

Statement of Andrew Jennings
BBC Investigative reporter specialising in FIFA corruption

July 19, 2015

Chairman Moran, Senator Blumenthal and Members of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation.

Let's start by honouring America's soccer players and the gracious way they - and the other 23 teams – conducted themselves at the Women's World Cup.

That contrasts, sadly, with the deficiencies of the US Soccer Federation, frightened to upset President Blatter 's corrupt FIFA - while enjoying the elite lifestyle he provides. We are here to discuss how American soccer relates to FIFA. I note the absence of your FIFA delegate Mr Sunil Gulati.

I'm an investigative reporter. I write books and present documentaries for the BBC. I have worked with CBS Sixty Minutes and with Frank Deford at HBO's Real Sport. I have reported from war zones in Beirut, Chechnya and Central America.

I am not a sports reporter; send me to the game and I may get the score wrong.

I am proud of being the only reporter in the world banned by Blatter because of my disclosures of his corruption over the last 13 years.

Before stumbling upon the FIFA lowlifes I had experience of Organised Crime, filming nose to nose with the Mafia in Palermo.

Blatter's FIFA ticks all the boxes defining an OC syndicate. Seizing and holding power; massive stealing; running rackets, compromising and outwitting the public authorities. Hiding their criminality behind the world's most popular game.

After 7 years probing these sleazebags and putting up with their legal threats and attacks on my computers I was invited to meet FBI Special Agents in London. Their business cards said Organised Crime.

In August 2011 I gave them financial and other documents that America's Chuck Blazer hid from the fans and the public. My source obtained them from the archives of Concacaf, the regional body of 35 footballing nations including the USA.

These were circulated privately to all executive committee members of Concacaf, including US Soccer who also suppressed them.

US Soccer had to know that Blazer and his fellow crook Jack Warner from Trinidad, with the approval of Blatter, were looting regional football and evading rightful taxes. But they looked away.

If America's soccer leaders had taken action Blazer and Warner would have been in jail, Blatter seeking asylum in Zimbabwe and the 2022 World Cup being hosted by the USA, not some graveyards in the Gulf.

It only took the FBI and the IRS a few weeks to check out the information I gave them. They arrested Chuck Blazer. He immediately turned informant and FIFA has imploded.

FIFA is now a smelly shell. Blatter is determined to stay in control of this irredeemably corrupt organisation. His hitmen are working to eliminate rivals. His handpicked Ethics Committee obeys his instructions.

His PR operation briefs the wire services that he is innocent, knew nothing and it is all the fault of others. That is totally untrue.

This international sports leader can only travel to Russia and Qatar, fearing arrest elsewhere. He will resist reform - but we need not waste time on such a barren exercise.

America can engage with the clean decent football associations around the world, create a new organisation housed in another land and invite sponsors and TV networks to come with them. I cannot see Coca-Cola, McDonalds and VISA preferring the remnants of Blatter's Organised Crime family.

When the US Olympic Committee was in disarray over the Salt Lake Olympic scandal 16 years ago they called in Senator George Mitchell and Ken Duberstein, President Reagan's former chief of staff, to investigate where they had gone wrong with the IOC – and make recommendations for reform.

This committee could help US Soccer set up a similar independent review of their missteps at Concacaf and FIFA

One urgent change must be US Soccer adopting online transparency to the standard of the US government. Then this newly invigorated and publically responsive sports organization can start lobbying foreign bodies to join them following a moral path.

Next Monday the serpentine Blatter presides over a meeting of those members of his executive committee not in jail. US Soccer's Sunil Gulati will attend.

I urge that tomorrow Mr Gulati emails Blatter demanding that when he arrives at the FIFA boardroom he finds on his desk a list of what Blatter has paid himself for the last 5 years in salary, bonuses, allowances and perks. Everything. Two years ago Mr Gulati said he would try to get this information. We are still waiting.

If Mr Blatter still refuses to reveal how much he extorts from FIFA Mr Gulati must walk out of this joke meeting, come home and contribute to the real international reform process.