

Shielding Criminal Betrays Public Trust

By Edward J. O'Neill

Governor Chafee continues to amaze and outrage the citizens of Rhode Island. The most recent example is his refusal to surrender murder suspect Jason Wayne Pleau to federal authorities for allegedly robbing and fatally shooting David D. Main last September. Apparently Governor Chafee would prefer to use our limited resources to protect a 15-year career criminal from a possible federal death sentence.

According to The Journal, Mr. Pleau began his criminal enterprise at age 19 with a botched robbery attempt with a handgun in Bellingham, Mass. This was followed by a mini-mart robbery with a handgun. That was followed by a store robbery in Woonsocket involving a handgun that he put to the face of the store clerk.

He was sentenced to 30 years, with 12 to serve. He was paroled on Sept. 30, 2009. He is now back at the Adult Correctional Institutes, where he received 39 disciplinary bookings since 1997, including refusing to work and participating in, or inciting to, riot. While in maximum security at the ACI, Mr. Pleau assaulted corrections officer Osvaldo Cuevas with a dangerous weapon, and kicked and stomped him as the guard fell to the floor. Pleau also tried to knock Officer Cuevas off a balcony, 30 feet up, to his possible death. Governor Chafee apparently has more concern for the criminal that perpetrated these crimes than his victims or their families.

Our governor is spending our valuable resources to keep this alleged murderer in Rhode Island. Based on current costs, this will be about \$51,000 per year for the next 50 years, if he lives to age 83. It will cost taxpayers \$2.5 million to house and feed this poor excuse for a human being who places zero value on your life or mine. Mr. Pleau is beyond redemption.

Governor Chafee does not seem to show anywhere near the compassion for the victims or their families that he has for the criminal that perpetrated these crimes. Has he spoken to the victims of these crimes and explained why this accused murderer should be protected from federal authorities and due process? What about their losses? What about the family of David Main? What about the corrections officers at the ACI who face these thugs every day?

Yes, Governor, you are telling them it is okay to commit murder in Rhode Island and they won't face the death penalty. What about the police who hunt down these criminals and risk their lives arresting them? Don't think for a minute that Mr. Pleau would not kill a police officer if he had the chance. He demonstrated that already, when he attempted to toss a corrections officer off a third-story balcony at the ACI.

So, Governor, you may keep spending our money and legal resources to protect this criminal, but beware that people in Rhode Island will not forget this misguided behavior on your part. Please step aside in this case, and let the federal authorities do their work. We cannot afford to spend over \$2.5 million to keep this criminal in Rhode Island because of your personal belief. We need to spend our very limited resources wisely, and for the benefit of our law-biding, taxpaying residents.

Your mission should be to serve and protect the citizens of Rhode Island.

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