

Celebrating Australian Playwriting



Australian Script Centre



X Ray

by Chris Tugwell

EXTRACT

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Cast

On Stage

David Hicks, age 27 Australian
Guard, 19

Off Stage

(recorded)

Camp Announcer
General Dunlavey
Chief Petty Officer Mark J. Owens (National Anthem singer)
Major Sharon Newton
Soldier #1
Soldier #2
Female Soldier

(live)

Tower Guard

Quotes from U.S. military personnel are taken from the worldwide media, the Joint Task Force Guantanamo Bay's website <http://www.nsgtmo.navy.mil/JTFgtmo/home.html>, the *Guantanamo Gazette* published monthly by the U.S. Naval Base Guantanamo Bay and *The Wire*, a monthly newsletter published by 362nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment assigned to the Joint Information Bureau at Joint Task Force Guantanamo and are in the public domain.

Every effort has been made to ensure that the details in the play are accurate, including the military routine, the Islamic call to prayer, the prisoner's menus, and the music. The *Mickey Mouse Club* and *Sesame Street* themes are actually used by the military as wake-up music at Guantanamo Bay and *Froot Loops* are served. The prisoner's ID numbers are not those of any actual prisoners.

PART 1.

In the centre of a bare stage is a 1.8 x 2.4 metre wire mesh cell. It is 2.4 m high with a sloping corrugated iron roof. There are no gutters. There is a heavily padlocked mesh door on one of the long sides. A thin mattress is on the floor with a metal bucket next to it, another in a corner.

David Hicks, in bright orange overalls, is asleep as the audience enters. He has a green hospital type tag on his wrist, with a colour photo, name, religion etc.

A Guard stands several metres away from the wire, facing Hicks at all times. His camouflage uniform is unbelievably immaculate. He is NOT armed. At irregular times he moves in military style to another position - on the next side of the cage.

An American flag is painted high on a rear wall. This represents one of the guard towers. Near it is a sign in Arabic indicating the direction of Mecca. On the floor of the cell a stencilled arrow also indicates Mecca.

At intervals through the play, candles will be placed around the edge of the cell; one for each day that David Hicks has been held. If he is still being held during the production, extra candles should be added for each extra night of his captivity.

During long pauses David will occupy himself with reading the Koran, praying, doing push-ups, or simply staring into space.

A series of slides with the following text:

David Hicks has been held at Camp X Ray in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba since January 2002.

He has been in U.S. custody for 811 days*

*[*to 28th February 2004. This number should be adjusted for each performance, calculated from his capture in Afghanistan on (approx.) 9th December 2001]*

without charge

without access to legal advice.

He has not seen his family.

For two years he has not talked to his family.

For two years he did not see a lawyer.

For two years his lawyer is not allowed to tell him he had a lawyer.

No Australian Government ministers have seen him.

No Australian Government ministers have asked to see him

The Australian Consul visited him for the first time two weeks ago.

An Embassy official has visited him once.

He has been interrogated repeatedly by the US military and the FBI.

ASIO and the Federal Police have seen him four times (most recently in May 2003).

They tell his family there is nothing they can charge him with.

He has broken no Australian laws

He has broken no U.S. laws

He has broken no international laws.

His sister has written to him every day he has been held captive

Her letters are sent back

"return to sender"

He is not a prisoner of war

He is not officially in the United States

He is not officially in Cuba

He is classified as an "Unlawful Enemy Combatant"

He has no legal status.

At the time of his capture in Afghanistan he was fighting with the Taliban...

... then the legal government of the country

We don't know why

We can't ask him

Probably as payment for his tuition at an Islamic college.

The U.S. military paid the Northern Alliance \$5,000 US for every foreign prisoner they handed over.

David Hicks was the only one of his group of Taliban fighters handed to the U.S.

He was also the only foreigner.