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## 4 Guantanamo detainees arrested in Britain

Associated Press  
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LONDON — Four Britons who were freed after being detained for up to three years at the U.S. military camp at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, returned to Britain today and were immediately arrested.

"Police arrested the men under Section 41 of the Terrorism Act 2000 which refers to the alleged involvement in the commission, preparation or instigation of acts of terrorism," Metropolitan Police said.

The four men — the last of the British detainees at Guantanamo — were accompanied by British anti-terrorist officers on a military flight which landed at the Northolt Royal Air Force base, west of London just after 5 p.m. (11 a.m. CST).

Moazzam Begg, Feroz Abbasi, Martin Mubanga and Richard Belmar were among some 550 prisoners from 42 countries swept up in the U.S.-led war on terrorism and detained without charge.

Abbasi, 24, reportedly was arrested by U.S. forces in northern Afghanistan in December 2001. Belmar, 25, and Begg, 37, reportedly were arrested in Pakistan in February 2002, while Mubanga, 32, was detained in Zambia.

Police said they would be examined to ensure they were medically fit to be detained before being interviewed by anti-terrorist officers.

Each man would be allowed a phone call, access to a lawyer and a visit from a relative.

Peter Clarke, head of the Anti Terrorist Branch, said police had discussed the case with representatives of Britain's Muslim community and recognized there were strong feelings about it.

"But the fact is that we have an absolute duty on behalf of all communities to investigate the circumstances leading to the men's detention," Clarke said.

"Our inquiries are being carried out strictly in accordance with U.K. law and procedures. These have built-in safeguards and are subject to independent scrutiny. We are totally committed to ensuring that the men are treated properly and fairly," he said.

Four of five British men released from Guantanamo last year also were arrested on their return but were released within a day.

Some of the men claim they were tortured at Guantanamo, which holds detainees that U.S. authorities say are suspected of having links to al-Qaida or Afghanistan's ousted Taliban regime.

The decision to release the four follows months of negotiations between Washington and London. Prime Minister Tony Blair's government had argued that the men should face a trial which met international legal standards, or be released.

The Pentagon said today that British authorities had given assurances "that the detainees will not pose a continuing security threat to the United States or its allies."

"The Department of Defense has strong confidence in the U.K.'s commitment and ability to fulfill this responsibility," the statement said.

Four of the men have filed a lawsuit in a U.S. court seeking \$10 million each in damages.

A British Muslim group welcomed the return of the last Britons held at Guantanamo.

"These returnees have been through an appallingly lengthy and unjust ordeal in which they were deliberately held in a legal black hole by the U.S. authorities," the Muslim Council of Britain said in a statement. "The priority now must be for these returnees to receive immediate counseling and medical help."

Moazzam Begg's father has expressed concern about his son's mental health because of his detention.

"He was kept in solitary confinement for about three years and sustained solitary confinement is not a joke, it is a big thing," Azmat Begg told British Broadcasting Corp. radio.

His son had suffered "mental torture for three years and I don't know what that has done to him," he said. "Also, at the same time, I am happy my son is coming home."