

# GITMO AS OUR RECRUITMENT TOOL

The NYT is out with another report of the Pentagon stat that 14% of those released after being held in Gitmo subsequently engaged in terrorism.

An unreleased Pentagon report concludes that about one in seven of the 534 prisoners already transferred abroad from the detention center in Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, has returned to terrorism or militant activity, according to administration officials.

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The report, a copy of which was made available to The New York Times, says the Pentagon believes that 74 prisoners released from Guantánamo have returned to terrorism or militant activity, making for a recidivism rate of nearly 14 percent.

There's something that all of the discussion on so-called "recidivism" from Gitmo never considers.

What are the chances that some, or even most, of these "recidivist" terrorists are actually men we recruited to spy for us? That is, they may have "returned to terrorism or militant activity," but did so with our blessing, with the understanding they'd send back information on what those militant groups were doing.

We do know the US and its allies were using those captured as spies of a sort. Just last weekend, for example, newspapers in the UK reported that an "Informant A" was used by the Brits and Morrocco to try to get Binyam Mohamed to "cooperate" with his captives.

Mohamed, 31, says that in September 2002, after his 'extraordinary

rendition' to North Africa, an agent known only as Informant A told him the torture would stop if he gave intelligence to the British.

The offer from the agent, a UK citizen of Moroccan descent, suggests that British security forces had the power to end his treatment, Mohamed's lawyer claims.

Mohamed already knew the agent from London.

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Clive Stafford Smith said: 'The Moroccans told Mr Mohamed that Informant A was working with the British Government and pressed Mr Mohamed to do the same if he wanted to end his torture.'

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Informant A is said to have fought alongside Osama Bin Laden in the caves of Tora Bora.

He was said to have been captured and held at a U.S. base in Afghanistan in 2002, when he agreed to turn informant.

Terek Dergoul, held at the same base, said: 'One of the guards was saying, "We've got another 007".'

The language here is particularly interesting: the reference to Informant A as "another 007" and the suggestions that Mohamed should "work with the British Government." If Binyam Mohamed had agreed to spy for the Brits, would he have avoided all that horrible torture he suffered?

The possibility that these "recidivists" are actually our recruits spying on Islamic extremists for the Americans might explain a few details about the report. For example, the report only lists 29 of the 74 purported

"recidivists" by name. It doesn't mention the others "because of national security and intelligence-gathering concerns." Sure, that might reflect a desire not to alert militants to our intelligence channels. It might also reflect a desire to protect our spies in the field.

And the possibility that at least some of these "recidivists" are now our spies might explain the hold-up on the release of the document. The NYT suggests the Bush dead-enders who did the report won't release the report for fear of pissing off Obama and/or out of fear for their jobs, even while reporting that Obama is not pressuring anyone in the Pentagon to hold up the report. But the detail that the findings are "under review" suggests the dead-enders who did the report might have a credibility problem.

The Pentagon promised in January that the latest report would be released soon, but Bryan Whitman, a Pentagon spokesman, said this week that the findings were still "under review."

Two administration officials who spoke on condition of anonymity said the report was being held up by Defense Department employees fearful of upsetting the White House, at a time when even Congressional Democrats have begun to show misgivings over Mr. Obama's plan to close Guantánamo.

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Pentagon officials said there had been no pressure from the Obama White House to suppress the report about the Guantánamo detainees who had been transferred abroad under the Bush administration. The officials said they believed that Defense Department employees, some of them holdovers from the Bush administration, were acting to protect their jobs.

There are a lot of reasons why such a report

might have a credibility problem. But if they were counting the spies we recruited under threat of harsh treatment as "recidivists," it would certainly call into question the validity of the numbers.

Aside from some allegations that recruitment is what the Americans were trying to do with their torture at Abu Ghraib (the pictures showing men in humiliating poses, which could serve as blackmail, were supposed to be a part of that), I really haven't heard this question asked. But we do know they used detainees as informants and possibly as spies. If so, it might explain why so many went on to "rejoin" militant groups.