

DUKE CUNNINGHAM RAILS AGAINST LEADERSHIP FAILURES AND SCANDALS

Okay, it's been a busy day. But I thought I'd throw out this little tidbit just to lighten your afternoon.

On page 86 of this FOIA packet, a CIA MFR from a May 6, 2004 briefing on the Abu Ghriab scandal records Duke Cunningham's outrage that DOD had not informed the House Intelligence Committee of the looming Abu Ghraib story. He wailed about how scandals cause a stain on the United States.

Other scandals. The pages here in Congress. Enron. The Catholic Church. In all these cases, the focus isn't on the good but on the bad. There is a stain on the US as a result of this and that is what has us so upset. Leadership is at the point of contact. Here, they seem to have lost all attention to detail. Bureaucracies tend to prevent immediate action. There are exceptions to the chain of command. When I was a wing commander in the military, I told my people to go to me directly and speedily in certain cases. They included sexual harrassment. Radical prejudice. Spouse and child abuse. Drug abuse. In other words, any issues that could prove critical to the reputation of the unit, the service or our country. Twice, I shut down my squadron to address such issues. We are upset by the failure here to notify.

To which Jane Harman responded,

Hear, hear!

Slightly over a year after Cunningham made this impassioned speech, news began to break that Cunningham was selling himself to Defense contractors for—among other goodies—a yacht named the Duke Stir.

But boy can he make a nice speech, in the privacy of a classified briefing.