



MISCONDUCT ABOUNDS AT THE IRS - INSIDE SOURCES

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"I have no words." That was the comment by U.S. District Court Judge Ana Reyes regarding the Department of Justice charging IRS leaker Charles Littlejohn with one count of unauthorized disclosure of tax information.

Judge Reyes made that exasperated comment on January 29 at the sentencing hearing for Littlejohn, who had gained notoriety by leaking the tax return information of Donald Trump and then following up with the leaking of tax return information on more than 1,000 individuals to the New York Times and ProPublica.

Justice could have charged Littlejohn with numerous felony counts of unauthorized disclosure and obstruction but charged him with only one felony count with a maximum sentence of five years.

Judge Reyes, to her credit, sentenced Littlejohn to the full five years. However, Justice has extended every courtesy and break to Littlejohn throughout the case, limiting his exposure.

Like other Americans, I suspect that Judge Reyes does not realize just how corrupt the federal tax system has become. The system has become absolutely corrupt because there is absolutely no accountability. Specifically, the IRS has become utterly corrupt because there is no check on that agency's misconduct.

The IRS inspector general (TIGTA), theoretically, serves as a "watchdog," but in reality protects IRS management with junkyard dog ferocity.

In 2017, I provided TIGTA with the names of nine witnesses to substantiate IRS misconduct and corruption. Not one of those witnesses was ever contacted. Regarding the collusion between TIGTA and the IRS, I asked five of the witnesses directly if they had ever been contacted by TIGTA. All five laughed because the question was so absurd.

I discussed TIGTA in 2017 and 2018 with the chief investigator for the House Ways and Means Committee. She told me that TIGTA conducts "substandard investigations" and that TIGTA executives "lie to (her) all the time."

In April 2023, I asked the staff of Rep. Rob Wittman, R-Va., to make a formal inquiry to TIGTA, asking the "watchdog" why it never contacted the nine witnesses. It seemed like a reasonable question. TIGTA has stonewalled Wittman's staff and, as of recently, has not returned their phone calls. The IRS "watchdog" cannot be bothered to return phone calls from a congressman's staff.

Justice's coddling of Littlejohn and the efforts of TIGTA to bury misconduct are two sides of the same problem. There are no safeguards to

protect the public from IRS abuse and misconduct.



The IRS routinely handles routine matters and then congratulates itself on its ethics. However, the second there is a competing interest or pushback, the IRS goes straight to Plan B. It will lie, cheat and break the law with impunity.

When the IRS retaliated against me for being a whistleblower, they invented phony conversations that never occurred. The IRS backdated signatures when it failed to execute penalty authorizations in easement cases. When the IRS ran into problems in a line of cases, they bullied elderly taxpayers into improper settlements and denigrated World War II veterans as “twits.” When an IRS employee stumbled upon a possible suppression of evidence in tea party cases, IRS management and TIGTA tore her apart.

The IRS engages in such lawless activity for a simple reason: because it can. I was an IRS attorney for 30 years, and I used to be proud to work there. It used to be an honorable job. However, the agency’s lack of safeguards and accountability has caught up with it, and the corruption and misconduct has metastasized.

I have spoken out for years, but ultimately I’m just a bird dog. Genuine reform of the IRS, instead of just throwing money at it, is a political project, and I fear there is no will or constituency for such action. And that’s a shame.