

Witness Against Torture

Torture, Former Combatants, Political Prisoners, Terror Suspects, & Terrorists

<https://witnessagainsttorture.com/2018/12/30/close-guantanamo-rule-of-law-not-rule-of-trump/>

Campaign and Advocacy

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On January 11, human rights activists and attorneys will gather at the White House in Washington, D.C. to mark another tragic year since the opening in 2002 of the U.S. detention camp at Guantanamo, where forty prisoners remain. The demonstrators will call for the closure of the prison camp.

Shut Down Guantanamo

Playing to Islamophobic fears of Muslim peoples, Guantanamo was founded with the lie that it houses only the worst of the worst terrorists. It continues to hold exclusively Muslim men, many of whom were severely tortured, without charge or trial.

Other detained men face prosecution in the Military Commissions. The unworkable Commissions have failed to provide due process for the accused or justice for the victims of terrorism.

Guantanamo has been a place of physical and psychological torture, the imprisonment of innocent men, brutal forced-feedings to break hunger-striking prisoners, and the pain of indefinite detention without charge.

The prison remains a profound violation of law. It is a threat to American security and a blow to American ideals. It is an insult to the world, to the tenets of all religious faiths, and to the idea of human rights.

Guantanamo must close.

Guantanamo Today

Trump has put his own terrible stain on Guantanamo. Trump openly supports torture. Last year he appointed as CIA head Gina Haspel, who supervised a CIA torture black site in 2003.

The Trump administration has ended the U.S. policy of seeking Guantanimos closure. Trump has threatened to bring new prisoners there. And he has forbidden the release of anyone from Guantanamo into freedom. This includes five men long cleared for release by the U.S. government itself.

With no functioning mechanism for the release of any prisoner, Guantanamo has plunged deeper into lawlessness. Federal lawsuits are challenging this detention regime that deprives prisoners of nearly all rights of due process.

The newly elected Congress and the American people must awaken to the persisting damage of this immoral and illegal prison and demand its closure.

Rule of Law Not Rule of Trump

Guantanamo is now subject to the Rule of Trump. It feeds the fear-mongering, cruelty, racism, xenophobia and lawlessness of his presidency.

Much of the world has been aghast at Trumps defining policies and rhetoric: the Muslim travel ban; the separation of migrant families; physical and other assaults on asylum seekers; and the incessant slander of foreigners as threats to the American nation.

Such cruelty and racism has always been part of Guantanamo. They now lie at the heart of vast domains of Trumps policies. Images of Guantanamo detainees behind barbed-wire and in cages are echoed by those of migrants in detention camps. The hateful, fear-mongering rhetoric long used to denounce Muslim terrorists is now used to tar the people of whole nations and whole categories of immigrants.

Now entering its seventeenth year, the prison at Guantanamo is newly dangerous in the hands of a bigoted authoritarian, contemptuous of the rule of law and human rights.

We must work to establish the rule of law and respect for the rights and dignity of all peoples. We must close Guantanamo.