

Patrick Fitzgerald as a special counsel in charge of the case. Mr. Fitzgerald is a highly qualified, professional prosecutor who carried out his responsibilities as charged.

This case has generated significant commentary and debate. Critics of the investigation have argued that a special counsel should not have been appointed, nor should the investigation have been pursued after the Justice Department learned who leaked Ms. Plame's name to columnist Robert Novak. Furthermore, the critics point out that neither Mr. Libby nor anyone else has been charged with violating the Intelligence Identities Protection Act or the Espionage Act, which were the original subjects of the investigation. Finally, critics say the punishment does not fit the crime: Mr. Libby was a first-time offender with years of exceptional public service and was handed a harsh sentence based in part on allegations never presented to the jury.

Others point out that a jury of citizens weighed all the evidence and listened to all the testimony and found Mr. Libby guilty of perjury and obstructing justice. They argue, correctly, that our entire system of justice relies on people telling the truth. And if a person does not tell the truth, particularly if he serves in government and holds the public trust, he must be held accountable. They say that had Mr. Libby only told the truth, he would have never been indicted in the first place.

Both critics and defenders of this investigation have made important points. I have made my own evaluation. In preparing for the decision I am announcing today, I have carefully weighed these arguments and the circumstances surrounding this case.

Mr. Libby was sentenced to 30 months of prison, 2 years of probation, and a \$250,000 fine. In making the sentencing decision, the district court rejected the advice of the probation office, which recommended a lesser sentence, and the consideration of factors that could have led to a sentence of home confinement or probation.

I respect the jury's verdict. But I have concluded that the prison sentence given to Mr. Libby is excessive. Therefore, I am commuting the portion of Mr. Libby's sentence

that required him to spend 30 months in prison.

My decision to commute his prison sentence leaves in place a harsh punishment for Mr. Libby. The reputation he gained through his years of public service and professional work in the legal community is forever damaged. His wife and young children have also suffered immensely. He will remain on probation. The significant fines imposed by the judge will remain in effect. The consequences of his felony conviction on his former life as a lawyer, public servant, and private citizen will be long-lasting.

The Constitution gives the President the power of clemency to be used when he deems it to be warranted. It is my judgment that a commutation of the prison term in Mr. Libby's case is an appropriate exercise of this power.

Proclamation 8159—Grant of Executive Clemency

July 2, 2007

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Whereas Lewis Libby was convicted in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia in the case *United States v. Libby*, Crim. No. 05-394 (RBW), for which a sentence of 30 months' imprisonment, 2 years' supervised release, a fine of \$250,000, and a special assessment of \$400 was imposed on June 22, 2007;

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, pursuant to my powers under Article II, Section 2, of the Constitution, do hereby commute the prison terms imposed by the sentence upon the said Lewis Libby to expire immediately, leaving intact and in effect the two-year term of supervised release, with all its conditions, and all other components of the sentence.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this second day of July, in the year of our Lord two thousand and seven, and

of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:34 a.m., July 5, 2007]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on July 6.

Remarks Following a Visit With Wounded Troops at Walter Reed Army Medical Center and an Exchange With Reporters
July 3, 2007

The President. Thank you very much. General, thank you very much for your hospitality. It's a true honor to come to Walter Reed to be able to see the docs and nurses, the physical therapists who are working with our wounded soldiers. The care here is remarkable. There has been some bureaucratic redtape issues in the past that the military is working hard to cure. But when it comes time to healing broken bodies, this is a fabulous place.

I am constantly amazed at the character and courage of those who wear our uniform. And that's no more vividly displayed than here in this place of healing. I want to thank our soldiers, sailors, and marines, airmen, coast guards men and women for their service to the country. I thank their families. As we head into the Fourth of July, we're a fortunate nation to have people who are willing to volunteer in the face of danger to help secure this country in the long run.

I'll be glad to answer two questions from you.

I. Lewis Libby

Q. Mr. President, are you willing to rule out that you will eventually pardon Scooter Libby?

The President. First of all, I had to make a very difficult decision. I weighed this decision carefully. I thought that the jury verdict should stand. I felt the punishment was severe, and so I made a decision that would commute his sentence but leave in place a serious fine and probation. As to the future, I rule nothing in and nothing out.

Q. Mr. President, Federal sentencing guidelines call for jail time in these kinds of cases of perjury and obstruction of justice. Why do you feel otherwise, and are you worried that this decision sends a signal that you won't go to jail if you lie to the FBI?

The President. I took this decision very seriously on Mr. Libby. I considered his background, his service to the country, as well as the jury verdict. I felt like the jury verdict ought to stand, and I felt like some of the punishments that the judge determined were adequate should stand. But I felt like the 30-month sentencing was severe. I made a judgment, a considered judgment that I believe is the right decision to make in this case, and I stand by it.

Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:08 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Maj. Gen. Eric B. Schoomaker, USA, commanding general, North Atlantic Regional Medical Command and Walter Reed Army Medical Center.

Joint Declaration by President George W. Bush and President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia on Nuclear Energy and Nonproliferation Joint Actions
July 3, 2007

We are determined to play an active role in making the advantages of the peaceful use of nuclear energy available to a wide range of interested States, in particular developing countries, provided the common goal of prevention of proliferation of nuclear weapons is achieved. To this end, we intend, together with others, to initiate a new format for enhanced cooperation.

Bearing this in mind, we acknowledge with satisfaction the initialing of the bilateral Agreement between the Government of the Russian Federation and the Government of the United States of America for cooperation in the field of peaceful use of nuclear energy. We share the view that this Agreement will provide an essential basis for the expansion of Russian-U.S. cooperation in the field of peaceful use of nuclear energy and expect this document to be signed and brought into