
National News

Senate To Debate More Gitmo Prisoner Rights

The Senate Armed Services Committee passed legislation giving more rights to prisoners who are being held by the Cheney/Bush regime at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, by a vote of 25-0, in closed session the week of May 25. The legislation was drafted by Chairman Carl Levin (D-Mich.), and the full Senate will debate the issue in late June.

According to press reports, the proposal would: 1) narrow the definition of an enemy combatant; 2) give every detained suspect a lawyer, regardless of whether a trial is set; 3) reject any testimony obtained by coercion or hearsay evidence; and 4) require "status reviews" with a military judge in charge, at which each defendant has a lawyer, and evidence against the defendant is disclosed.

The legislation would affect some 380 prisoners who are being held indefinitely at the U.S. naval base. So far, only two of them have been selected to stand trial. The Defense Department says that another 75 will go to trial, and that about 80 are to be released.

Currently, President Bush can order the imprisonment of any individual who is suspected of engaging in or supporting terrorism. Only those going to trial are provided lawyers and guaranteed access to the evidence against them.

The proposal does not address the issue of habeas corpus, which is considered to be under the purview of the Senate and House Judiciary Committees.

Students, Faculty Boo Bushie Card at UMass

President Bush's former Chief of Staff Andy Card was lustily booed by hundreds of students and faculty members as he rose to accept an honorary degree from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst May 25. The booing drowned out Provost Charlena Seymour's remarks as she awarded Card an honorary degree in "public service."

Faculty members on the stage joined

hundreds of students in the booing. It continued so long and loud that Card didn't even to try to speak, but simply waved and smiled as one professor on the stage raised a sign, "Card—No Honor, No Degree." Another sign said, "War Criminals Go Home," according to press reports. More than 100 students and faculty sang anti-war songs and leafleted before the ceremony began.

Card's inverse ratings on the applause meter may be the result of much recent press attention to his role in accompanying the disgraced, then-White House Counsel Alberto Gonzales to the intensive care unit of George Washington Hospital on March 10, 2004, with the mission of getting the sedated U.S. Attorney General John Ashcroft to sign a broad order allowing surveillance of U.S. citizens. This was an unsuccessful end-run around Acting Attorney General James Comey, who had refused to sign it as "unconstitutional." Ashcroft agreed with Comey.

Hurricane Data Blow Out Global Warmers' 'Theory'

Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (WHOI) geologists have studied records of 5,000 years of hurricanes that made landfall. The results don't sit well with the man-caused-global-warming brayers who want you not to question their contention that warmer ocean waters must mean more intense and frequent hurricanes.

Hiding that problem, the *Washington Post* May 28 simply buried the study's results under the headline, "Ocean Temperatures Not the Only Determining Factor in Hurricanes," and played up the brayers' line as though there is credible science to back it up.

What the Woods Hole study showed, according to a May 23 WHOI release, is that the El Niño/Southern Oscillation and the West African Monsoon are the key determiners of hurricanes. The researchers found that the number of intense hurricanes increased when El Niño was relatively weak, and the West African monsoon was strong.

"Much media attention has been focused

recently on the importance of warmer ocean waters as the dominant factor controlling the frequency and intensity of hurricanes. And indeed, warmer sea surface temperatures provide more fuel for the formation of tropical cyclones," the WHOI release noted. "But the work by [Jeff] Donnelly and [Jonathan] Woodruff suggests that El Niño and the West African monsoon appear to be critical factors for determining long-term cycles of hurricane intensity in the Atlantic."

The two geologists began their study in 2003 of sediment-core samples from Laguna Playa Grande on Vieques (Puerto Rico), an island extremely vulnerable to hurricanes. The geological record showed periods of more frequent and intense hurricanes from 5,000 to 3,600 years ago, from 2,500 to 1,000 years ago, and from 1700 AD to the present. Previous records from New York and the Gulf Coast matched those findings. The study's latest results are in the May 24 issue of *Nature*. The official U.S. hurricane season started June 1.

15-Year-Old Shows Gore Film Is So Much Hot Air

Kristen Byrnes, a 15-year-old pupil in Portland, Me., has created a website as the finished product of an extra-credit school project, in which she read and worked through climate research papers from both sides of the climate debate. Through the research, she determined that the only major force acting on the Earth's climate is the Sun.

Kristen set as a goal, to find the explanation for the 1945-75 cooling, noting that both solar activity and CO₂ were rising. She is still looking for that answer, but has a thought that it may lie in the extended El Niño periods of that period.

Her website (<http://home.earthlink.net/~ponderthemaunder/>) is named for the Maunder Minimum that produced the "Little Ice Age." She has written an 18-page document called "Facts and Fictions of Al Gore's 'An Inconvenient Truth.'" The webpage is set up to allow visitors to walk through her discoveries.