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AT WAR

Terms of Internment

How to win friends and influence enemy combatants.

BY ALAN BROMLEY

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A chorus of democrats has begun to sing a song written by New York Times columnist Tom Friedman, whose lyrics included a line suggesting that we should close the Guantanamo Bay detention center because of alleged failings in how we treat the prisoners' holy books.

First, we gave them food, then clean clothing, then supplied all the prisoners with copies of the Koran, one for each prisoner. We gave them the time and place to bathe, to ponder and to pray. Then, it comes out that one, two, maybe three times over a span of three years (that would be more than 1,000 days), some U.S. soldiers, administrators or interrogators may not have treated those Koranic copies with the utmost respect.

Sacre bleu! Close Gitmo! the critics cried.

Well, I think we should not close Gitmo but write a new set of rules of procedure for the treatment of terrorists, those who often either hide behind civilians when being shot at or kill innocent civilians to show how tough they are. The new rules, with the working title of, "Terms of Internment", should be:

- We really, really respect all your beliefs and all your writings, even if you use them as your basis for killing us.
- We want you to retain your beliefs, and therefore we will continue to supply you with every written word that reinforces your instinct to kill.
- We will honor those words, at all times, as much as you do, lest we offend you.
- We will only serve you the best humus available, from Zabar's (serving airline food is a severe violation of these protocols), or have kosher catering from the nearest kabbalah center.
- We will cover our women, from head to toe, in your presence, lest you be unduly offended--or aroused.
- We will give each prisoner one innocent civilian to hide behind during interrogations.
- We will prepare each prisoner a list of 72 virgins (or give them 72 raisins, I forget which they want).
- We will never lie to you or try to deceive you in our quest for your information.
- We will neither wake you early, nor keep you up late, and will always wait until your prayer sessions are complete before questioning you.

- We will house you in no less than five-star accommodations, and if all the hotels are booked, will place you in the five homes owned by Sen. John Kerry and his wife.

These new rules of internment should satisfy the critics of our present policies, make the prisoners more comfortable in their new, alien surroundings, and help us win the war of ideologies.

Mr. Bromley is editor of WhatsRight-WhatsLeft.com.

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