



June 27, 2011

The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Mr. President:

I join the calls from both sides of the political aisle in support of the commutation of Jonathan Pollard's sentence to time served.

Not only have I researched the facts associated with Jonathan Pollard's sentence, I had the opportunity to meet with Jonathan Pollard and heard directly from him his remorse for his actions. I am aware that he sent you a recent personal letter of remorse as well. It is well known that the average sentence for the crime that he committed is 2-4 years. Jonathan Pollard is now in his 26th year in prison.

Jonathan Pollard has now served longer in jail than the prosecution recommendation to the judge under their binding plea bargain arrangement with Pollard. What message does this send to our justice system when the prosecution makes a plea bargain and gets a person to cooperate and then, according to Federal Appeals Court Judge Stephen Williams, improperly convinced the Judge to ignore the plea bargain (through affidavits the Prosecutors submitted from former Secretary of Defense Casper Weinberger) and give Pollard a life sentence that contradicted the plea bargain. Williams characterized Pollard's sentence as a fundamental miscarriage of Justice and I agree. To be sure, such actions by the prosecution in the Pollard case significantly hurts the credibility and integrity of our justice system. Moreover, it is a future deterrence to those who might now reconsider a wish to agree to a plea bargain by cooperating with the U.S. Government, an act that could thus jeopardize our national security. It is therefore not surprising that significant people from the intelligence community who know the classified information of the Pollard case - like former CIA Director James Woolsey and former head of Senate Intelligence Senator Dennis DeConcini - support Pollard's release. Further, it is telling that those in Congress with military backgrounds, like Arizona Senator John McCain, and Congressmen Alan West and Michael Grimm, also favor Pollard's release.

I note that Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu has publicly expressed remorse for Israel's actions concerning Pollard and that he has committed Israel to not repeat such actions; more so, they have not done so. Israel is an ally and we need to treat them as an ally. An injustice can occur when a person who commits a crime is punished in a manner completely disproportionate to said crime as is the case with Pollard.

Undeniably, Pollard deserved to be punished, but none can reasonably argue that his continued incarceration is not unjust. It needs to be ended. Mr. President, please give urgent consideration to the request from both sides of the political aisle to commute Jonathan Pollard's sentence to time served. Every day of a delay further exacerbates an injustice.

Matt Salmon
Former Member of Congress