

# DOD ALLOWS CAROL ROSENBERG TO RETURN TO GITMO NEXT WEEK

There are two pieces of good news in this McClatchy story reporting that Carol Rosenberg, one of four journalists banned from Gitmo because she published the previously reported name of Omar Khadr's first interrogator, Joshua Claus, will be allowed to return next week rather than after August 5, as they had previously decided. The first piece of good news is that Rosenberg, easily the best and most experienced Gitmo reporter out there, will be back on the job.

The Pentagon on Thursday reversed its ban on a Miami Herald reporter from covering military commissions at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, and said the reporter can return to the naval base there to cover a hearing next week.

The other piece of good news is that McClatchy appears uncowed by DOD's efforts to intimidate. The story reports precisely the piece of news for which Rosenberg got banned in the first place!

Before a May hearing, Rosenberg and the three Canadian journalists published the name of a witness that the government had said should be identified as "Interrogator No. 1." **The name of the witness, former Army Sgt. Joshua Claus,** had been known for years after he voluntarily gave a newspaper interview to one of the banned Canadian reporters denying that he had abused Khadr.

Claus also had been convicted by a U.S. court martial of abusing detainees in Afghanistan and sentenced to five months in prison. [my emphasis]

So much for DOD's efforts to prevent readers from learning that the same guy that threatened Khadr with rape was convicted in association with Dilawar's death.

Still, I can't help but wonder whether DOD's calculations about the relative benefits of press coverage have changed? As I pointed out, the earlier possible reinstatement date—August 5—was conveniently timed to occur after Khadr's suppression hearing. Thus, the timing ensured that the best reporters would not be covering discussions of whether Khadr's confession had anything to do with abuse at the hands of his interrogators.

But on Wednesday, Khadr fired his American lawyers (again).

Omar Khadr, the Canadian accused of terrorism, has fired his American lawyers — throwing his war-crimes trial, scheduled for next month, into disarray and creating a political conundrum for both the Canadian and U.S. governments.

"We're absolutely devastated and worried beyond words what will now happen to our former client," said Barry Coburn, the now-dismissed attorney regarded as one of America's premier defence lawyers.

Mr. Khadr's bombshell decision could leave the Obama administration putting a child soldier on trial in Guantanamo without any defence lawyers in a war-crimes case that has attracted international attention, not least because U.S. President Barack Obama failed to shut down Guantanamo as promised within his first year in office.

This likely changes the calculations regarding the damage that full transparency will have on the perceived legitimacy of the Gitmo trials. So why not let the journalists who know Khadr's history of firing lawyers and refusing to

cooperate to cover the show?

Obviously, I don't know if that's a consideration. I'm happy Rosenberg's on her way back, in any case.