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February 1, 2012

Mr. Chris Matthews  
"Hardball"  
c/o MSNBC  
4001 Nebraska Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20016

Dear Mr. Matthews,

On the January 24<sup>th</sup> "Hardball," while discussing the views of Sheldon Adelson, a republican political contributor, you present the attempts to commute the sentence of Jonathan Pollard as a "hawkish" position "which most people would see as divisive in the world and would cause nothing but trouble." Nothing could be further from the truth.

I had the opportunity to visit Mr. Pollard in prison with three of my colleagues, including Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, hearing firsthand the details of the injustice he has endured. I find your comments on the matter incendiary and insulting to Mr. Pollard and the movement that has organized to press for his release. In New York State, a broad cross-section of religious and political leaders support commuting Jonathan Pollard's sentence. To broadly suppose that this movement has no support in United States and is an extremist position betrays a lack of understanding on your part.

Without condoning the acts of espionage that Mr. Pollard committed when he handed over State secrets to Israel – then also an American ally - the life sentence that resulted was unduly harsh. Having already served 26 years in Federal prison Mr. Pollard has served longer than most, including spies who trade secrets with our enemies. It is for this reason that there is a growing effort calling for the commutation of Jonathan Pollard's sentence to correct this injustice.

I hope you will reconsider your position, perhaps arranging a visit with Mr. Pollard yourself. For now, I urge you to apologize to Mr. Pollard's supporters and his wife Esther, who has dedicated her life to seeing her husband once again a free man.

Thank You,

*Helene E. Weinstein*  
Helene E. Weinstein  
Assemblywoman, 41<sup>st</sup> A.D.