
From: Weich, Ron (OLA)
To: Richardson, Margaret (OAG)
Sent: 9/12/2011 12:50:29 PM
Subject: FW: Issa comments

From: Schmalzer, Tracy (OPA)
Sent: Monday, September 12, 2011 12:31 PM
To: Weich, Ron (OLA); Reich, Steven (ODAG); Grindler, Gary (OAG)
Subject: Issa comments

Further confirmation that he's frustrated by the lack of traction, but this is outrageous even for Issa ...

Issa: Holder 'so inept he may be a danger' as attorney general

By Justin Sink - 09/12/11 11:10 AM ET

Rep. Darrell Issa (R-Calif.) said that Attorney General Eric Holder is "so inept that he may be a danger as attorney general" and that President Obama should consider removing him from office.

Issa made the comments on the Laura Ingraham show while commenting about the controversial "Fast and Furious" gun-tracking program.

"He doesn't want to admit that it was felony-stupid," Issa said of the operation, which was run by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), which allowed assault-type weapons to be illegally purchased and smuggled across the border.

The Department of Justice was monitoring the weapons, but they have turned up at crime scenes across Mexico. Two weapons that were sold under the program were found at the murder scene of Border Patrol Agent Brian Terry last December.

Acting ATF Director Kenneth Melson was removed from his position late last month as the result of an investigation pushed by Issa, chairman of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee. But Issa believes that Attorney General Holder either signed off on the operation or was "willfully ignorant."

"The only way the attorney general didn't know is that he made sure he didn't want to know," Issa said.

The congressman said the scandal was "worse than Iran-Contra," the program under which senior officials in the Reagan administration secretly sold arms to Iran to fund Nicaraguan rebels. Both arms sales to Iran and funding of the Contras was explicitly prohibited by law, and Reagan national security advisers Oliver North and John Poindexter were convicted of violating the law.

"What we need is an admission that it was wrong ... and then we need assurance that it won't happen again," Issa said.

For his part, Holder has admitted that the Fast and Furious program "was clearly a flawed enforcement effort," but denied that he or any of his aides had knowledge of the operation.

"The notion that this reaches into the upper levels of the Justice Department is something that at this point I don't think is supported by the facts and I think once we examine it and once the facts are revealed we'll see that's not the

case," Holder said last Wednesday.

The Department of Justice has launched an internal investigation to look into the matter, in addition to the one led by Issa.

Holder also defended the decision to transfer Melson into the DOJ's Office of Legal Policy, rather than fire him outright.

"Ken has served this department well over the course of some three decades," Holder said.

Source:

<http://thehill.com/blogs/blog-briefing-room/news/180867-issa-holder-qso-inept-he-may-be-a-dangerq-as-attorney-general>