

PSYCHOLOGISTS FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

January 30, 2014

Eric H. Holder Jr.
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530-0001

cc: Erlinda Hernandez
Federal Bureau of Prisons
Residential Reentry Office
PO Box 7000
Butner, NC 27509

cc: Charles Samuels
Director of Federal Bureau of Prisons
320 First St. NW
Washington, DC 20534

Dear Mr. Holder:

Psychologists for Social Responsibility writes here to urge you to allow John Kiriakou (inmate 79637-083 at Loretto) to serve the last nine months of his sentence in a halfway house, so that he may resume productive contributions to society.

Mr. Kiriakou was sentenced to 30 months in prison. In 2008, after leaving the CIA, he confirmed the name of a former CIA colleague to a reporter writing a book on the Agency. The name was not made public as a result of the confirmation, and Mr. Kiriakou, under threat of more severe terms and financial ruin, pled guilty to violating the Intelligence Identities Protection Act. He was sentenced to 30 months in prison.

We believe Kiriakou was prosecuted because he spoke out against the Agency's practices. Speaking out, in such circumstances, is a rational, ethical and indeed heroic decision. In this way, among others, Kiriakou is a patriotic American. In the 14 years Mr. Kiriakou was in the CIA he received 10 Exceptional Performance Awards, the Sustained Superior Performance Award, the Counterterrorism Service Medal, and the State Department's Meritorious Honor Award.

More important, Mr. Kiriakou refused the CIA's offer to train him in "enhanced interrogation techniques." He was never known to authorize or engage in techniques that constitute torture, and wrote at one point *"There are some things we should not do even in the name of national security."* He was the first to confirm the U.S. use of waterboarding. And despite all, he is the only person to be prosecuted in relation to the U.S. torture program.

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The just treatment of Mr. Kiriakou particularly concerns us as psychologists. When the government prosecutes the whistleblower, the primary aim is to frighten other potential truth tellers. We all lose as a result – we lose those willing to stand up for what is right in the face of adversity and punishment. As a nation we lose our commitment to our higher values.

Therefore, as health professionals working for social responsibility and justice we write this letter as a reminder that courage, altruism and a willingness to risk speaking important, unpleasant truths are attributes that should be honored for the good of our society. It is not easy to speak out in any institution, particularly the CIA, and work toward more ethical systems, consistent with our Constitution. Our organization respects and values the decency and courage of public protest.

Mr. Kiriakou, as an honorable American, does not deserve to be made an example of wrongdoing. We ask that he be granted at least nine months of halfway house time so that he may begin his life again as a valuable member of society and as a father to his five children.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this message, *

The Steering Committee of Psychologists for Social Responsibility

*Historical details drawn mainly from reports prepared by the Government Accountability Project, Washington DC

NOTE: To contact PsySR by U.S. mail or courier service, please use this address:

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