

DAVID IGLESIAS: OBAMA'S USED CAR SALESMAN FOR GITMO SHOW TRIALS

In January of 2009, right after Obama's inauguration, there was a swell feel good buzz about the fact David Iglesias, the media darling face of Bush US Attorney Purgegate victimology, had been tapped to be part of a special team of prosecutors to bring sanity to the detention and prosecution of Guantanamo detainees. Iglesias said:

We want to make sure that those terrorists that did commit acts will be brought to justice – and those that did not will be released.

As with so many other facets of the nascent Obama Administration's promise on the interests of justice, it appears to have been shiny window dressing for the same old story, same old song and dance. A year and change later the same duplicity, bad faith, and specious claims based on vapor and evidence from torture permeates the Obama handling of Gitmo detainees as it did under Bush and Cheney. That is not my conclusion, not that of the "far left progressives", but that of impartial Federal judges like Henry H. Kennedy.

And today we have yet another reminder that nothing has changed. Iglesias, the photogenic exemplar of A Few Good Men is being walked out once more to shill for the return of Gitmo Show Trials. From Carol Rosenberg:

For hearings on whether U.S. forces tortured confessions out of a Canadian teenager accused of killing an American soldier in Afghanistan, the Pentagon Monday unveiled a new face to advocate military commissions:

Fired former Bush-era prosecutor David Iglesias, a key figure in the so-called Attorney-Gate scandal. He was mobilized last year to the war court as a U.S. Navy Reserves captain.

....

Monday, Capt. Iglesias was part of a Pentagon prosecution team going to Guantánamo for up to two weeks of hearings on which, if any, of Omar Khadr's confessions cannot be presented to a jury at his summertime trial.

....

The chief war crimes prosecutor, Navy Capt. John F. Murphy, is leading the Khadr team in court. So the Pentagon tapped Iglesias to brief 35 reporters leaving from Andrews Air Force Base on Monday for the remote U.S. Navy base in Southeast Cuba, a larger than usual number of worldwide media traveling to the base for this week's hearings. Many are Canadian.

Earlier in his Navy lawyer career, Iglesias has said, he worked on a hazing case that became a basis for the Hollywood hit set in Guantánamo, *A Few Good Men*, starring Tom Cruise and Jack Nicholson. Since then he has emerged a telegenic critic of Bush era policies.

So there you have it, the white knight Iglesias is not leading the legal charge cleaning up the detention/Habeas cases and prosecution status of the rickety and ill defined military commission effort, he is serving as the used car huckster for the old status quo. I guess Cal Worthington and his dog Spot were not available.

Lest anyone mistake the cravenly serious nature of what is really at stake here, Iglesias is being trotted out to sell a return to military commissions with few established known standards, that have been scorned and blasted by a conservative Supreme Court and, just for kicks, the government is fighting tooth and nail

– complete with Hollywood Iglesias – for the admissibility of tortured confessions from a child, Canadian Omar Khadr, in a military tribunal to be convened at Guantanamo. Gitmo, the gulag Obama railed on while a candidate and promised to close within a year of taking office. Well he didn't do that, but Obama did fire the man in his Administration who actually thought the promise ought to be upheld and his word honored.

For an outstanding review of the renewed plunge off the military commission cliff we are headed, and overview of the Omar Khadr case, please go read Spencer Ackerman's reporting at the Washington Independent:

Starting this week, something will happen that was never supposed to when Barack Obama took the oath of office. A military commission meeting at Guantanamo Bay nearly five months after Obama said the detention facility would cease to exist will hold a pre-trial hearing for Omar Khadr, a Canadian citizen captured by U.S. forces in Afghanistan in 2002 and accused of throwing a grenade that killed a U.S. soldier. At the end of the hearing, it will likely be possible to tell whether Obama's changes to the military commissions created and advocated by George W. Bush – and most congressional Republicans – are substantive or cosmetic.

Khadr, a teenager when initially detained, has been held for nearly half his life at a facility that the Obama administration has pledged to close. He will be tried in a legal venue that Obama rejected as a Senator and embraced, in reformed fashion, as president. What happens this week at Guantanamo will determine whether Obama's pledge that the new, revised military commissions can deliver

internationally-recognized justice is meaningful: the pre-trial hearing in Khadr's case will provide the first in-depth examination of whether Khadr's treatment in U.S. custody amounts to torture; will determine whether prosecutors can use evidence against him acquired under abusive, coercive circumstances that civilian courts would never allow; and whether additional statements made by Khadr in subsequent and less-coercive circumstances are fair game or inextricable from his overall abuse.

Please go read the entire article. In addition to his work for The Windy, Spencer is one of our own here at FDL. Spencer left this morning for Gitmo to report live. He will be featured on a continuing basis for the whole week on the commissions and process on Khadr at the Washington Independent. The other must see reporter is, of course, Carol Rosenberg at the Miami Herald.