

THE TED STEVENS OPR REPORT: THE RETURN OF THE DOJ ROACH MOTEL

The long awaited, and much anticipated, DOJ Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR) Report on the misconduct in the Ted Stevens Prosecution has just been delivered to Congress, and thereafter immediately released to the public by the Senate Judiciary Committee. I know this will shock one and all but, at least as to real results, it is fairly weak tea.

Legal Times reports:

A Justice Department internal investigation of the botched prosecution of Ted Stevens concluded two prosecutors committed reckless professional misconduct and should be sanctioned through forced time off without pay.

DOJ officials recommended Joseph Bottini be suspended without pay for 40 days and James Goeke be suspended for 15 days without pay. DOJ did not find that either prosecutor acted intentionally to violate ethics rules, a finding that is contrary to a parallel criminal investigation. Bottini and Goeke have the option to appeal the misconduct finding to the Merit System Protection Board.

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Department officials said Bottini and Goeke failed to disclose information a chief government witness, Bill Allen, provided to investigators and prosecutors at a meeting in 2008, before Stevens was charged. Allen's credibility was central to the prosecution case that Stevens concealed gifts and other items on U.S. Senate financial disclosure

forms.

OPR did not make any professional misconduct findings against any of the other Stevens prosecutors, including William Welch II, Brenda Morris and Edward Sullivan. OPR, however, concluded that Morris, then a supervisor in the Public Integrity Section, exercised poor judgment by failing to supervise "certain aspects of the disclosure process."

A special counsel who conducted a parallel probe of the Stevens team, after the case was dismissed in April 2009, did not recommend criminal charges against any of the Stevens prosecution team.

However, the lawyer, Henry "Hank" Schuelke III, concluded that Goeke and Bottini committed intentional misconduct in concealing exculpatory information. The two prosecutors dispute that finding.

Yeah, that about sums it up.

Cover letter to the Senate Judiciary Committee

Here are all the relevant documents (note: the pdf on the report itself is huge – 672 pages):

Office of Professional Responsibility Report

Bottini Decision

Bottini Disciplinary Proposal

Bottini Response

Goeke Decision

Goeke Disciplinary Proposal

Goeke Response

Goeke Response Appendix

A little more than two years ago I wrote about

the inherent worthlessness of the OPR at DOJ:

Most governmental agencies have independent Inspectors General which operate independently of the agency leadership, have jurisdiction of the entire agency including legal counsel, and thus have credibility as somewhat neutral and detached evaluators and voices. Not so the DOJ, who has arrogated upon themselves the sole right to sit in judgment of themselves. This action to grab the exclusive authority for themselves and exclude the independent IG was first accomplished by Attorney General Order 1931-94 dated November 8, 1994 subsequently codified into the Code of Federal Regulations and reinforced through section 308 of the 2002 Department of Justice Reauthorization Act. Just in time for the war on terror legal shenanigans!

Go back and read that post again, I am too tired to write it again and nothing has changed. What a load of bunk the Stevens OPR Report is. Some harsh words for sure, but, as to actual accountability – a rap on the knuckles with a foam ruler.

Ted Stevens lost his Senate seat these twits get an unpaid vacation.

The OPR is STILL The Roach Motel.