

Who Benefits from Guantánamo?

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Following the Presidentially ordered release of ten inmates from the U.S. detention center at Guantánamo on Jan.14th, three days after the prison entered its fifteenth year, Sen. Mark Rubio was quick to go on air blasting Obama for being soft on terror, which, he assured the American people, would never happen were he to be elected, because protecting his country from those hell-bent on destroying America is of utmost importance to him, if not to the current President. Now that there are fewer than a hundred left, we must know if Rubio is right to indirectly accuse the White House of inviting more 911s, upon letting them go free.

What he fails to mention is that the overwhelming majority of detainees have never been charged with either a war crime, or any other for that matter. Some have been waiting for as long as fourteen years to be given a reason for their incarceration, during which they have been tormented by illegal waterboarding, various forms of deprivation, and humiliation, under the former Administration. With this condemnable imprisonment being dragged on ad nauseam, it is high time to demand an answer to the question: Exactly who benefits from its blatant, brutal- and apparently unnecessary- abuse of human rights?

The answer can be found, as they say, following the money-trail, which leads to the doorstep of the "Military-Industrial Complex", of which Pres. Eisenhower, who coined the phrase in his farewell speech, told us to "beware". Being a super-power with warehouses full of weapons eager to be used or sold abroad, requires an enemy equal in might, or one that is contrived to be so. After the early 90's collapse of our arch rival, the Soviet Union, orders for more arms, materiel, and technology, were becoming increasingly difficult to justify. With 911, however, here was MIC's golden opportunity to portray Al Queda as a force of international reach, capable of bringing America down like the Tower of Babel.

Then, with the blessing of President Bush's State and Defense teams, our citizens, reeling from the collapse of the Trade Towers and an adjacent third building, were easily persuaded to believe that this "terror" is actually world-wide, to be eradicated quickly and decisively AT ALL COSTS. So, instead of collaborating with our recent allies, the Taliban, (who, with our indirect help, had recently turned back the powerful Soviet Union), to ferret out Bin Laden who found shelter their forbidding mountains, we instead invaded and occupied the entire nation of Afghanistan. And if that were not enough, we needed to broaden the scope: adding Iraq, whose tyrant we loved to hate. Never mind that Saddam Hussein wanted nothing to do with this fringe extremist organization, a fact that was later verified after years of pouring over all his government-documents-without finding a single trace of Al Queda in them. Never mind the truth, MIC needed to conceive of a "global war on terrorism". The rest is a tragic history of the decimation of a relatively defenseless ancient land and her innocent people, now virtually threatening to dismantle the entire region, as millions of civilians and ex-military fled, creating ISIS.

Now in order to keep this pretence of an immanent attack on our soil on the front burner, MIC needed a prisoner-of-war camp, and what better place to press the fear of invasion upon Congress and the public's mind than a few miles off the Florida coast. If you can't find real combatants, given that Al Queda at that time only numbered about seven to ten thousand in all, then you must fill it with men who could be seen as likely suspects. In Pakistan, for example, our army paid up to ten thousand for any information leading to arrest of someone who appeared to be an operative. Local villagers were clever and quick enough to take full advantage of our anxious desire to fill the jail cells, and virtually any resident non-Pakistani could fit the bill, as in one case of a Russian soldier fleeing with his family after he converted to Islam. He is still being held, his family now in London, with a son now 16. What is his crime? Being in the wrong place at the wrong time.



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In essence, then, what we have at GITMO is a fabricated prison to justify a fabricated war. As long as MIC can continue to pull the wool of a vast and endless war over Congress and our public's eyes, the new branches of extremists will find it easy to convince recruits that we are waging a war on Islam itself, and that indeed is a war of global proportions. Despite our official rhetoric, actions always speak louder than words.

President Eisenhower was a prophet gone unheeded, and the price we pay gets higher every additional day GITMO remains open, like a festering wound.

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