

FNC's Hume: Washington is in a frenzy over the alleged White House leak of a CIA agent's identity, but is there any evidence that it was the White House?

NBC's Miklaszewski: At the White House today, President Bush was beginning to feel political heat.

And CBS's Roberts: the White House tried to jump out in front of the potentially damaging controversy today, insisting that it would never authorize the leaking of a CIA operative's name.

Now, my recommendation is that the President call upon the Attorney General to appoint a special council. It is the only way to ensure the American public that the investigation will be performed fairly and impartially, to call upon the Attorney General to appoint the special council.

Now, if we read the Code of Federal Regulations, volume 28 at section 600.1, the Attorney General is required to appoint a special council when a "criminal investigation of a person or matter is warranted"; and, two, the investigation "by a United States Attorney's Office would present a conflict of interest for the Department"; and, three, "it would be in the public interest to appoint an outside special council to assume responsibility for the matter."

Now, it so happens all of the facts are present here. First, the allegations, if true, constitute an obvious serious criminal violation under 50 United States Code section 421. The disclosure of a name of a covert agent is punishable by up to 10 years in a Federal prison.

CONSTITUENTS EXPRESS THEIR VIEWS ON PRESIDENT'S REQUEST FOR \$87 BILLION SUPPLEMENTAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Madam Speaker, I wanted to join my colleague, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), who, along with him, I have been reading some letters and e-mails from constituents regarding their view on the ongoing war in Iraq, and their views about the request for \$87 billion. A number of these e-mails that I have gotten have been generated by moveon.org that has an online petition where hundreds of thousands of people have signed on, and many of them have written comments regarding their unwillingness to spend \$87 billion, particularly while the leadership team that got us into Iraq is still in place, and as long as we fail to internationalize the effort in rebuilding Iraq.

So I thought it would be useful to read some of the letters and the e-mails that I have gotten.

Rebecca from Park Ridge says, "This Congress has a responsibility to ensure that our tax dollars are used well, but President Bush is demanding another enormous blank check. Congress must withhold the \$87 billion requested by

President Bush until he dismisses the team responsible for the quagmire in Iraq, starting with Defense Secretary Rumsfeld, and end the U.S. occupation of Iraq by transferring authority for rebuilding to the United Nations."

Doralee of Evanston says, "I beseech you as moral people who care about the survival of this world to deny Bush's request for \$87 billion and fire Rumsfeld and develop a whole new approach to restoring Iraq by involving the United Nations. This is such a serious matter that you cannot give Bush blanket authority anymore. He has not handled this situation in a competent manner."

And Barbara from Wilmette says, "I was stunned and disheartened to read that President Bush is asking for \$87 billion from Congress for an occupation in Iraq that has only lead to the death of our soldiers and Iraqi civilians and further bitterness of the Iraqi people toward the United States."

Oletta from Chicago says, "This war has been fiscally and morally mismanaged and should not garner any further financing without an exact budget and defined timelines. Don't let Bush and his administration continue to bankrupt America because he still doesn't know what he is doing or is going to do."

Pamela says, and she is from Chicago, "I believe we need to invest in rebuilding Iraq and protecting our troops, but we need to do it in a sensible way, in concert with the world, and in a way that benefits the people of Iraq. So, the quid pro quo for the money is a change in policy and in leadership."

Cecelia, also from Chicago says, "I don't begrudge funding, as long as I feel that the war is properly managed. I don't. Our soldiers are vulnerable, the Iraqis seem to hate us, the terrorists are picking us off, and we don't seem to have a plan to change any of this. Firing Rumsfeld would be a start."

David from Chicago says, "I hear story after story of parents of our men and women serving in Iraq sending regular care packages with things like sun screen because their children are not being provided these items by the military. It is clear that the money being spent is not being targeted to those in the service and apparently not to the Iraqi people who still lack power, water, food, and medical facility. It does appear that Halliburton is profiting quite nicely from its no-bid contract. I object to sending more money until Mr. Rumsfeld is removed and we get an accounting of how the money is being spent and who is getting their pockets lined with it."

Janice from Chicago says, "Congress must withhold the \$87 billion requested by the President until he dismisses the team responsible for the quagmire in Iraq, starting with Defense Secretary Rumsfeld, and ends the U.S. occupation by transferring authority for rebuilding to the United Nations."

Jonathan from Chicago says, "Don't reward failure. The war in Iraq was

won handily, but the Defense Department's hamfisted attempts to run things in Iraq, over the objections of the more experienced State Department, has been dismal and embarrassing. By all means, fund the continued rebuilding efforts in Iraq, but not while the architects of the current mess are still choosing how to spend our money."

And David from Chicago says, "Please make sure we don't alienate the rest of the world more than we already have. Please make this administration admit that it has made a misstep by not involving the world community in the Iraq situation from the outset."

Jeffrey from Chicago said, "This is outrageous, given the fiscal crisis our States are in, and the fact that the money would go a long way to shore up education or help programs that confront the issues of homelessness or poverty. Get up and do something about this. I'm keeping track."

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 1474, CHECK CLEARING FOR THE 21ST CENTURY ACT

Mr. OXLEY submitted the following conference report and statement on the bill (H.R. 1474) to facilitate check truncation by authorizing substitute checks, to foster innovation in the check collection system without mandating receipt of checks in electronic form, and to improve the overall efficiency of the Nation's payments system, and for other purposes:

CONFERENCE REPORT (H. REPT. 108-291)

The committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 1474), to facilitate check truncation by authorizing substitute checks, to foster innovation in the check collection system without mandating receipt of checks in electronic form, and to improve the overall efficiency of the Nation's payments system, and for other purposes, having met, after full and free conference, have agreed to recommend and do recommend to their respective Houses as follows:

That the House recede from its disagreement to the amendment of the Senate and agree to the same with an amendment as follows:

In lieu, of the matter proposed to be inserted by the Senate amendment, insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) *SHORT TITLE.*—This Act may be cited as the "Check Clearing for the 21st Century Act" or the "Check 21 Act".

(b) *TABLE OF CONTENTS.*—The table of contents of this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

Sec. 2. Findings; purposes.

Sec. 3. Definitions.

Sec. 4. General provisions governing substitute checks.

Sec. 5. Substitute check warranties.

Sec. 6. Indemnity.

Sec. 7. Expedited recredit for consumers.

Sec. 8. Expedited recredit procedures for banks.

Sec. 9. Delays in an emergency.

Sec. 10. Measure of damages.

Sec. 11. Statute of limitations and notice of claim.