

RELEASE IN PART
B6

From: Mills, Cheryl D <MillsCD@state.gov>
Sent: Saturday, September 05, 2009 7:45 AM
To: H
Subject: Fw: New POGO story - forced resignation of whistleblower

Fyi

From: Seiden, Maya D
To: Crowley, Philip J; Mills, Cheryl D; 'haroldhongjukoh [redacted]'; Thessin, James H
Cc: Lew, Jacob J; Verma, Richard R; Polt, Michael C; Kennedy, Patrick F; Boswell, Eric J; Wood, Robert A (PACE); Feldman, Daniel F
Sent: Fri Sep 04 16:11:07 2009
Subject: RE: New POGO story - forced resignation of whistleblower

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From POGO's website blog: A positive take on our actions thus far, as characterized by the remaining guards in Kabul.

<http://pogoblog.typepad.com/pogo/2009/09/more-news-from-guards-on-the-ground-in-kabul.html>

More News From Guards on the Ground in Kabul

A quick update from the ground in Kabul: we've heard that guards at the U.S. Embassy in Afghanistan are very pleased with the State Department's actions so far, with one source saying guards feel as if they've been "liberated from prison." State Department investigators have been conducting thorough, respectful interviews and are not asking guards if they shared information with POGO. The right people are being fired and it looks like we're on the way to restoring an atmosphere of professionalism at the U.S. Embassy.

The contractor who was forced out of his position, by the way, was asked to leave before the State Department arrived on the scene. More as it comes in.

-- Bryan Rahija

From: Crowley, Philip J
Sent: Friday, September 04, 2009 2:22 PM
To: Seiden, Maya D; Mills, Cheryl D; 'haroldhongjukoh [redacted]'; Thessin, James H
Cc: Lew, Jacob J; Verma, Richard R; Polt, Michael C; Kennedy, Patrick F; Boswell, Eric J; Wood, Robert A (PACE); Feldman, Daniel F
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We are now in a battle with POGO for ownership of this issue. What the Embassy today did was quite effective – maintaining the initiative and outlining decisive actions taken. We need to continue this trend, forcing POGO to react to what we are doing rather than the other way around. The Embassy statement does include removal of supervisors. I wonder from a contracting and legal standpoint how to react if asked to POGO's suggestion that supervisors are not allowed to work for another contractor. While people have a right to work, I believe we get to review a contractor's management team and instruct them on who is acceptable or not, right? I don't necessarily buy into POGO's Nuremberg defense, that people are exonerated because they were forced to debase themselves. But I see the release below as good news, that we have established momentum on the issue. We should retain it even though it will become more challenging as Congress returns next week.

PJ

From: Seiden, Maya D
Sent: Friday, September 04, 2009 2:10 PM
To: Mills, Cheryl D; 'haroldhongjukoh' [redacted] Thessin, James H
Cc: Lew, Jacob J; Verma, Richard R; Polt, Michael C; Kennedy, Patrick F; Boswell, Eric J; Crowley, Philip J
Subject: RE: New POGO story - forced resignation of whistleblower

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POGO released the following statement on their website today:

Statement by Danielle Brian, Executive Director, Project On Government Oversight:

"POGO is pleased that the State Department has finally taken decisive steps to bring the Kabul security guard scandal under control. We remain very concerned, however, with certain elements of this action. POGO has no solid information of the identities of those reported to have been removed. We have been told people are being fired for simply being in the photographs. We do know a number of those were unwilling participants.

We also want to hear that the supervisors who were responsible for this debacle are being held fully accountable and not simply allowed to resign and go to another contractor."

<http://www.pogo.org/pogo-files/alerts/contract-oversight/co-gp-20090904.html>

From: Mills, Cheryl D
Sent: Friday, September 04, 2009 5:45 AM
To: 'haroldhongjukoh' [redacted] Thessin, James H
Cc: Lew, Jacob J; Seiden, Maya D; Verma, Richard R; Polt, Michael C; Kennedy, Patrick F; Boswell, Eric J; Crowley, Philip J
Subject: Fw: New POGO story - forced resignation of whistleblower

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Fyi

From: Seiden, Maya D
To: Mills, Cheryl D
Sent: Thu Sep 03 21:00:52 2009
Subject: New POGO story - forced resignation of whistleblower

POGO posted the attached on their website, claiming that the whistleblower who exposed the guard scandal was forced to resign.

<http://www.pogo.org/pogo-files/alerts/contract-oversight/co-gp-20090903.html>

One of the whistleblowers who helped expose the guard scandal at the U.S. Embassy in Kabul has just been forced to resign after his company—whose client is ArmorGroup, North America (AGNA)—came to believe that he had reached out to D.C. for assistance. The company told POGO that the whistleblower's resignation was voluntary.

However, information obtained by the Project On Government Oversight (POGO) strongly suggests he was pressured into resigning to avoid being fired, an action often referred to as constructive dismissal.

POGO is deeply concerned about the action allegedly taken against the whistleblower. He is being forced out at a time

when three of the supervisors responsible for allowing the misconduct at Camp Sullivan have been allowed to quietly resign and escape accountability. As per our letter to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton of September 1, 2009, POGO calls on the State Department to take immediate action to protect both the physical and employment security of whistleblowers who have stepped forward with allegations of serious misconduct involving ArmorGroup, North America and others.