

July 2, 2007 - Slaughter Responds to President's Commuting of Scooter Libby's Sentence

Washington, DC - Rep. Louise M. Slaughter (D-NY-28), Chairwoman of the House Rules Committee, today released the following statement in response to President Bush's commuting of Scooter Libby's sentence:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, July 2, 2007

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Washington, DC - Rep. Louise M. Slaughter (D-NY-28), Chairwoman of the House Rules Committee, today released the following statement in response to President Bush's commuting of Scooter Libby's sentence:

"The President has claimed Mr. Libby's sentence was excessive. But the only excessive actions taken were those of the Administration as it sought to exact retribution against a critic. As I learned personally from the testimony of former CIA agents, its actions were unconscionable."

"The case against Scooter Libby always involved much more than the fate of one man. By revealing Valerie Plame's identity, the Administration endangered her life, the life of everyone in the field she had worked with, and America's national security. This illegal action set back the work of our intelligence community immeasurably by breaking bonds of trust which take years to form. Two years is a paltry price to pay for the damage done to our nation, damage Mr. Libby made possible."

"With its decision, the Bush Administration has proven that to the very end, it is interested only in shielding its members from accountability rather than encouraging it, even when doing so comes at the direct expense of our nation's security."

BACKGROUND

On Friday, July 22nd, 2005 Rep. Slaughter took part in a joint hearing of the Democratic Special Investigations Division of the House Government Reform Committee and the Senate Democratic Policy Committee. The hearing examined the national security implications of the outing of Valerie Plame.

The hearing was co-chaired by Rep. Henry A. Waxman and Sen. Byron Dorgan (D-ND), Senate DPC Chairman. The witnesses, who uniformly testified to the damage done to the American intelligence community by the leak of Ms. Plame's identity, included:

- W. Patrick Lang - Former Defense Intelligence Officer for the DIA
- Larry Johnson - Former CIA Analyst
- Jim Marcinkowski - Former CIA Case Officer
- David McMichael - Former CIA Case Officer
- Mel Goodman - Former senior CIA Analyst

Previous Statements from President Bush and George Bush Senior:

At the beginning of the Plame scandal, President Bush stated that "If anyone in this administration was involved in it [the alleged leaking of Plame's identity], they would no longer be in this administration."

On September 30th, 2003, he added: "If somebody did leak classified information, I'd like to know it, and we'll take the appropriate action."

In 1999, George H.W. Bush, former CIA director himself, stated that: "I have nothing but contempt and anger for those who betray the trust by exposing the name of our sources. They are, in my view, the most insidious of traitors." [Speech at CIA, 4/26/99]

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