4. Detention of non-specified length (Deprivation of hope for release).
6. Use of solitary confinement for long duration.

12. A Death row (Revolutionary Worker Online rwor.org 2003-12-09).


16. Being kept in cages as animals are.

17. Exposure (this can be a medical condition). Extreme heat. Sun.


19. Use of prisoner’s medical records in conjunction with interrogation (washingtonpost.com, “Detainees' Medical Files Shared, Guantanamo Interrogators' Access Criticized,” by Peter Slevin and Joe Stephens, Washington Post Staff Writers, June 10, 2004).


22. Pain relief as a reward for cooperation with interrogation. (ie. Removal from non-privileged levels to more rewarding levels of daily life because lower levels are in fact painful per se. (“Guantanamo: What the World Should Know,” by Michael Ratner and Ellen Ray, AlterNet, June 11, 2004).


25. Deprivation of self control as the prison claims increasing manipulation of all functions of life.


28. Use of dogs against prisoners.

29. Guantanamo detainees have reported physical abuse in Kandahar or Bagram as part of the “softening up” process for interrogation. (Amnesty International, AMR 51/075/2004, 7 May 2004).

30. On base “rendering” (interrogation by the prisoner’s home country).

31. Thirty prisoners have attempted suicide or succeeded in killing themselves (Revolutionary Worker Online rwor.org 2003-12-09 ). Since each is the target of psychological warfare while in captivity, these cannot be called suicides but intentional deaths, or someone forced to prefer death to life. N.B. “32 suicide attempts” (“Int’l Red Cross Calls Guantanamo
32. Physical torture, resulting in death; secrecy interferes with verifiable information of this at Guantanamo. Investigations into deaths in custody in both Afghanistan and Iraq are in progress (Amnesty International AMR 51/075/2004, 7 May 2004).
33. Ghost detainees. Living prisoners have been hidden from any listing at all, by Defense Secretary Rumsfeld’s order. It is more difficult to find evidence of the dead. (Possibly substantiated by ie. Amnesty International AMR 51/075/2004, 7 May 2004, see “ghost detainees.”) “Internal CIA probe on 'ghost detainees' Iraqis jailed without U.S. knowing their charges or names,” Bob Drogin, Los Angeles Times, San Francisco Chronicle online Wednesday, May 5, 2004.
34. Living under death threat CIA facility prisoners have been killed. (“Secret World of U.S. Interrogation: Long History of Tactics in Overseas Prisons Is Coming to Light,” by Dana Priest and Joe Stephens, Washington Post Staff Writers May 11, 2004).
35. Use of torture endemic in military and covert agency policies.
1. This is recognized by the need for the January 2002 memorandum, “Alberto Gonzales, White House counsel, to President Bush:” this memo counsels Bush to declare the Geneva Convention not applicable to Al-Qaida or the Taliban.
3. Courses offered for a generation at the U.S. School of the Americas.
4. Evidence of torture, killing, as interrogation techniques used by U.S. personnel in Vietnam.
6. Psychology, as applied to selling techniques of management, population and police controls, results in various degrees of perception management which bend individual human need as sought in perception to the uses of the powerful. When it is against the individual’s will, it becomes a psychological hardship; extreme imbalances eventually cause pain. The extreme imbalance is trained into military thinking which is often not able to discern its crime in illegal interrogation.
7. The lessons of Abu Ghraib are that the U.S. Army will scapegoat its enlisted personnel in attempt to cover a national policy. Under current leadership it will sacrifice officers and a woman general, to maintain its claim to the right to torture people. Evasion in dealing overtly with mistakes suggests policies so deeply entrenched that eventually the policies will lead to war crimes trials.
8.”Lieutenant General Ricardo Sanchez, the Commanding US general in Iraq,” condoned use of “military dogs, temperature extremes, reversed sleep patterns, sensory deprivation, and diets of bread and water on detainees whenever they wished.” “Sanchez borrowed heavily from a list of high-pressure tactics used at the detention center at the US naval base in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, the report said.” (Washington, June 12 (Xinhuanet) www.chinaview.cn , quoting from the Washington Post).

**To whom?**

At least 600 to 700 men and minors, as of this date, were taken as prisoners to Guantanamo since January 11, 2002. Some individual names are mentioned in press accounts and in legal cases brought by lawyers on their behalf, or noted at the release of prisoners. Complete lists of prisoners are not available. Registration numbers provided the International Red Cross are
apparently incomplete. As of April 2, 2004, there were at least seven detainees missing, unaccounted for. (“Ending Secret Detentions,” June 2004, Pearlstein, Posner etc. Human Rights First (Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, NYCDC).

**Partial Listing of Accountable Personnel**


Mr. Rodriguez, “the head of Guantanamo's intelligence-gathering effort” (*ibid.*).

Col. Nelson J. Cannon, “the commander of the joint detention operation” (*ibid.*).


Brig. Gen. Jay W. Hood, “Commander of the task force that runs the Guantanamo prison” (*ibid.*)

CIA recruitment operatives. Bill Harlow, the C.I.A. spokesman. (*ibid.*).


Alberto Gonzales, counsel to the President.

President George W. Bush (Commander-in-Chief).