

By Frida Berrigan, Witness Against Torture

Courage, Muslim brothers, you do not walk alone. We will walk with you and sing your spirit home.

Courage, Muslim brothers, we seek your liberty. We will stand with you, until we all are free.

We were 25 strong, wearing orange jumpsuits and carrying an array of well worn signs, some dating back to the early days of our movement to mark January 11 as a Day of National Shame. In a single file, holding our signs and wreathed in a disciplined silence, we stood on the escalator, and it slowly moved our group out of the depths of the station and out into the early morning half light at the Pentagon.

The massive headquarters of U.S. war making was busy in the dawn hours. There was a queue of more than 100 Pentagon workers waiting to get through security as we walked by. Our mournful quiet, somber faces and "Shut Down Guantanamo" signs letting them all know this was not just another manic Monday.

Courage, Muslim brothers, you do not walk alone....

Witness Against Torture began our time together in Washington by joining the Dorothy Day Catholic Worker community in their Monday morning vigil at the Pentagon, a discipline they have held since 1987.

The moon was nearly full, hanging bright in the sky as it got lighter and lighter. Facing the Pentagon, we watched the War Department turn from gray to an almost salmon pink in the early morning sun that rose over our shoulders during our hour of witness. Many of us meditated on the moon-- delighting in its beauty and its constancy of change, noting that the same moon hanging over the Pentagon, shines down on our families back home and over the 35 men still languishing at Guantanamo... and over all of the Witness Against Torture

community fasting and witnessing in their own communities too.

Courage, Muslim brothers, we seek your liberty.....

I found myself hoping that our plaintive song would be an earworm, niggling into the brains of all who heard it. I imagined the workers-- an enlisted woman in khaki and heavy boots, a maintenance man in his green and brown uniform, an office worker in ungainly heels-- humming to themselves as they mopped or made copies or put graphics into powerpoint presentations. Courage, Muslim brothers, you do not walk alone.... Our song, our prayer, our plea traveling the distance that our feet cannot reach.

Courage, Muslim brothers, we seek your liberty. We will stand with you, until we all are free.

Art Laffin of the Dorothy Day Community prepared a [litany](#), and many of us read portions out as Pentagon workers steadily streamed in the building. Part of Art's litany is included below:

About 779 prisoners have been held by the U.S. military at Guantánamo since the prison opened on January 11, 2002. Of those, 735 have been released or transferred, [including one who was transferred to the U.S. to be tried and subsequently convicted](#). Today, 35 men continue to languish at Guantanamo, never knowing their fate, with no resolution to their cases in sight. We need to see these men as members of our own blood family and act on their behalf.

Refrain: End the Crime of Torture—Close Guantanamo Now

We remember and pray for all victims of the U.S. empire, including the 9 men who have died at Guantanamo since its opening. Adnan Latif was one of these men who have been all but forgotten. Latif, who spent more than ten years in Guantanamo without ever being charged with a crime, would often go on a hunger strike to protest his unjust confinement. A Yemeni citizen, poet, father and husband, Latif was subject to severe beatings, druggings and torture. He had been cleared for release at least four separate times yet continued to be imprisoned. On September 8, 2012, Latif was found dead in his cell. No independent investigation has been

conducted into his death, or the deaths of the other eight detainees.

Refrain: End the Crime of Torture—Close Guantanamo Now

In Latif's own words he asks: "Where is the world to save us from torture? Where is the world to save us from the fire and sadness? Where is the world to save the hunger strikers?" Adnan Latif, our Muslim brother, We and many others hear your cry and that is why we are here today!

Refrain: End the Crime of Torture—Close Guantanamo Now

We call for an independent investigation into the death of Latif and those who died at Guantanamo! In the name of the detainees who continue to be unjustly held at Guantanamo, we call on all people of goodwill to implore President Biden to issue an executive order to Close Guantanamo immediately!

Refrain: End the Crime of Torture—Close Guantanamo Now

[Pentagon Vigil Litany and Program](#) by Art Laffin

[WAT Statement as Guantanamo Turns 21](#)

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