

LURITA DOAN, ROUND 2043: DAVIS V. BLOCH EDITION

Since I seem to be the only one interested in Lurita Doan now that Bush has apparently refused to fire her for clear Hatch Act violations, I thought I'd point out the interesting tidbit that shows up in a profile of Scott Bloch, the guy in charge of Office of Special Counsel, the office that carries out Hatch Act violations that Bush studiously ignores.

Meanwhile, the Doan matter is breeding some ironies. Before Bloch officially released his report, The Washington Post's Web site obtained a leaked copy in May. Rep. Thomas M. Davis III of Virginia, the top Republican on the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, contended the leak denied Doan any effective chance of answering her accusers. Davis arranged to have Bloch brought before the committee last month to ask if he authorized the leak, which Bloch denied doing.

Davis previously had been a Bloch defender and had praised the OSC for dramatically cutting back its backlog of personnel cases. But at the hearing, the congressman blew up at the witness, explaining that he'd obtained a personal e-mail by Bloch describing Davis as "acting like Doan's defense counsel" when she testified before the Oversight committee.

Davis then promised to wage what might be called a Blochian crusade: He announced his intention to corral all politically sensitive e-mails Bloch may have sent from his personal account that referred in any manner to Doan or other federal lawmakers. Davis's chief of

staff, DavidMarin, says his boss will punish any failure to comply by urging thecommittee to pursue contempt-of-Congress charges. In other words, ScottBloch, the Bush administration's in-house Hatch Act enforcer in theU.S. attorneys scandal, could wind up facing the same charges nowconfronting the high-profile noncompliant congressional witnesses inthe case, White House Chief of Staff Joshua B. Bolten and former WhiteHouse counsel Harriet Miers. [my emphasis]

A couple of points. Davis is almost certainly going to be running against Mark Warner to replace John Warner in the Senate. Can we get a little more serious about painting Davis as the Bush mouthpiece he is serving as in Government Reform? I mean, seriously, if not for the yeoman's work Davis did in pretending Doan was the victim, it'd be a lot harder for Bush to now sit on the recommendation to fire her, as he is doing. Not to mention the way that Davis has leaked information about Susan Ralston's testimony useful to Karl Rove.

Secondly, while the move to get "politically sensitive e-mails ... that referred ... to Doan or other federal lawmakers" is not that far beyond the pale of Waxman, consider the kinds of things Davis is likely to get: emails about Doan, certainly—though the irony here is that, at one point, Bloch spiked the more negative tone of the Doan report, so those emails might actually backfire on Davis. But in spite of what she might wish, Doan is not a lawmaker. So Davis is likely culling emails that include lawmakers plus political appointees. Does that plus include Karl Rove, the big target of Bloch's current investigation? Is Davis also sneaking a peek into Bloch's investigation into Turdblossom? As I pointed out, Davis seems to have leaked information useful to Rove in the past—is he planning on doing it again?

But you know who **is** a lawmaker, one of the few

lawmakers involved in this Lurita Doan scandal?

That's right. Tom Davis.

John Bolton would be proud.