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## **Famous FBI Whistleblower to Speak at ACLU-IAF Annual Dinner in Iowa City**

by R. Ben Stone, Executive Director  
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### **Coleen Rowley, in 2002 named one of Time Magazine's "Persons of the Year," to speak April 30th on balancing civil liberties and security**

DES MOINES - Retired FBI agent Coleen Rowley, who became famous when her internal memo to FBI Director Robert Mueller became public detailing shortcomings in the FBI's work in the period leading up to the 9/11/01 terrorist attacks, will speak at the American Civil Liberties Union of Iowa Foundation Annual Dinner in Iowa City later this month.

Perhaps the best known whistleblower since Daniel Ellsberg released the "Pentagon Papers" in the 1960s, Ms. Rowley has, since her retirement from the FBI at the end of last year, embarked on a nationwide campaign to talk about civil liberties. Her recent appearances include National Public Radio's "Talk of the Nation" <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4503062> and public television's "NOW" program <http://www.pbs.org/now/politics/rowley.html>.

In February 2005, a majority of Minnesota congresspersons and senators recommended Rowley to the President for service on the "Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board." This Board was mandated by recent federal intelligence reform legislation implementing the recommendations of the "9-11 Commission."

Ben Stone, the ACLU-IA's executive director, said Rowley's appearance at their dinner represents a great opportunity. "Coleen's credentials in regard to security issues are stellar, and her ethics and courage are beyond question," said Stone. "Her appearance provides Iowans with a chance to hear from a security insider with the common sense to know that much of what is done in the name of national security is really ill-advised and shortsighted," he added.

Her keynote address, entitled "Balancing Civil Liberties with the Need for Effective Investigation," will be presented at the ACLU-IA Foundation's Annual Dinner the

evening of Saturday, April 30th, in the Richey Room of the Iowa Memorial Union in Iowa City. Tickets are \$30. Advance reservations required. Persons interested in attending should contact the ACLU-IA at 515/243-3988 x 11, or visit its website at <http://www.iowaclu.org>

Rowley had this to say about the ACLU: "No other organization or citizen group has done as much as the ACLU to attempt to correct the various knee-jerk and counter-productive missteps that have thus far occurred in the so-called "war on terrorism" including: the post 9-11 round-up of immigrants; the detentions of "enemy combatants" on Guantanamo and elsewhere without due process rights; the numerous incidents of torture which have occurred as a result of murky official guidance; and the ever-increasing shrouding of government operations in secrecy."

More on Coleen Rowley:

Coleen Rowley was raised in northeast Iowa. She received an undergraduate degree from Wartburg College in Waverly, Iowa, and a law degree from the University of Iowa. In 1981 she was appointed a Special Agent with the FBI and initially served in the Omaha, Nebraska and Jackson, Mississippi Divisions. In 1984 she was assigned to the New York Office and for over 6 years, worked on Italian organized crime and Sicilian heroin drug investigations.

In 1990 she was transferred to Minneapolis where she assumed the duties of Principal Legal Advisor (now known as "Chief Division Counsel") which entailed oversight of the Freedom of Information, Forfeiture, Victim-Witness and Community Outreach Programs as well as providing regular legal and ethics training to FBI Agents of the Division and some outside police training.

In May of 2002 she brought some of the pre 9-11 lapses to light and testified to the Senate Judiciary Committee about some of the endemic problems facing the FBI and the intelligence community.

In April, 2003, following an unsuccessful and highly criticized attempt to warn the Director and other administration officials about the dangers of launching the invasion of Iraq, she "stepped down" from her (GS-14) legal position to go back to being a (GS-13) FBI Special Agent.

Coleen retired from the FBI at the end of 2004 and now speaks publicly to various groups, ranging from school children to business/professional/civic groups, on two different topics: ethical decision-making and "balancing civil liberties with the need for effective investigation." The 2004 book, *Patriotism, Democracy and Common Sense: Restoring America's Promise at Home and Abroad*, published by the Milton Eisenhower Foundation, contains a chapter authored by her.