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Liberty  **Sentinel**

Corrupt Judge Convicted of Selling Children Seeks Early Release

By Marty Gottesfeld, July 14, 2020



Is the Justice Department Showering Favors on a Man Who Drove Kids to Suicide?

While millions of Americans are struggling and over 100,000 have died, the coronavirus pandemic has proved a windfall for Michael Conahan, a corrupt former Luzerne County, Pennsylvania, judge theoretically serving a 17.5-year federal-prison sentence for his role in the kids-for-cash scandal.

Conahan and coconspirator Mark Ciavarella, an ex–juvenile-court judge from the same county, grabbed millions in bribes to help establish a for-profit jail then incarcerate nearly 5,000 children there. The kids’ so-called offenses included creating a webpage that mocked an assistant school principal—conduct likely protected by The First Amendment.



With the children imprisoned at ongoing taxpayer expense, the judges illegitimately extended their incarcerations while the jail reportedly neglected and abused them. Ciavarella and Conahan continued to send kids there and hold them while an increasing number of children committed suicide.



Now Conahan complains his own incarceration threatens his life. And the DOJ seems to care more for the crooked judges than for their victims.

When the Juvenile Justice Center of Philadelphia uncovered this so-called *kids-for-cash scandal* and word reached the nation, the DOJ had little choice but to arrest Ciavarella and Conahan. Shortly thereafter, however, the DOJ offered them plea agreements conspicuously low on prison time.

Only a federal judge was able to stop the deals by ruling them unjustly lenient.

Under the pleas Conahan and Ciavarella likely would've been released in 2016, after each served 6 years and 2 months of a 7.25-year sentence.

Conahan instead got 17.5 years under a different plea agreement. Steadfastly unrepentant, Ciavarella blew trial and got 28 years.

But to many of the survivors and aggrieved parents of the dead, Ciavarella and Conahan still got off light. One crying mother tried to rush up to Judge-turned-Defendant Ciavarella as he exited the courthouse on bail. She was held back by deputies.

"You ruined our lives!" she screamed.



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