

Bob Dole

U. S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS



NEWS

FROM:

SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER

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CONTACT: WALT RIKER
(202) 224-5358

WALSH/IRAN-CONTRA

DOLE: TIME TO CLOSE LAVISH TAXPAYER-FUNDED
WALSH IRAN-CONTRA OPERATION;
LETTER TO THORNBURGH CALLS FOR OFFICIAL SHUTDOWN

It used to be said that the only certainties in life were death and taxes. I think we can now add the Iran-Contra investigation to that list. Since December 19, 1986, the Iran-Contra investigation led by Independent Counsel Lawrence Walsh has grinded on and on.

Each and every workday, Mr. Walsh and his staff report to work at their lavish suite of offices in one of Washington's most expensive buildings. Each and every workday, they continue to add to their thirty-to-fifty million dollar bill, payable by United States taxpayers.

I've remained quiet on this issue. I've refrained from criticizing the pace of the investigation. But yesterday's Supreme Court decision upholding the reversal of Oliver North's conviction, and Mr. Walsh's announcement that he intends to move forward, leads me to say that enough is enough. It's time that Mr. Walsh and his staff do the taxpayers a favor by closing their investigation, and removing themselves from the government payroll.

Mr. Walsh, himself, hinted as much back in September 1990, when he said that this spring might be a good time to shut down operations, "absent any new indictments."

Spring has come and gone. There are no new indictments. It is now time for history, and not the courts, to be the final judge of the Iran-Contra affair.

When Congress created the Office of Independent Counsel it also created two methods for closing up shop. The first is at the instigation of the Independent Counsel. Despite Mr. Walsh's statement of last September that this spring might be a good time to shut down operations, there is no sign that this is forthcoming.

The second method allows the court, upon the request of the Attorney General, to terminate the office on the ground that all actions "have been completed or so substantially completed that it would be appropriate for the Department of Justice to complete such investigations and prosecutions."

Today, I am sending a letter to Attorney General Thornburgh, asking him to request the court to do just that. I am confident that the Justice Department can perform the few remaining tasks of the Independent Counsel just as competently and at a much reduced cost to the taxpayers.

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