

A look beyond the moral dilemmas on why Guantanamo Bay should not be closed

[Government](#)



Guantanamo Bay

On September 11, 2001, the United States and the view on terrorism has changed forever. These were the devastating attacks that sparked the War on Terror and the creation of Guantanamo Bay. Guantanamo Bay is a detention camp located in Cuba that hold suspected terrorists and is used to extract critical information. There have been proposed plans to close or replace Guantanamo Bay due to moral and cost-wise reasons. However, it should remain open because the detainees are too dangerous to move to another prison, crucial information is extracted, and the U. S. Constitution and the Geneva Convention are not violated.

The detainees in Guantanamo Bay are not the average criminal in prison; they are terrorists whose goal is to strike fear into the hearts of their targets. Moving them to any other prison would cause various problems. For example, Dick Cheney, former U. S. Vice President, says, " They're terrorists. They're bomb-makers. They're facilitators of terror.. They're members of al Qaeda and the Taliban . . ." (" Should the prison at Guantanamo Bay be closed?"). The detainees are not a simple soldier who is a prison of war, they are more dangerous than that. They are much more capable of doing worse attacks, like bomb attacks and mass shootings. While being detained, the detainees are still dangerous. Andrew Apostolou and Fredric Smoler, a historian and a professor of history, respectively, write that some detainees " have murdered their guards with anything that came to hand - one appears to have used his teeth" (Apostolou and Smoler). While being detained in a prison, these terrorists will still do anything to escape or harm their captors.

If they would go far as to kill someone, they would most likely attempt to do something worse in order to escape. In addition, Apostolou and Smoler write, “ Even by the loosest definition, the detainees do not fit the Geneva Convention’s conception of soldiers, militiamen or resistance fighters” (Apostolou and Smoler). The majority of soldiers follow the rules stated in the Geneva Convention, which lists certain rules for war and prisoners of war. However, since they are not categorized as soldiers, they will not follow the rules listed in the Geneva Convention and can do anything they please to do. In conclusion, the detainees are extremely dangerous terrorists, and should not be handled as regular soldiers.

Using the interrogation and torture methods at Guantanamo Bay, crucial information can be extracted from prisoners. This information has also saved lives, in some cases. For example, the architect of the September 11 attacks, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, was detained at Guantanamo Bay (Meese III). Details such as the original plan, what had gone wrong, and what other attacks were planned could be extracted from Mohammed because he is such a high-value detainee. David Leigh, a writer for The Guardian, writes that the U. S. military claims “ claims Qahtani to be a would-be “ 20th hijacker” who narrowly failed to get into the US in time for 9/11” when referring to Maad al-Qahtani, a detainee. (“ Guantánamo Bay files: Torture gets results, US military insists”) As a result of interrogating Qahtani and other detainees, the government now knows that another hijack was planned and more lives would have been lost. An example of an attack that has been prevented is seen when George W. Bush writes, “ Their interrogations helped break up plots to attack American diplomatic facilities abroad, Heathrow

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airport and Canary Wharf in London, and multiple targets in the United States" (Macintyre). Not only did extracted information reveal details about attacks, it has saved lives. Guantanamo Bay has proven its usefulness by interrogating detainees.

Guantanamo Bay does not violate the U. S. Constitution and the Geneva Convention. The Constitution's eighth amendment states, " Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted" (U. S. Constitution. Amend. VIII.) However, Guantanamo Bay is in Cuba, where U. S. laws do not apply. Therefore, the Constitution is not violated. Also, Apostolou and Smoler write, " The al Qaeda and Taliban fighters held at U. S. detention centers have broken the codes of war set forth in the Geneva Convention of 1949, and thus are not eligible to receive protection as prisoners of war" (Apostolou and Smoler). Since the Geneva Convention lists rules on treatment for prisoners of war and the detainees are not categorized as such, nothing is violated. They also write that " To enjoy the rights of a POW, a combatant must only not stop fighting, he is explicitly forbidden from feigning surrender" (Apostolou and Smoler). However, they have not completely surrendered as they will continue to fight while being detained. Guantanamo Bay is not violating any rule or U. S. law. Despite the many benefits of keeping it open, many propose to close or replace it.

Many of the reasons why some may support removing Guantanamo Bay are moral and financial based. Some may state that the methods used to extract information from detainees are immoral and unjustified because they

deserve POW-status protection and the methods are not effective. However, the terrorists held there do not qualify to receive POW-status protection because their methods of fighting breaks the codes of war listed in the Geneva Convention. Also, some argue that no useful information are from detainees because torture forces the victim to tell the captor what they want to hear. Although some information may be false, the information that is correct can save lives and prevent attacks. Others may argue that shutting down the detention camp would save large amounts of money by removing maintenance, salary, and miscellaneous costs. This is not the case as Doug Criss, a writer for CNN, writes that “ The price tag would have been around \$600 million” (Criss). Closing the camp may also bring up more problems, such as transferred detainees returning to terrorism. In the long run, keeping Guantanamo Bay open would yield more positive effects than shutting it and down.

Guantanamo Bay should remain open because extremely dangerous detainees are held there, and they have useful information that can prevent attacks, and the interrogation and torture methods do not violate the U. S. Constitution or the rules stated in the Geneva Convention. The detainees have and will try anything in order to resist and escape, for example, kill guards. Also, details about past attacks like those on September 11 and future attacks can be revealed from detainees like Khalid Sheikh Mohammed. Since the camp is outside the U. S. and the detainees are not categorized as POW's, everything happening in Guantanamo Bay is completely legal. For the sake of the United State's security and the safety of its people, Guantanamo Bay should remain open.

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