

DEMOCRATS COMMITTED TO PROTECTING AMERICA

While Democrats Create Policies, GOP Uses Scare Tactics to Score Political Points

While President Obama and Congress have been developing a plan to close the military prison at Guantanamo Bay, Republicans have been attempting to score political points by reviving old talking points falsely suggesting their party is stronger on national security. Last week, Democrats included an amendment in the supplemental creating strict rules under which detainees from the Guantanamo Bay prison facility can be released or transferred. Moving forward, Democrats will continue working with the Administration to ensure that the best plan possible is carried out, and that it is done in full consultation with the Congress and States.

Republican Scare Tactics Incite Fear, Offer No Solutions

“We've released hundreds [of prisoners] already of the less-threatening types. About 12 percent of them, nonetheless, went back into the fight as terrorists. The group that's left, 245 or so, these are the worst of the worst, this is the hard core... **They want to get out because they want to kill more Americans.**” – Former Vice President Dick Cheney, 5/10/09

“This is nuts. I mean, this is just crazy... **The idea we're going to put alleged terrorists on welfare and have you pay for them and me pay for them, so they get to be integrated into American society** – remember, all these people were brought in on the grounds that they were trained in terrorist camps.” – Former House Speaker Newt Gingrich, 5/10/09

FAST FACT

During World War II, 425,000 Nazis were held inside the United States – much more than the 250 detainees who remain in Guantanamo.

[USA Today, 11/15/04]

Democrats Take Steps to Ensure Our Nation's Security

As the Obama Administration develops a plan for closing Guantanamo Bay, Democrats continue to uphold the interests of our country and its national security.

Bipartisan Experts Agree: Guantanamo Bay is a blight on America's reputation and must be closed. A group of five former Secretaries of State, including Colin Powell, Henry Kissinger and James Baker agree that the military prison at Guantanamo Bay should be closed. In addition, Secretary Rice and Defense Secretary Gates both urged President Bush to close it. Until Guantanamo is shut down, America will find it incredibly difficult to pursue other foreign policy interests.

America's prison system is fully equipped to detain the world's worst criminals. Congressional Republicans continue to put down the men and women who run and work in our prisons by claiming that allowing terrorists to be held on American soil will make our country less safe. Despite Republican objections, our country has some of the most secure detention facilities in the world and a long history of holding dangerous terrorists and criminals, including the perpetrator of the first World Trade Center attacks, numerous 9/11 conspirators, the Shoe Bomber, and Timothy McVeigh. Our prison system is fully equipped to handle these types of criminals, and also provides a benefit to local communities by providing employment opportunities.

America's criminal justice system has record of success in trying and convicting terror suspects. The ad-hoc system at Guantanamo Bay has been much less efficient at trying and convicting terror suspects than the U.S. justice system. Between September 12, 2001 and the end of 2007, 145 terrorists were convicted in American courts, compared to the three that have been convicted at Guantanamo.

Prepared by the Office of Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, 05/14/09