

Five POWs are mistreated in Iraq and the US cries foul. What about Guantanamo Bay? Suddenly the government of the United States has discovered the virtues of International law.

It may be waging an illegal, immoral, unethical war on a sovereign state, and it may be seeking to destroy each treaty that impedes its attempts to run the world, but when five of its captured soldiers were paraded in front of Iraqi television, Donald Rumsfeld immediately complained that it was against the principles of the Geneva convention to show photographs of prisoners of war which is humiliating.

He is of course quiet right. Article 13 of the third convention, concerning the treatment of the prisoners insists that they must at all times be protected... against insults and public curiosity. The convention is non negotiable for if you break them you are standing up for war crimes.

This being so, Rumsfeld better watch his own back and that of the biggest terrorist of all times. For this passionate convert to legal wars as head of the Defense department; is responsible for a series of offenses enough to put him behind bars for

the rest of his natural life.

His prison camp in Guantanamo Bay with over 640 prisoners; breaches no fewer than 15 articles of the third convention. The US government broke the first of these articles the moment these prisoners arrived when it displayed them for television cameras. Unlike the Iraqis in this case they were not encouraged to address the cameras.

They were kneeling on the ground, hands tied behind their backs. Wearing blacked out goggles and ear-phones. In breach of article 18 they had been stripped of their own clothes and deprived of their possessions. They were then caged in a penitentiary (against article 22), where they were denied proper mess facilities (26), canteens (28), religious premises (34), opportunities for physical exercise (38), access to the text of convention (41), freedom to write to their families (70 & 71), and parcels of food and books (72).

These prisoners were not released

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# One Rule For Them

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and repatriated after the cessation of active hostilities (118), because the US authorities say their interrogation may reveal one day interesting information about Al Qaida.

Article 17 implies that the captives are only obliged to give their name, rank, number and date of birth. No coercion of any kind may be inflicted on the prisoners to obtain any information of any kind whatsoever. In the hope of breaking them the US authorities have confined them to

what is now known as severe torture in the civilised world. The torture in some cases has been so extreme that some prisoners have tried to kill themselves by smashing their heads on the prison walls and using plastic cutlery to kill themselves.

The US Government claims these prisoners are not POWs but in fact unlawful combatants. By the same definition the Iraqis can make similar claims on the intruders who ran havoc in their country. However this is in itself a breach of article 4 of the third convention under which people detained as suspected members of a militia (the Taliban) or volunteer corps (Al Qaida) must be treated as prisoners of war.

Even if there is doubt about how such people should be classified, article 5 insists that they shall enjoy the protection of the present convention until such time that their status has been confirmed by a competent tribunal. When some lawyers tried to

back these were rejected by authorities that since they were the US territory therefore the no constitutional rights.

You may be hesitant to do these prisoners lucky if you what they went through once were captured by the US liberation forces in Afghanistan. More 8000 Afghans who surrendered at Kunduz have never been heard again.

Thousands of prisoners were detained in a manner that can be explained without throwing getting seriously sick. The and explicit pains inflicted on unfortunate Muslims is hard to imagine, only bits of torture stories enough to loose a weeks sleep.

On the contrary the five US soldiers are indeed very lucky that they are not Iraqi POWs in the hands of the law abiding, God Fearing, civilized US Marines. Instead they must thank their lucky stars that they are being held captive by the barbaric Iraqi forces. Any lawyers in the Muslim world who can stand up and fight for one rule or are we back to the times old barbaric times. At least