



Homeland Security

November 19, 2004

Robert P. Schuster, Esquire
250 Veronica Lane, Suite 204
P.O. Box 13160
Jackson, Wyoming 83002

Dear Mr. Schuster:

Your letter of October 19, 2004, to Inspector General Ervin, received in our office on October 27, 2004, has been referred to me for action.

Your letter discusses a telephone call on August 25, 2004, between Steven Kanstoroom and two employees of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Office of Inspector (OIG), Eric Banks, Assistant Counsel to the Inspector General, and Katherine Azarpour, paralegal in the OIG's Office of Counsel. A similar conversation occurred on August 27, 2004, between Mr. Kanstoroom and Ms. Elizabeth Redman, OIG's Assistant Inspector General for Investigations.

According to your letter, Mr. Kanstoroom discussed documents he had received from "government whistleblowers and persons unknown to him" that concerned, among other matters, alleged mismanagement and wrongdoing on the part of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and DHS OIG employees. Furthermore, according to your letter, "Rather than demonstrating any commitment to investigate the very serious issues raised by these documents, Mr. Banks instead directed Mr. Kanstoroom to return the documents to the government and to destroy any copies that he may have." Finally, you say in your letter that the telephone call between Mr. Kanstoroom and Mr. Banks and Ms. Azarpour was placed on a speakerphone by Mr. Kanstoroom and recorded by a CBS affiliate working with him.

The accusations against FEMA and DHS OIG personnel, including Mr. Banks, Ms Azarpour, and Ms. Redman, are extremely serious. The first step in any inquiry into this matter is to examine whatever supporting materials exist. Rather than speculate about what those documents contain or about what Mr. Banks and Ms Azarpour may have said, or whether your rendition of those documents and conversations is accurate, the source materials themselves apparently are available. See generally, Fed. R. Evid. 1001 -1004, (source materials, rather than a secondary description of them, constitutes the best evidence). Accordingly, I would greatly appreciate your sending me *copies* of the documents that Mr. Kanstoroom allegedly received and of the videotape allegedly made

by CBS. Once we receive this material, the OIG will be in a position to determine whether further inquiry by this office or some other entity is warranted.

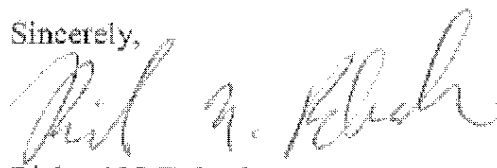
Documentary material may be faxed to me at (202) 254-4285, or mailed or delivered to me addressed as follows:

DHS/Office of Inspector General/STOP 2600
Richard N. Reback, Counsel to the IG
(202) 254-4100
245 Murray Drive, Building 410
Washington, DC 20528

A copy of the videotape also may be sent to the same address. DHS' security screening procedures should not affect the quality of the videotape. However, please label the outside of the envelope to indicate that a videotape is contained inside.

I greatly appreciate your bringing this matter to our attention and I look forward to receiving the materials.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Richard N. Reback".

Richard N. Reback
Counsel to the Inspector General