

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

July 14, 2005

The President  
The White House  
Washington, DC

Dear Mr. President:

We write in order to urge that you require your Deputy White House Chief of Staff, Karl Rove, to either come forward immediately to explain his role in the Valerie Plame matter or to resign from your Administration.

Notwithstanding whether Mr. Rove intentionally violated the law in leaking information concerning former CIA operative Valerie Plame, we believe it is not tenable to maintain Mr. Rove as one of your most important advisors unless he is willing to explain his central role in using the power and authority of your Administration to disseminate information regarding Ms. Plame and to undermine her husband, Ambassador Joseph Wilson.

We now know that e-mails recently turned over to the prosecutor by Time, Inc. between writer Matthew Cooper and *Time* editors reveal that one of Mr. Cooper's principal sources in the Plame matter was Mr. Rove.<sup>1</sup> This has been confirmed by *Newsweek*, which obtained a copy of an e-mail from Mr. Cooper to a *Time* editor stating that "it was, [Karl Rove] said, Wilson's wife, who apparently works at the agency on wmd [weapons of mass destruction] issues who authorized the trip" and not the CIA Director or Vice President.<sup>2</sup> According to the e-mail, Mr. Rove spoke to Mr. Cooper on "double super secret background" just three or four days before Robert Novak wrote a column outing Ms. Plame as a CIA operative.<sup>3</sup>

We also know that Mr. Rove told Chris Matthews that Ambassador Wilson's wife and her undercover status were "fair game."<sup>4</sup> A White House source also appears to have previously acknowledged that Mr. Rove contacted Mr. Matthews and other journalists, indicating that "it was reasonable to discuss who sent Wilson to Niger."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Michael Isikoff, *Matt Cooper's Source: What Karl Rove Told Time Magazine's Reporter*, NEWSWEEK, July 18, 2005.

<sup>2</sup>*Id.*

<sup>3</sup>*Id.*; Josh White, *Rove Told Reporter of Plame's Role But Didn't Name Her*, Attorney Says, WASH. POST, July 11, 2005, at A1.

<sup>4</sup>Evan Thomas & Michael Isikoff, *Secrets and Leaks*, NEWSWEEK, Oct. 13, 2003, at 26.

<sup>5</sup>*Id.*

The above facts appear to be directly inconsistent with previous statements by you and representatives of your Administration concerning leaking in general and the Plame case in particular. For example, on September 30, 2003, you stated “there’s just too many leaks [in Washington]. And if there is a leak out of my administration, I want to know who it is.”<sup>6</sup> You also stated “I want to know the truth. If anybody has got any information inside our administration or outside our administration, it would be helpful if they came forward with the information so we can find out whether or not these allegations are true and get on about the business.”<sup>7</sup> On October 10, 2003, White House Press Secretary Scott McClellan was asked if Mr. Rove or two other aides in your Administration had ever discussed the Plame matter with any reporter, and he stated he had spoken to Mr. Rove and the others and “they assured me that they were not involved in this.”<sup>8</sup>

Regardless of whether these actions violate the law – including specific laws against the disclosure of classified information<sup>9</sup> as well as broader laws against obstruction of justice,<sup>10</sup> the negligent distribution of defense information,<sup>11</sup> and obligating reporting of press leaks to proper authorities<sup>12</sup> – they seem to reveal a course of conduct designed to threaten and intimidate those who provide information critical of your Administration, such as Ambassador Wilson.

We hope you agree with us that such behavior should never be tolerated by any Administration. While it is acceptable for a private citizen to use every legal tool at his or her disposal to protect himself against legal liability, high-ranking members of your Administration who are involved in any effort to smear a private citizen or to disseminate information regarding

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<sup>6</sup>President George W. Bush, President Discusses Job Creation with Business Leaders (Sept. 30, 2003) (transcript available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/09/20030930-9.html>).

<sup>7</sup>*Id.*

<sup>8</sup>White House Press Secretary Scott McLellan, Press Briefing (Oct. 10, 2003) (transcript available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/10/print/20031010-6.html>).

<sup>9</sup>50 U.S.C. § 421(a).

<sup>10</sup>18 U.S.C. § 1510.

<sup>11</sup>18 U.S.C. § 793.

<sup>12</sup>18 U.S.C. § 793(f).

a CIA operative should be expected to meet a far higher standard of ethical behavior and forthrightness. This is why we believe it is so important that Mr. Rove publicly and fully explain his role in this matter.

Sincerely,

John Longenecker	Phil Johnston
Liane E. Watson	Massimo D'Indy
Sam Farn	Zoe Lofgren
Barbara Kee	Carine Brown
Bill Saul	Rail M. Hijab
Danny K. Davis	Jim Van Boven
Ben A. Waxman	Mike Honda
Lynn C. Woolsey	Cynthia C. Zelick
J. John	Frank Pallone
Bennie L. Thompson	Charles B. Rangel
Hilda L. Solis	John E. Sununu

Jim Mc Dermott

Max Moran

Louise Slaughter

Tom Odell

Mahe Waters

Sue Brown

Maury Kaptan

Jed Strickland

Ni

Linda J. Sanchez

Al Smith

Carolyn B. Maloney

Joe E. Sweeney

Robert Work

Chris Van Holler

Donald Payne

Tony Baldini

Martin O. Sabo

Jensold Rodley

Robert L. Water

Debbie Wasserman Schultz

Barry Frank

John Lewis

Anna Durkin

Elizabeth Cummings

Albert R. Jeff

Jan Schakowsky

~~Paul H. ...~~

Karl Holt

Hans DeGroot

Lois Lacey

Bill Delahunt

Pete Stark

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Ernie Amodeo

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John W. Olver

Jim Moran

Pete Viscusi

...

Bob Miller

Robert I. K... ..

Sheila Berkley

Hayd D... ..

Colin E. Kildee

J... ..

Ellen O'Sullivan

C... ..

Gu... ..

Sh... ..

Paul L. ... ..

James R. ... ..

Frank ... ..

John ... ..

Bob Filner

Lawrence ... ..

Paul B. ... ..

Eddie Bernice Johnson

Al... ..

D... ..

Bobby Setz

Ed Markey

Bob Dean

Robert E. K

Stephen M. [unclear]

Agnes [unclear]

Grace J. Napolitano

Howard Bernau

Neil Abernethy