

PATRICK FITZGERALD RESIGNS

For better (he's always been an aggressive, though usually fair, prosecutor) or for worse (I really believe he did try to hold Dick Cheney accountable for exposing Valerie Plame's identity), Patrick Fitzgerald has resigned. And he's a more honest prosecutor than a lot of the ones DOJ has these days.

From DOJ:

Attorney General Eric Holder issued the following statement today on the resignation of U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois Patrick Fitzgerald:

"Throughout his distinguished career as a prosecutor, United States Attorney Patrick Fitzgerald has served the American people and the citizens of Illinois with the utmost integrity and a steadfast commitment to the cause of justice.

"From his early consequential years in New York City confronting the terrorist threat to his strong leadership of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Illinois, Pat has rightly earned a reputation over these last 24 years as a prosecutor's prosecutor, overseeing significant cases involving public corruption, international terrorism and terrorism financing, corporate fraud, organized crime, and violent crime.

"A hallmark of Pat's tenure has been his personal commitment to the Department's mission and his willingness to accept the call of duty – whenever it came and whatever it required. In 2003, he was appointed as special counsel in the investigation into the disclosure of the

identity of a covert employee of the Central Intelligence Agency that resulted in the indictment of I. Lewis "Scooter" Libby, then chief of staff and national security advisor to the Vice President. He also served as lead counsel in the trial, which resulted in Mr. Libby's conviction on charges of perjury and obstruction of justice. In 2010, I appointed Pat as Special Attorney to supervise the investigation that resulted in the pending indictment, in the Eastern District of Virginia, of former CIA officer John Kiriakou for allegedly repeatedly disclosing classified information, including the name of a covert CIA officer and information revealing the role of another CIA employee in classified activities.

"Over the years, he has gained the trust of two presidents and the unwavering confidence of four Attorneys General, and I am deeply grateful to him for his service and his friendship over the years."

I'll update as I learn more. Though I will say the timing—just after the crackdown on the NATO protestors as terrorists—is curious.

Update: Per CBS (NDIL's announcements are blogged), he has no immediate employment plans. His resignation will be effective June 30.