

The following text may be printed, copy/pasted, or downloaded and emailed.

## **Ex-Guantanamo Detainees, Attys Speak Of Abuse, Humiliation**

Associated Press  
March 20, 2006

WASHINGTON (AP)--America risks convicting the innocent and letting the guilty evade justice in how it handles detainees at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, the military attorney defending an Australian terror suspect held at the U.S. prison camp said Monday.

Maj. Michael Mori, a Marine Corps lawyer, told an audience at George Washington University that no civilized justice system would accept "information being acquired potentially under torture or questionable methods."

Mori spoke after several former detainees recounted their experiences at the camp, which holds roughly 500 prisoners. Most were taken in the aftermath of the U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan following the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks.

Mori's client, David Hicks, was caught in December 2001, allegedly while fighting alongside Afghanistan's ousted Taliban regime. He has pleaded innocent to charges that include attempted murder and aiding the enemy.

"When you use an imbalanced system," Mori said, "all you do is risk convicting the innocent and providing someone who may be truly guilty with a valid complaint to challenge their conviction."

He added: "There are no rules. They change every day."

Only a handful of Guantanamo prisoners have been charged. Others have been released, usually to their home countries.

Tarek Dergoul, who spent two years imprisoned at Guantanamo, said he was forced to watch as Americans stepped on a Quran, wrote slurs on its pages and then threw the holy book into a toilet. He said by video link from London that his beard was shaved and his eyes sprayed with pepper spray.

"Guantanamo was a shambles," Dergoul said. "It is creating, as they say, terrorists. ... It's doing no justice for America; there's no information being extracted."

The U.S. government has denied some previous reports of abuse of the Quran, specifically a Newsweek magazine report that a copy was flushed down a toilet. Newsweek later retracted the report, which sparked riots that left dozens of people dead.

Shafiq Rasul, who spent more than two years at Guantanamo, said he was forced to admit to appearing on a video with al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden. Rasul said he had been working in England when the video was made.

Interrogators, he said, isolated him for the better part of three months, his legs shackled while they blasted loud music into his cell until he confessed.

"I was going crazy," Rasul said. "My mind-set was, 'I have to get out of isolation because I can't hack it no more.'"

Attorney Joshua Colangelo-Bryan spoke of attempting to win more freedoms for a client held in isolation who had tried several times to kill himself.

The U.S. military, he said, argued in part that the prisoner was not isolated because he had been interrogated 29 times over two years.

"Is there another case anywhere in the history of Anglo-American jurisprudence where it was argued that a person is not isolated, and in fact has meaningful interaction with other human beings, because he is interrogated?" Colangelo-Bryan asked.