

Join the people's campaign to Shut Down Guantanamo

We urge you to join us in a nationwide campaign and petition drive to shut down the Guantanamo Bay Detention Facility. The campaign is a project of the A.N.S.W.E.R. Coalition and VoteNoWar.org which was the largest grassroots peoples referendum opposing the launch of the Iraq war.

The goal of the campaign is to ignite a mass movement of the people of the United States and around the world to close Guantanamo and all the secret prisons and torture centers set up around the world by the Bush administration. Each and every official must be held accountable for their criminal conduct from Bush and Cheney to Rumsfeld and General Geoffrey Miller.

We will be gathering hundreds of thousands of names on the printed "Shut It Down" petition. We will flood Congress with emails, faxes and phone calls. We will be launching a mass education campaign in the mainstream media and in the alternative media. With your help we will be placing newspaper ads around the country. We will be coalescing with organizations and movements who focus on civil rights, legal rights, faith-based and student communities, and within the labor movement. This is an issue that affects everyone.

The most important counter-weight to the Bush Administration's criminal policies has been the creation of a global progressive movement. Millions of people have been in the streets in countless demonstrations in the past few years. Now Bush's approval ratings have dropped to 29% and the anti-war movement's political position has been proven to be correct. But unless we act now, and help the rest of the country join in this movement, the criminals in the White House will continue on their path.

Suicides and Torture in Guantanamo

Three men who had been held for four years resorted to hanging themselves in June. Scores of others have tried to kill themselves. In a shocking but inadvertent admission of the depravity of the Guantanamo authorities, the Camp Commander Rear-Admiral Harry Harris described the suicides "an act of asymmetric warfare against us." He then said about the dead inmates, they "have no regard for life, neither ours or their own."



The three men who killed themselves had previously been hunger strikers subjected to force-feeding by prison guards.

Held for years without ever being charged with wrongdoing, without being able to see their families, subject to constant interrogation and torture by the U.S. government and no end in sight, Guantanamo detainees have increasingly attempted suicide and others have gone on hunger strikes.

The Pentagon made public its approval of the use of force feeding, which is another form of torture. According to detainees, those who refuse to eat are strapped down twice a day in specially designed chairs, and tubes are violently inserted through their noses and into their stomachs. The U.S. military personnel force liquids through the tubes. Detainees, many of whom are left vomiting blood, have also reported that U.S. military personnel reuse the unclean tubes on different captives. As a result of the application of this torture regime, the U.S. military has bragged of a significant reduction in hunger strikers in recent days.

The Associated Press recently published a story about three British youths who were detained at Guantanamo for more than two years without charge before they were released.

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The AP story reports, "At the camp, the men say they were beaten and saw troops throw Qurans in the toilet. They also say they were forced to watch videotapes of prisoners who had allegedly been ordered to sodomize each other and were chained to a hook in the floor while strobe lights flashed and heavy metal music blared."

The New York Times has also condemned the Guantanamo prison and said that it was no surprise that detainees are committing suicide, "It is a place where secret tribunals sat in judgment of men whose identities they barely knew and who were not permitted to see the evidence against them. Inmates were abused, humiliated, tormented and sometimes tortured."

UN Panel says: Shut Down Guantanamo Now!

The United Nations panel investigating conditions at Guantanamo insisted in a report released on May 19, 2006 that the prison must be shut down. The UN panel declared the prison to be a torture facility. Unless they are charged and given a fair trial, the report also called for the release of the hundreds of prisoners at Guantanamo who are being held indefinitely. Without criminal charges, these prisoners are held in savage conditions and subjected to physical and psychological abuse, including the much vaunted innovations of "cultural" and sexual humiliation.

The UN report did not limit itself to demanding the closing of Guantanamo. It also called for the closure of secret CIA prisons, and the end of the "extraordinary renditions" which is the policy of the US government shipping people to other countries so that they can be more effectively tortured.

This torture center must be closed. The people of the United States should join the people of Cuba and the people of the world in demanding that the entire U.S. Naval Base in Guantanamo Cuba be closed down. The

U.S. invaded Cuba in 1898 and forced the colonial government of that time to sign a treaty giving the U.S. military control over this part of the island of Cuba in perpetuity. The continued maintenance of a U.S. Naval Base inside of Cuba against the wishes of the Cuban people is a modern day expression of the vilest colonialism. How ironic it is that the Bush Administration accuses the Cuban government of violating "human rights" when the only place in Cuba where the authorities engage in systematic torture of prisoners held without Due Process rights is the portion under the control of the U.S. government.

Say No to Torture - Say No to Bush' s Imperial Government

The establishment of a torture facility at a US naval base located in a foreign country is not an isolated criminal act by this administration. It is part of a pattern whose methods and goals are now obvious. The Bush White House, in both its domestic and foreign policy, wants to establish that all existing international and domestic law that in any way inhibits the assumption of near-dictatorial power by the President of the United States must be declared null and void.

The so-called war on terrorism is revealed as nothing more than a slogan masking a quest for unfettered empire. The war of aggression against Iraq; the assassination of targeted individuals; the establishment of torture facilities and secret prisons around the world; the secret phone record collection, warrantless wiretapping and monitoring of the email of millions of Americans - all of this constitutes a brazen effort to assume unfettered authority and power.

This is the challenge of our time. Will the people intervene and act decisively? The people of the United States, in partnership with the peoples of all continents, are a power far greater than the Bush White House. But we must act. Each one of us must act to inform our neighbors, family members and co-workers.

Join the campaign to shut down the Guantanamo torture facility. Sign the petition at ChicagoANSWER.net or ShutItDown.org today!



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