

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 17, 2008

Hon. Michael W. Wynne
Secretary of the Air Force
1000 Air Force Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20330

COMMITTEES:
ARMED SERVICES
COMMERCE, SCIENCE AND
TRANSPORTATION
HOMELAND SECURITY
AND GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS
INDIAN AFFAIRS
SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING
PERMANENT SUBCOMMITTEE
ON INVESTIGATIONS

Dear Secretary Wynne,

It was with great dismay that I read today's *Washington Post* article entitled "Report Finds Air Force Officers Steered \$50 Million Contract." As you know, the article details undue command influence as well as command improprieties that appear to have risen all the way to the level of the senior uniformed official in your service, Air Force Chief of Staff General T. Michael "Buzz" Moseley. The result of the improprieties was the award of a \$50 million services contract to a crony of numerous Air Force General officers. Based on the reports included in the *Post* of the extent of accountability for those involved in this contract award, I am concerned that there has been insufficient punishment and a lack of corrective actions taken. I seek your immediate attention to this matter.

I have repeatedly expressed my displeasure with the level of accountability that has been meted out on those associated with contracting improprieties – both those within the military departments and those working for the contractors. I have expressed similar displeasure with the particular lack of accountability for senior military commanders under whose watch misconduct has taken place – often, I believe, a direct result of lax and arrogant command climates that create a culture of impunity for contracting laws and, even worse, for the American taxpayer dollar.

It seems to me that a corrosive command climate that leads to major wrongdoing is something a commander should be held accountable for nearly in the same way as direct illegality – at minimum, the loss of the privilege of command, if not the privilege of continued uniformed service, is warranted. In this case, there appears a mix of direct misconduct by the officers and the establishment of command climates that engendered additional wrongdoing.

I seek additional information from the Air Force as to the circumstances under which this \$50 million contract was conceived of, competed and ultimately awarded. More importantly, I want to more thoroughly understand who has been held accountable for the misconduct and in what ways. So long as the Department of Defense continues to hold harmless the very leaders who establish the conditions under which American taxpayer dollars are spent and all too often wasted, the sorts of unacceptable circumstances as has been reported with this contract will continue.

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As a final note, I am also deeply troubled by the tenor of General Moseley's comments about this matter. General Moseley expressed a wish that those who noticed improprieties in the process for the award of this contract had said "stop." The people who failed to show courage in this case were not those being pressured, but the commanders who bullied them.

I look forward to hearing from you further about this matter and to your aggressive handling of the situation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Claire McCaskill". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Claire" being more prominent and the last name "McCaskill" following in a similar style.

CLAIRE MCCASKILL
United States Senator