

COMMUTING BLAGO'S WILDLY EXCESSIVE SENTENCE WOULD BE RIGHT FOR TRUMP TO DO

Another poster at the Emptywheel blog,



okay, it may be Emptywheel herself, has today posted a very interesting take, and I think a good one, on the intersection of Jim Comey, Pat Fitzgerald and Rod Blagojevich.

If Trump were to commute Blago's sentence....it would be one of the few pardon power actions he has taken that would be justified.

The other was, obviously, the woman Kim Kardashian talked him into commuting.

Don't get me started about governance by reality show/sex tape idiots like Kimye, but still that was good.

Here is the thing though. Hate on Rod Blagojevich all you want. Laugh at him all you want. Sure, all that is good and proper.

What was not, however, was his sentence. Judge James Zagel got a bug up his ass and sentenced Blago to twice as much time as was possibly appropriate for his purported offenses. There is a long history of Illinois Governors, criminal charges, and prison. But no sentence remotely like Zagel gave Blago.

Then there was Bob McDonnell of Virginia, who ended up not ever serving a day on things that were, mostly, more obvious pay to play corruption than Blago. Also, there was Don

Siegelman, who arguably met potential charging elements, even if they were mostly innocuous acts, and who was only ever charged because of a Rove/Cheney effort to insure the same. Siegelman got just over six years.

Don't get me started about Bob Menendez. The point being, even if Blago was corrupt, needed to be found guilty, and needed to be sentenced....The sentence of 14 years Zagel gave Mr. Blagojevich was insane and ludicrous.

As big of a narcissistic and useless asshole as Trump is, he would be right to commute the insanely over sentenced punishment Zagel gave to Rod Blagojevich.

People, especially the more liberal than not among us, constantly scream for criminal justice reform. Abolish cash bail (a good thought, but one with far different and deeper implications than you think as Scott Greenfield at Simple Justice has noted), less incarceration, shorter sentences, better programs for those incarcerated. End the death penalty. Less solitary confinement. Etc. All good things.

But part and parcel of all of it is recognizing crazy stupid sentences too. Blago is pretty much a joke of a historical character. Fine. He was never Public Enemy Number One either. His sentence from Zagel was outrageous. If Trump is willing to commute it, he should, and that should be cheered.

But, because of pushback from the very same people that usually scream and squawk, and rightfully so, about criminal justice reform when it is not one of their pet pariahs, i.e. people on the left and, here, Blago, Trump will certainly chicken out from doing the right thing. Because Trump doesn't know the facts, and he is a pussy that is too easily grabbed by Republicans and, in this case, bullshit liberals too.

Free Blago. It needs to be done.