

Mistreatment of Manning Criticized by Leading Law Professors & UN Torture Investigator

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Hundreds of Thousands Write Obama Urging End to Manning Abuse

Retired Colonel: "Obama Could End Torture of Manning With One Phone Call"

Washington, DC: The eight months of solitary confinement of Bradley Manning at Quantico has drawn national and international criticism in the last week. Support is growing for him around the world with 500,000 writing President Obama in the last few days and with hundreds of top U.S. legal scholars criticizing his conditions of confinement.

Lawyers representing every leading law school in the United States have written an open letter to President Obama criticizing the conditions of Manning. Among the law professors is Lawrence Tribe who was President Obama's law professor at Harvard and served in his administration until recently. The letter, [Private Manning's Humiliation](#), raises questions about President Obama saying: "President Obama was once a professor of constitutional law, and entered the national stage as an eloquent moral leader. The question now, however, is whether his conduct as commander in chief meets fundamental standards of decency."

Col. Ann Wright (ret) who served 29 years in the military noted that “President Obama could end the treatment of Manning with one phone call. As Commander-In-Chief he is responsible for the actions of the Marines at Quantico. Certainly he understands the constitutional right to be convicted before punished and that the condition of Manning violates protection from cruel and unusual punishment.”

The UN Rapporteur on Torture Juan Mendez reprimanded the United States for blocking an official visit with Manning to investigate his treatment. The UN torture investigator has been reviewing Manning’s case since December but the United States will not allow a private meeting with no tape recording. The military has also refused a U.S. Congressman’s request for an official visit to Manning, Rep. Dennis Kucinich, as well as a visit from Amnesty International.

Daniel Ellsberg, a veteran who graduated from Quantico and is noted for leaking the Pentagon Papers commented: “It seems likely that the Pentagon’s refusal to allow Amnesty International and the UN Rapporteur on Torture to hold unmonitored discussion with Bradley Manning (as the UN mandate demands) reflects well-founded fear that such experts on abusive conditions and torture could conclude that Manning’s treatment is not only ‘ridiculous, counterproductive and stupid’ — as State Department spokesperson P.J. Crowley was forced to resign for saying- but criminal.”

This comes at a time when the U.S. and China are challenging each other on human rights. [China issued a lengthy report](#) regarding human rights violations in the United States this week. As PJ Crowley, former Assistant Secretary of State said when he resigned the Manning case would be an embarrassment to the U.S. internationally, highlighting “the broader, even strategic impact of discreet actions undertaken by national security agencies every day and their impact on our global standing and leadership. The exercise of power in today’s challenging times and relentless media environment must be prudent and consistent with our laws and values.”

Around the world there is growing anger at the treatment of Manning. Five hundred thousand people have sent letters to President Obama urging him to “immediately end the torture, isolation and public humiliation of Bradley Manning.” The petition was put out by [Azaaz.org](#) and is addressed to President Obama, Secretary of State Clinton and Secretary of Defense Gates.

“A half million people have taken a stand in support of Bradley Manning. It’s certainly a challenge to President Obama to get on the right side of history here and finally put an end to the extreme and illegal pre-trial punishment,” said Jeff Paterson, a veteran speaking on behalf of [the Bradley Manning Support Network](#). “After he ends the mistreatment of Manning, he could then ensure that Bradley receives the fair and public trial that is guaranteed under the Constitution.”

Call the White House and tell President Obama end the torture of Bradley Manning: Comments: 202-456-1111. Switchboard: 202-456-1414.

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