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## **At Gitmo, the Wait Goes On**

Life is on hold for the 567 post-9/11 detainees being held at Guantanamo Bay

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Since last summer, the Pentagon has been conducting reviews of each of the 567 post-9/11 detainees being held at the U.S. naval base in Guantanamo Bay to determine whether they should continue to be designated "enemy combatants"—and thus subject to indefinite detention during wartime. U.S. officials tell TIME the tribunals have recommended that more than 36 of these detainees be reclassified as "nonenemy combatants"—in other words, free to go.

Yet even for those detainees ostensibly cleared, the wait goes on.

Only one of them has been released thus far, the officials tell TIME, and just two more are cleared to depart. The reason is that under the tribunal rules, final approval of each release order is put on hold until the CIA and other intelligence agencies have a chance to comb their files for additional incriminating evidence to present to the tribunal. Only if the tribunal then decides a second time that a detainee is eligible for release will the Pentagon actually sign off.

A Pentagon spokesman would not comment on the more than 30 detainees whose fate is in limbo. But to critics of the Pentagon's treatment of detainees at Guantanamo, the continuing delays are inexcusable. Says Neal Sonnett, the American Bar Association's observer at Gitmo: "Some of these people have been detained for three years, and we should do everything possible to be sure that we don't detain innocent people one minute longer than we have to."