

THE GITMO DOCUMENTS REVEAL DISPARITIES BETWEEN US AND OTHER COUNTRIES' ASSESSMENT OF RISK

I'm working on weedy readings of the Gitmo Files released today. But I wanted to note the important revelation—and the source of the government's concerns—regarding the release.

These files assess how big a risk these prisoners are. And in a number of cases, the assessments label prisoners who have subsequently been released to other countries a "high risk." Thus, the international community may draw several conclusions from the release of these documents: either that the US pawned off high risk prisoners onto their countries, or the US trumped up charges against detainees to justify continued detention.

This tension shows, for example, in this story from Spain's *el País*: *High Risk in the United States, Absolved in Spain*. It describes the assessments of two detainees with Spanish ties—Hamed Abderramán and Lahcen Iksarrien—who were released to Spanish custody and subsequently released after a court ruled the evidence against them was not credible. (These are two of the detainees whose treatment at Gitmo Spain was trying to investigate.)

The tension also shows in the the joint release from DOD flack Geoff Morrell and Special Envoy for Closure of the Guantanamo Detention Facility Ambassador Daniel Fried. They struggle to explain how it is that detainees labeled high risk got released and emphasize that these assessments may have used different information than the Gitmo Review Task Force convened by President Obama.

Assessment Briefs (DABs) written by the Department of Defense between 2002 and early 2009. These DABs were written based on a range of information available then.

The Guantanamo Review Task Force, established in January 2009, considered the DABs during its review of detainee information. **In some cases, the task force came to the same conclusions as the DABs. In other instances the review task force came to different conclusions, based on updated or other available information.** The assessments of the Guantanamo Review Task Force have not been compromised to Wikileaks.

Thus, any given DAB illegally obtained and released by Wikileaks may or may not represent the current view of a given detainee. [my emphasis]

They even go so far as to suggest that if detainees were improperly released, it's Bush's fault, since he transferred so many more detainees.

Both the previous and the current administrations have made every effort to act with the utmost care and diligence in transferring detainees from Guantanamo. The previous administration transferred 537 detainees; to date, the current administration has transferred 67. Both administrations have made the protection of American citizens the top priority and we are concerned that the disclosure of these documents could be damaging to those efforts.

Of course, all of this dodges the real problem here. The DABs rather obviously include every claim against a detainee, even if doing so required relying on dubious intelligence.

So while Morrell and Fried are right that

revealing what DOD claimed about these detainees might make it more difficult for other countries to accept them as transfers, the problem lies in the Administration's refusal to speak the truth about the shoddy claims used to justify Gitmo in the first place.