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According to a [Los Angeles Times report](#), a senior U.S. official stated the Obama administration wants to detain and interrogate non-Afghan terrorism suspects captured in countries outside Afghanistan in a section of the Bagram prison, even after it turns the prison over to Afghan “control.” The proposal is reportedly in the early stages of development.

This is consistent with Obama’s record of continuing and expanding the national security state begun by the Bush regime. Bagram is one of the pre-eminent hellhole prisons currently run by the U.S. military. In many respects it is even worse than Gitmo, with torture and death being the result for many prisoners detained there.

To date, Obama administration lawyers have been successful in court in arguing that prisoners held at Bagram are not entitled to due process rights such as habeas corpus. As a result of the federal court victory, the U.S. can use Bagram to detain indefinitely, without any judicial oversight, “terrorism suspects” captured far from any battlefield who have not been charged with any crime.

The administration is currently involved in the charade of turning over the prison at Bagram to the Afghan puppet government, but if this latest idea goes ahead, part of the prison will still be under the direct control of the U.S. torturers instead of the puppets in Afghanistan.

As if the lack of basic legal and human rights is not bad enough, the Obama administration maintains that prisoners of the U.S. war of terror can be held indefinitely. Bagram appears to be one of the hellholes where such prisoners will be held, possibly until they die. Other newly captured prisoners of the U.S. war of terror would also be interrogated at Bagram as well. Some prisoners currently held at the prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba may also eventually be transferred to Bagram although a Pentagon spokesperson denies that this is **currently** under consideration.

According to the Times, “The senior U.S. official...said Bagram remains the best option for holding future terrorist suspects captured elsewhere in the world, in places like Somalia or

Yemen.” Bagram is also a place to hold prisoners without as much media attention as that accorded to Gitmo. Unlike Gitmo it is thousands of miles from the U.S. If it is under “Afghan jurisdiction” it will be even easier to cover up the crimes committed there.

According to

Melissa Goodman, staff attorney with the ACLU National Security Project, “The Guantánamo problem is not solved simply by recreating a Guantánamo somewhere else. Closing Guantánamo is essential but it is equally important that the Obama administration put an end to the illegal indefinite detention policy behind Guantánamo. The entire world is not a battlefield. We cannot just capture people far from any zone of armed conflict and lock up them up indefinitely without any access to the courts or due process. Such a policy not only flies in the face of our justice system, but opens up the possibility that mistakes will be made and the wrong people will be imprisoned – which is exactly what we have seen at Guantánamo.”

The ACLU filed a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) lawsuit in September 2009 demanding information about Bagram, which has thus far been shrouded in much secrecy to protect the crimes of the national security state. In response to the lawsuit, the government has been forced to turn over some important information but continues to withhold key details about the prisoners detained at Bagram, as well as information about the implementation of its new detainee status review procedures (kangaroo proceedings) and about a separate “secret jail” on the base. The secret facility is reportedly run by either the Joint Special Operations Command or the Defense Intelligence Agency, and detainees maintain they have been tortured there.

“The possibility of continuing to hold and interrogate detainees at Bagram is even more disturbing given the lack of transparency about the facility,” said Goodman. “Plans to continue holding prisoners in U.S. custody at Bagram must be accompanied by the disclosure of key information about what currently goes on there.”

As part of the ongoing FOIA lawsuit, the ACLU on June 8th received several documents from the Department of Defense (DOD) and the Department of Justice. The disclosures include a number of detainee policy documents from the early years of the Bush administration, including a 2004 document describing “Global Screening Criteria for Detainees” used to determine who – no matter where they were captured – could be detained as an enemy combatant and which detainees could be transferred to Guantánamo. Also just turned over to the ACLU are Obama-era records including policy guidance from February 2010 regarding access to detainees and facilities by non-DOD government officials, foreign governments, members of the media and representatives of non-governmental organizations that confirms non-DOD agents can visit detainees at Bagram in order to interrogate them. This allows the CIA and other torturers regular access to the prisoners. The DOD also disclosed its policy regarding the waiver of autopsy requirements for detainee deaths. Thus when prisoners are tortured to death their murders are more easily covered up. (The documents received in the ACLU FOIA lawsuit are a v
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Bagram and Gitmo are just two of the prisons run by the U.S. and its allies in the war of terror. Tens of thousands of prisoners have been held and abused at these facilities. Secrecy continues to surround the crimes committed in these hellholes. But the crimes that we already know of are more than enough to warrant prosecutions of various top U.S. officials, including former president Bush and VP Cheney. But do not expect the Obama administration to begin prosecutions of these top criminals or even their underlings.

The Obama administration has instead repeatedly gone to court and taken other actions to protect and cover-up for them, as well as the national security state. Even worse many of the crimes of the Bush regime are now the crimes of the Obama administration. Gitmo and Bagram are under the command of Commander-in-Chief Obama. Obama has greatly expanded the U.S. war of terror. We can not hear the screams and cries for help of the prisoners held by the U.S. In places like Bagram they have often been silenced under court rulings that deny them basic legal and human rights. This makes it even more incumbent on those who know what is happening to speak out. Silence about the crimes of our government is complicity.