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## White House: Scalise as No. 3 says a lot about who GOP is



Republican Congressman Steve Scalise

*"I'm (KKK Leader) David Duke without the baggage"*



Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday events on page 2.

By Nedra Pickler

WASHINGTON (AP) - The White House on Jan. 5 led into a controversy over revelations that the House's No. 3 Republican spoke to a white supremacist group 12 years ago, saying who the GOP has in leadership "says a lot about who they are."

White House Press Secretary Josh Earnest repeatedly said Scalise once described himself as "David Duke without the baggage." A reporter for the New Orleans Advocate newspaper said Scalise made the remark to her as he was starting out in the Louisiana Legislature nearly 20 years ago. Scalise's office did not immediately respond to calls for comment.

Earnest said it's up to Republicans to decide whether he retains his position. "There is no arguing that who Republicans decide to elevate into a leadership position says a lot about what the conference's priorities and values are," Earnest said.

"We've also heard a lot from Republicans particularly over the last few years, including the chairman of the Republican Party, about how Republicans need to broaden their appeal to young people and to women, to gays and minorities, that the success of their party will depend on their ability to broaden that outreach," Earnest said. So it ultimately will be up to individual Republicans in Congress to decide whether or not elevating Mr. Scalise to leadership will effectively reinforce that strategy."

The Democratic National Committee and the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee also issued statements attacking Scalise as Democrats sought to fan the controversy a day before Republicans formally assumed control of Congress. "As the new Congress begins, nothing discredits Republican claims of outreach and bringing people together more than their decision to keep Steve Scalise at the top tier of the elected leadership of their caucus," said DNC Chair Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz.

The controversy was sparked last week when a liberal Louisiana blogger uncovered Scalise's speech to a 2002 Louisiana convention of the European-American Unity and Rights Organization, which called itself EURO. Former Ku Klux Klan leader David Duke founded the group, which the Southern Poverty Law Center has classified as a hate group.

Scalise moved quickly to distance himself from the group, saying he opposes its views. As a state legislator at the time, Scalise said, he didn't have much staffing and didn't know details of the groups he was invited to address. He said the speech was a mistake he now regrets, and party leaders have backed him.

Louisiana's Republican governor, Bobby Jindal, defended the congressman in response to the White House criticism.

"I don't think it would be smart for the Republican conference to take advice from this White House," Jindal said in an interview with The Associated Press. "Steve's a good, decent man. I continue to support him. I know his heart. He's not a racist."

## Number of those fired in UNC grades scandal remains fuzzy

By Emery P. Dalesio

RALEIGH (AP) - Officials at North Carolina's flagship university may fire fewer staffers for their role in an academic fraud scandal than University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Chancellor Carol Folt previously described.

University officials last week named three UNC-CH professors or academic counselors who were dismissed, in line for firing, or resigning since Oct. 22, the day that a scathing report into the long-running cheating scandal was released. Folt previously said hours after the report was released that four were slated for termination. School officials have refused to clarify the discrepancy.

"Someone may have misspoken at some point. That is a possibility," UNC-CH spokesman Rich White said.

The report by former U.S. Justice Department official Kenneth Wainstein described a pattern of fake classes, which allowed 3,100 athletes and other students to earn artificially high grades from 1993 to 2011.

"We have terminated or commenced disciplinary actions against nine university employees," Folt said Oct. 22 in describing her reaction to the report's findings.

Asked by The Associated Press how many of the nine were being fired, Folt said: "four at this point ... we're proceeding with severing, with separation."

Minutes earlier, Tom Ross, president of the 16-campus University of North Carolina system, said: "I will take steps to initiate one additional personnel action involving an individual formerly employed on this campus, now employed at another UNC campus."

Ross was referring to Beth Bridger, one of the UNC-Chapel Hill football counselors named in the report as steering players toward the bogus classes, who lost her job at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington the day the report was published, spokeswoman Joni Worthington said this week.

It's not clear whether Folt was thinking of Bridger when she said four "university" employees were slated for dismissal, or if there were moves to fire one of the six other UNC-CH employees being reviewed for possible disciplinary action.

"Of the employees referred to by the Chancellor during the October 22 news conference, six were designated to undergo a review for consideration of any disciplinary action," campus lawyer David Parker said in a statement released last week seeking to settle a lawsuit by The Associated Press and nine other media organizations.

The litigation came after UNC-Chapel Hill officials said they weren't required to produce records of dismissed or demoted employees until staffers finished appealing the decision, a process that could take years in some cases.

Parker this week referred questions about the discrepancy to White, the school's associate vice chancellor for communications.

The campus last week promised to quickly disclose decisions on whether or not to impose penalties on the six unnamed UNC-CH employees as those decisions are made, Parker's statement said.

The media groups filed their lawsuit because North Carolina's public records law requires state agencies, including public universities, to make employee records available. That includes dismissal, suspension or demotion records.

Court-ordered mediation of the lawsuit led to statements last week by Parker and Folt, who identified philosophy professor and former faculty leader Jeanette Boxill as one of those slated for firing. Boxill is appealing Folt's decision and has not responded to requests for comment.

Boxill directed women's basketball players she advised into the fake courses, at least twice sought to influence the grades given to students, and acknowledged sometimes editing student papers, the Wainstein report said.

Parker also disclosed that Timothy McMillan resigned. He was a senior lecturer in the Department of African, African American and Diaspora Studies, the renamed department where a retired administrator orchestrated and a retired chairman allowed the pattern of no-show classes and generous grades.

Parker also said UNC-CH academic counselor Jaimie Lee was terminated, which was previously reported.

## The North Carolina NAACP, Forward Together Moral Movement, and Clergy Representing Many Faiths Will Gather at the N.C. General Assembly

RALEIGH, NC: The North Carolina NAACP, Forward Together Moral Movement, and religious leaders representing the diversity of the Movement will gather in the General Assembly on Wednesday, January 14th, the eve of Dr. King's birthday. They will call on members of the North Carolina Senate and House of Representatives to pursue a moral agenda in the 2015 legislative session.

Although the NC NAACP's request for talks with government leaders was ignored last year, the NC NAACP, Forward Together Moral Movement, and religious leaders will try again to meet with leaders of the government in person. They will hand-deliver their moral agenda, to be announced on Monday, January 12th, to each representative's office and a delegation will seek to meet with leaders of both parties to discuss the agenda.

The NC NAACP, Forward Together Moral Movement, and religious leaders will hold a news conference at 10:00 a.m. at First Baptist Church; then march to the General Assembly, and begin their preach-in and pray-in at 11:00 in the rotunda. When this service is complete, the clergy will visit the offices of representatives.