The outcome of the O'Brien case was announced several days ago, but I could not write about it until now. I could not write about it until the shock subsided and the anger receded. I could not write about it until the world seemed right, but thanks to Judge Joseph T. Clark, I am not sure if it ever will be.

In a nutshell the case comes down to this. Jim O'Brien was recruiting a kid from Serbia who was undergoing a personal crisis. His father was ill and his family had no money to pay for the funeral or for the medicine he needed. O'Brien's position is that the loan did not violate the NCAA rules because he claims he knew that Aleksandar Radojevic was going to be ineligible anyway.

This story is utter bull crap. When I was a kid, my old man told me that if it smells like shit I would not taste it to find out and I think that clearly applies here. Furthermore, O'Brien took steps to hide this transaction. First of all he gave Radojevic his "charitable contribution" to the Adopt an Ailing Serb (not to be confused with Swerb) Foundation in cash. The only people I know that are used to handling envelopes with $6600 in 50's and 100's are folks that are up to no good and Brink's armored car drivers. Unfortunately, I have yet to see coach O'Brien in one of those nifty quasi police uniforms so I must presume that ...

In any case, it is pretty clear that it is never OK for an NCAA coach to give an athlete money, and even if Coach O'Brien was really deeply concerned for this young man and knew that he was not going to be eligible anyway why wouldn't he at least alert the athletic department? Why wouldn't he write a check? Why all the cloak and dagger? The answer is simple, his story is bullshit, plain and simple.

Anyone capable of rational thought can see that this story is crap. Judge Clark admitted as such when he found Coach O'Brien to be in violation of his contract as it pertained to NCAA rules violations, but here is where the judge took a sharp left turn from reason. The judge ruled that he did not find O'Brien to be in "material breech of his contract." To take that out of legalize, the judge ruled that O'Brien had not acted so badly that Ohio State needed to immediately terminate the contract. Clearly I disagree with that point of view. Anyone who knows anything about the NCAA knows that there is no greater crime in the college sports than paying players. Yet the judge ruled that O'Brien had done nothing so egregious that he and the university could not reconcile the matter.

For the first time in my life I found myself in absolute agreement with Karen Holbrook, President of the school, that she acted in the best interests of the university. Quite frankly, the school had no choice. The longer they stood by and waited for an NCAA ruling, the more it would have cost the university in terms of the integrity of the program. This investigation is still unresolved, could you imagine O'Brien sitting here as a lame duck coach for two years? How much would this apparent tacit approval of his behavior impact the program?

In any case what is done is done. Ohio State will have to pay his salary for a few more years while he is out of work, for he has committed the most egregious of crimes and his peers in the NCAA will punish him. Jim O'Brien is now "persona non grata" in the NCAA coaching world, and I guess I can take solace in that. As for me, I guess it will be up to me to put my life back in order after finding myself in agreement with Karen "the tailgate destroyer" Holbrook.