

KARZAI AND US FIGHT OVER WHO GETS TO RUN THE ABUSIVE PRISONS

As I noted, President Obama reacted to the NDAA's requirement that DOD actually review detainees' cases to figure out if they should be held by claiming the authority to make our prison at Bagram largely exempt from the law.

At one level, having us hold detainees keeps them out of the Afghan prisons, where they'll be tortured. But of course, the Afghans have at least managed to do what we claim to be unable to do—give these men trials.

Now, Karzai is upping the ante: demanding that the US turn over Bagram and its 3,000+ detainees next month.

Afghan President Hamid Karzai ordered the transfer of the U.S.-run Bagram prison to his government's control within a month, citing human rights violations.

Karzai decided the transfer should be made after hearing a report on the prison from the Constitutional Oversight Commission that "details many cases of violations of the Afghan Constitution and other applicable laws of the country, the relevant international conventions and human rights," the president's office said yesterday in a statement.

And in response to Karzai's claims of abuses (which appear to be about nudity), State Department's spokesperson and former Cheney hack Victoria Nuland basically said the same thing the Bush Administration always said: Geneva comply blah blah blah.

QUESTION: And what about his charges that – violation of human rights in

these prisons?

MS. NULAND: Well, you know that we take seriously any charges or allegations of detainee abuse. We respect the rights of detainees who are in facilities that the United States manages, and we ensure that all detainees in U.S. custody are treated in accordance with international legal obligations, including Geneva Common Article III. Any specific allegations of detainee abuse are investigated fully by the Department of Defense and by ISAF.

Coming from Nuland, such reassurances are little comfort.

But then, this is basically a pissing contest over who can run abusive prisons, so it's not comforting in any case.