THE US PRISON COLONY

I'm not in the least surprised by the LAT report that Obama is trying to come up with a compromise plan that would allow it to use Bagram as its terrorist prison even after it hands over the prison to the Afghans.

> The Obama administration wants to retain the ability to hold terrorism suspects from other countries at its largest prison in Afghanistan, even after it hands control of the facility to the Afghan government next year, according to U.S. officials.
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> If Afghan officials agree, it would give the administration a place to interrogate terrorism suspects captured in countries such as Somalia or Yemen. President Obama made a high-profile pledge to close the prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, after taking office last year. But that would leave the administration without a lockup for those suspected of plotting attacks against the United States.

It's how story describes the thought process by which existing options cannot be used.

> Despite the insistence that no final decision has been made on Bagram, officials note that other options for holding terrorism suspects are being cut off.
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> The current version of the Defense authorization bill, a spending plan that has been approved by the House of Representatives and is being debated by the Senate, restricts the Obama administration from renovating a state prison in Illinois to hold detainees from Guantanamo.
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> Although primarily intended to hold such

> detainees, the prison in Thomson, Ill., also could have been used to hold other non-American terrorism suspects.

> [snip]
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> Senior Defense officials have expressed frustration that the U.S. lacks an overseas prison where new terrorism suspects can be held. Some Defense officials believe the U.S. is often pushed into trying to kill militants, instead of attempting to capture and question them. Some detainees can be held by friendly governments in the countries in which they are captured. But in such situations, American interrogators do not have control of the suspects.

Note all the assumptions here: that the US needs a "special" prison, distinct from the prisons where the US is already holding and questioning terrorist detainees like the undie-bomber and Faisal Shahzad. That, in turn, suggests both that they envision questioning people who might not meet US standards for arrest and that they may not want to give these detainees any rights.

Also according to the article, the Administration also believes it needs to hold these detainees in custody themselves, rather than have allies hold them. In cases like Egypt and Jordan, where detention by allies may amount to torture, I'm fine with the distinction. But the need to hold detainees directly also suggests a need for total control of detainees.

And so, as a result, we're actually entertaining a granting Afghanistan a false sovereignty, where we give them their prisons back, but still use them as the US prison colony.

I'm sure doing so wouldn't contribute at all to discrediting the Karzai government and/or inflaming Islamic extremism in the country. Really.