



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrew J. Lanza

## Senator Lanza Outraged by Release of Lockerbie Bomber

ANDREW J LANZA August 20, 2009

| ISSUE: **HOMELAND SECURITY**

**Calling it appalling and a diplomatic failure, Senator Lanza expressed outrage at Scotland's decision to release mass murderer and convicted terrorist, Abdel Baset Al-Megrahi**

Abdel Baset Al-Megrahi, the Libyan terrorist convicted of planting the bomb that brought down Pan Am Flight 103 which exploded over Lockerbie, Scotland in 1988, was released today from a prison in Scotland after serving just eight years of a life sentence. Al-Megrahi was convicted in 2001 for the murder of 270 people, 189 of which were from the United States.

61 of the victims from Pan Am Flight 103 were residents of New York State including 3 from Staten Island: Kathleen Mary Jermyn and Daniel Peter Rosenthal, both 20 years old and David Platt, 33 years old.

Senator Andrew Lanza (R – Staten Island) today called upon the United States Department of State, The United States Department of Justice and the White House to utilize any and all resources at their disposal to prevent Abdel Baset Al-Megrahi from living out his life in freedom. Lanza said, "This terrorist should not be permitted to escape justice for even one day." Lanza further called upon the Department of State to seek the immediate extradition of Abdel Baset Al-Megrahi from Libya so that he could face charges for the acts of murder and terrorism he committed. While Lanza acknowledges that there is no formal extradition treaty with Libya, he feels America should use all its might to convince Libya that it is in their best interests not to harbor this terrorist.

Senator Lanza said, "Scotland's decision lacks compassion for the victims and families of the Lockerbie murders and disregard for the safeguard of the principles of freedom everywhere. In an age when terrorism represents perhaps the greatest threat to America and the free world this sends a terribly wrong message to the enemies of freedom around the world."

Senator Lanza believes that the United States should pursue every means possible to bring this terrorist to justice in order to send the right message to would-be terrorists, that we will not rest until every terrorist is brought to justice. Lanza also added a word of disappointment with the Obama Administration for not possessing sufficient diplomatic clout to convince Scotland, one of America's allies, to reverse its decision to release this convicted terrorist.

"The return of Abdel Baset Al-Megrahi to Libya should not end America's pursuit of justice in this case." Lanza opined for instance, "If America knew that Osama bin Laden was resting quietly in a bed at a

disclosed location in Libya we should and would do something about it. This situation should be treated no differently.”

Senator Lanza also suggested that Americans exert economic pressure on Scotland to express our dissatisfaction with their dangerous decision. Lanza suggested for instance that Americans trade in their Johnnie Walker for America spirits. Lanza also believes that the Royal Bank of Scotland, now part of Lloyds Banking Group, should be made to repay American bailout dollars it received through AIG ( <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB123638394500958141.html>).

On December 22 1988, Pan Am flight 103 took off from London's Heathrow airport, headed for New York with 259 passengers on board. Approximately 38 minutes into the flight, the plane exploded at 31,000 feet over Lockerbie, Scotland, killing all the passengers as well as 11 people on the ground. Al-Megrahi served only 8 years of a life sentence which is equivalent to 11.5 days for each of his victims. Before Sept. 11, the bombing of Pan Am flight 103 over Scotland in 1988 was the symbol of terrorist brutality.

Today Senator Lanza sent a letter to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton offering support and urging success in her efforts in this matter.

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LETTER TO SENATOR CLINTON:

August 20, 2009

The Hon. Hillary Clinton  
Secretary of State  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Madam Secretary,

“We have lost some of our best and brightest”. Those were the words from Dr. Melvin A. Eggers, Chancellor of Syracuse University following the tragic and deplorable terrorist attack killing 270 people over Lockerbie, Scotland on December 21, 1988.

Today, we are left to wonder what our friends and allies across the Atlantic must be thinking to allow a terrorist, Abdel Baset al-Megrahi, freed to his county of Libya after being convicted of the barbaric terrorist act in which he murdered 270 people, including 189 Americans.

I write to call upon you to use your considerable abilities and clout to convince the Obama administration to exhaust any and all measures to prevent this terrorist from escaping justice even if for one day. I have witnessed firsthand your steadfast commitment to the victims of the terrorist acts of September 11, 2001 and I know that as the former United States Senator from New York you are particularly outraged by the release of this depraved terrorist. Given your considerable prestige, I believe your voice is critical in the upcoming fight to prevent this terrorist from escaping justice.

Three people from my hometown of Staten Island were murdered by Abdel Baset al-Megrahi in his terrorist attack on Flight 103. They were: Kathleen Mary Jermyn and Daniel Peter Rosenthal, both 20

years old and David Platt, 33 years old. Scotland's action today is appalling and lacks compassion for these victims and their families as well as each and every victim and family of the attack. Scotland's action also undermines principles of freedom around the world.

If America should not exhaust every resource at its disposal toward bringing this terrorist to justice we would send a terribly dangerous message to terrorists and would-be terrorists everywhere. During an age when terrorism represents perhaps the single greatest threat to America and the free world, our enemies need to know that America will never retreat from protecting freedom and bringing its enemies to justice.

While I realize the United States lacks a formal extradition treaty with Libya, I implore you to urge President Barack Obama to convince Libya that it is in their own best interest not to give safe harbor to Abdel Baset al-Megrahi and that they should immediately release him to the custody of America so that he can face murder and terrorism charges in the United States. We should never ever let a terrorist walk free – even for just a moment – if we are truly to be able to ensure our national security. This terrorist released to Libya should not end America's efforts to bring him to justice. Hypothetically, if America knew that if Osama bin Laden was resting peacefully in bed, in a disclosed location in Libya, would America do nothing? I feel that this should be treated in the same light.

Madam Secretary, I know I am preaching to the choir as your commitment to our security is well established; I write simply to offer my support and urge your success on behalf of the people I represent on Staten Island and across New York. I know the 270 lost souls from that infamous day, December 21, 1988, have a true champion in you and I wish you God's Speed.

Sincerely,  
Andrew J. Lanza  
State Senator  
24<sup>th</sup> District

cc: President Barack Obama  
Eric H. Holder Jr., Attorney General