

GITMO WILL BE THIS YEAR'S CAMPAIGN ISSUE

Via Laura, ABC reports that Bush is considering closing Gitmo.

President Bush will soon decide whether to close Guantanamo Bay as a prison for al-Qaeda suspects, sources tell ABC News. High-level discussions among top advisers have escalated in the past week, with the most senior administration officials in continuous talks about the future of the prison camp at Guantanamo Bay—and how it will be dramatically changed and/or closed in the wake of the Supreme Court's ruling that gave detainees there access to federal courts.

Sources have confirmed that President Bush is expected to be briefed on these pressing GTMO issues—and may reach a decision on the future of the naval base as a prison for al Qaeda suspects—before he leaves for the G8 on Saturday.

As a number of people have pointed out, the Boumediene decision basically eliminates the reason for Gitmo. BushCo had used Gitmo because Cuba technically retains sovereignty over the land, so—they claimed—the US military could evade US habeas corpus laws. But Anthony Kennedy didn't buy that logic, meaning the entire reason for Gitmo has now been invalidated. So why keep it open?

Particularly when you can turn Gitmo into a campaign issue. ABC notes, in passing, that subsequent to making a decision on Gitmo, Bush will basically dump the whole festering problem into Congress' lap.

Bush has not decided whether he will announce that GTMO should be closed, sources say. But at the very least,

sources say, **he will soon announce a host of these legal and policy changes that will force Congress to come up with a solution**—including where to imprison those detainees if GTMO does, in fact, shut its doors. [my emphasis]

I guess it's not enough to time the Gitmo Show Trials to coincide with the election. Now, Bush is going to demand that Congress legislate on Gitmo during election season. In 2002, we had the AUMF. In 2006, we had MCA. I guess this year it's Gitmo's turn.

Lovely. Congress always thinks so clearly when Bush plays this trick.