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Gitmo Gov on the Fly

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The Mitt Romney Anywhere But Massachusetts Tour pulled into of all places Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, yesterday as the governor looked to put another notch on his foreign policy belt.

"The Pentagon recognizes that governors run corrections systems and have a good understanding of issues as they relate to detention and incarceration," Romney spokesman Eric Fehrstrom said in explaining the Friday visit by Romney, Corrections Commissioner Kathleen Dennehy and chief of staff Beth Myers.

"This is an opportunity for them to get educated about activities at Guantanamo and perhaps share some of their own best practices with the military," Fehrstrom added, apparently with a straight face.

The maximum security military prison, which houses 500 "enemy combatants," has been hosting a steady stream of congressional visitors. The trip offered Romney also included Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee, chairman of the National Governors Association and a possible Romney rival for the GOP presidential nomination. (The Pentagon is nothing if not sensitive to those issues.)

The notion that military brass are just waiting around for this state's governor to swing by and offer them his best advice on running a military prison, now in its fourth year of operation, is kind of amusing. Well, it would be amusing if Mitt Romney had actually spent any quality time visiting prisons here in Massachusetts.

As nearly as anyone on the governor's own staff could determine, Romney has only visited one prison in Massachusetts during his now three and a half years in office and that was a pre-release facility in Boston. Oh, and he did hold a press conference IN THE PARKING LOT at the SouzaBaranowskiCorrectionalCenter in Shirley. There is no record of him touring the facility at the time.

Governors have been successful presidential contenders in recent years because they tackled the tough issues at home. Will Romney leave the prison system in better shape than he found it? Not likely.