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U. S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS

NEWS

FROM:

SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER



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## POLITICS & THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT

THEY SAY THAT "JUSTICE IS BLIND." BUT AS THE CLINTON ADMINISTRATION NEARS THE END OF ITS FIRST YEAR, I AM CONCERNED THAT THE BLINDFOLD AT THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE MAY HAVE BEEN REMOVED.

WHenever there is the slightest suggestion of a miscue by a Republican, the Justice Department is ready to sweep in and take charge of the situation. But when allegations are directed at a Democrat, then the Justice Department would rather sweep things under the rug.

As THE WALL STREET JOURNAL argued Tuesday, despite the Justice Department's continuing interest in allegations of vote fraud in New Jersey, there's no such attention to what THE JOURNAL calls "a far more documented case" -- Republican allegations of massive vote irregularities in Pennsylvania's second Senate district, which determined control of the state Senate. THE JOURNAL says "U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno, who campaigned for Jim Florio, has investigators combing New Jersey looking for what appears to be phantom payoffs. No interest, though, in the documented political exploitation of Hispanics just across the river in Philadelphia." Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that THE WALL STREET JOURNAL'S November 23rd editorial "Philly Outvotes New Jersey," as well as an accompanying JOURNAL piece by John Fund, be inserted in the record following my remarks.

But the appearance of politics at the Justice Department doesn't end there. Remember the Travelgate affair, the State Department file search, the Crown Heights civil rights case, and allegations concerning other matters surrounding the present administration.

In July, after the White House issued its so-called Travelgate "management review," I wrote to Attorney General Reno requesting the appointment of a special counsel to look into the Travelgate affair. My letter, citing specific laws that may have been violated, went unanswered for two months. Then I received a response from the deputy attorney general. Meanwhile, Congress directed the General Accounting Office to conduct its own investigation of Travelgate. On September 30th, the GAO issued an interim report, claiming it was having trouble getting access to relevant documents in possession of both the Justice Department and the White House.

When it was learned that State Department staff had allegedly searched the files of Bush administration State Department officials, Senator McConnell wrote to the attorney general requesting the appointment of a special counsel. Attorney General Reno denied that request. The Justice Department has since received a State Department inspector general's report -- also requested by Republicans. The Justice Department has had that report for more than two weeks, but has made no decision on whether to proceed with a prosecution.

Senate Republicans, bolstered by an overwhelming sense-of-the-Senate vote, also urged a federal civil rights investigation into the 1991 murder of Yankel Rosenbaum during the rioting in the Crown Heights section of New York. The Justice Department resisted, some speculated, to protect the re-election effort of New York's Democrat mayor. The Justice Department now claims that it has initiated an investigation, but it is my understanding that key witnesses have not yet been contacted.

Make no mistake, the attorney general has the authority to appoint special counsels. Attorney General Reno's predecessor, William Barr, used that authority in the Inslaw case and the House Bank scandal. But the appearance of politics at the

JUSTICE DEPARTMENT DOESN'T END THERE. IN FACT, IT MAY HAVE BEGUN WITH ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO'S "MARCH MASSACRE," THE SIMULTANEOUS FIRING OF ALL 93 U.S. ATTORNEYS, IN THE VIEW OF SOME JUST TO REMOVE JAY STEPHENS, U.S. ATTORNEY FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

THE SCALES OF JUSTICE SHOULD NOT BE TAINTED BY POLITICAL DECISIONS, AND I HOPE THAT IS NOT THE CASE. BUT MANY QUESTIONS ARE BEING RAISED BY WHAT APPEARS TO BE A PARTISAN APPROACH TO THE PURSUIT OF CERTAIN MATTERS BEFORE THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE.

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