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Close Guantanamo prison?

Letters to the Editor
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Close Guantanamo prison? Allegations of torture and abuse of terrorist detainees at a prison at Guantanamo Bay have spurred some to call for closing it. Do you think the facility should be closed?

Alex Li, 16, Charlotte Latin School, Charlotte: No matter what eventually happens to the Guantanamo base, there is an indelible mark on the ethics of the American government for even allowing allegations of torture and abuse to be spread due to its actions. I believe closing the base would give some form of closure to the debacle in Cuba, but the government better tread very carefully from now on.

Haley Price, 18, Appalachian State University, Boone: President Bush and other government officials refuse to allow U.N. inspectors into Cuba to assess the amount of illegal activity and claim to the people of this country that nothing is wrong. If that were the case, why would you not want to prove that to the rest of the world? We're not asking for some great tell-all expose on the practices in Guantanamo; however, I feel that the base should definitely be re-evaluated for effectiveness and the current leadership should be carefully scrutinized.

Will Stancil, 19, Wake Forest University, Winston Salem: Guantanamo isn't crucial; you can build a prison anywhere, albeit not one with the shadowy legal advantages afforded by being located off U.S. soil. If the administration has any hope of repairing our national reputation, it ought to spend less time finding loopholes in the Constitution, and worry about the rights that document is designed to protect. A good first step: Close Guantanamo, a facility that, to most of the world, represents nothing but abuse and torture.

Quinn Patrick Foster, 16, Sun Valley High, Monroe: How the prisoners detained at Guantanamo can be of any use to the investigation on terrorism escapes me. Many of these individuals have been incarcerated for several years. Whatever information they may have had is obviously outdated and irrelevant. I personally do not trust this administration's claim that there is no torture or abuse of the alleged terrorists. If there is no credible evidence that these prisoners are a threat to our security, they must be released. After all, in this country we are presumed innocent until proven guilty.

Kimberly Flanagan, 17, home-schooled, Charlotte: We cannot foolishly believe that we are above the laws we have set on other nations and people. Our downfall will be our pride in believing more in ourselves than in the power from above. Accusations from Guantanamo Bay prison, true or untrue, should open our eyes to the fact we are not a perfect nation. I believe that those in the prison should be fairly but firmly treated in order to stop terrorism.

Daniel Staten, 17, David W. Butler High, Matthews: The allegations of abuse and torture of the terrorist detainees in Guantanamo Bay aren't enough to warrant the closing of it. Instead of closing the facility, those accused of the abuse should be investigated and dealt with. We should do everything in our power to prevent terrorism from thriving. Those suggesting the closure should let the facility serve its purpose and allow the government to continue to protect its people, and punish the ones trying to commit acts of terrorism.