

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

August 2, 1991

Honorable Dick Cheney
Secretary of Defense
The Pentagon
Washington, New York 20301

Dear Mr. Secretary:

Please find enclosed a copy of an April 30 letter to Donald Atwood, along with a response to this letter from Leon Kniaz, Director of Personnel and Security, dated May 28.

We are writing you now because of our growing concern about the treatment Richard M. Barlow, a civilian employee in the Department of Defense, has received from DOD, and because we find Mr. Kniaz's May 28 letter inadequate and even troubling.

Mr. Kniaz has written that from "this office's viewpoint, Mr. Barlow's case is resolved." While technically this may be correct, such a statement is rather beside the point inasmuch as other components of DOD -- notably the Office of the Inspector General -- are still very much involved in Barlow's case. The fact of the matter is that, notwithstanding Mr. Kniaz's somewhat disingenuous disclaimer, DOD is still very interested in Barlow.

We should also point out that Mr. Kniaz's claim that "extraordinary steps were taken to assist" Barlow does not conform to the facts that have come to our attention. We urge you to consult with your Inspector General to corroborate this.

Finally, it is our considered judgment that Mr. Kniaz's statement that "all actions" regarding Barlow taken by DOD were done only in Barlow's "best interest" is patently false.

Accordingly, we are writing to ask that you personally look into Barlow's case as a first step toward resolving this troubling business as quickly and fairly as possible. It is our belief that Barlow, for reasons that are not clear, has not been dealt with in an entirely aboveboard manner, and that both his interests and those of DOD dictate a timely resolution of his case.

For instance, we note that in August 1989, personnel and security actions of a highly serious nature were initiated against

Barlow, arising out of allegations that he was incompetent and mentally unstable. Yet, DOD had promoted him only weeks earlier, and his files contain a number of commendations from senior officials in various agencies and departments of the Executive branch, including your own department.


We also note that last year DOD formally offered Barlow \$20,000 plus up to \$6,000 in legal fees as an inducement to agree to a final resolution of his case, and that this offer was subsequently withdrawn.


We would appreciate your assigning one of your most capable people to work with Barlow and his counsel in order to resolve this case quickly and in a manner that both reflects the best interests of the Department of Defense, and takes into account the personal, professional, and financial costs Barlow has incurred as a result of what appears to have been rather questionable activities on the part of some of your subordinates.


Based on discussions with your Inspector General staff, we believe the allegations being investigated by your Inspector General could take some time to resolve. Meanwhile, Barlow's personal situation, involving his career and financial concerns, is left in limbo. Although we understand these issues are intertwined, we would like to see them treated separately insofar as that is possible, in order that Barlow may resume his professional life without having to await the conclusion of the DOD investigations.

We look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,


NICHOLAS MAVROULES
Chairman, Subcommittee on
Investigations


GERRY SIKORSKI
Chairman, Subcommittee on the
Civil Service


STEPHEN J. SOLARZ
Chairman, Subcommittee on Asian
and Pacific Affairs