

ORIGINAL

OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT PROCEEDINGS BEFORE

THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES

DKT/CASE NO. 81-469
TITLE WILLIAM C. BUSH, Petitioner
v.
WILLIAM R. LUCAS
PLACE Washington, D. C.
DATE January 19, 1983
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1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 CHIEF JUSTICE BURGER: Mr. Elrod, I think you
3 may proceed whenever you are ready.

4 ORAL ARGUMENT OF WILLIAM HARVEY ELROD, ESQ.,
5 ON BEHALF OF WILLIAM C. BUSH, PETITIONER

6 MR. ELROD: Mr. Chief Justice, and may it
7 please the Court:

8 The petitioner in this case filed a complaint
9 containing a Bivens-type claim in a state court.
10 The respondent, who like the petitioner is a civilian
11 employee of the Federal Government, obtained the removal
12 of the case to the United States District Court for the
13 Northern District of Alabama.

14 From that point forward, the government, for
15 all intents and purposes, appears to have been cast in
16 the role of defendant. I say appears to have been cast
17 in the role of defendant. We are not suing the
18 government.

19 The petitioner's Bivens-type claim was that
20 the respondent had violated the petitioner's First
21 Amendment rights by participating as chief conspirator,
22 if not principal procuror, in the concocting and
23 consummating of the petitioner's demotion under color of
24 federal law and by virtue of the positions which the
25 conspirators held.

1 The avowed intent and purpose of the
2 conspiracy is to punish the petitioner, to strike back,
3 to retaliate, to pervert official power from its proper
4 purpose for having publicly observed and spoken up about
5 what he perceived to be rampant waste at George F.
6 Marshall Space Flight Center in North Alabama.

7 QUESTION: Had he -- does the record show to
8 what extent, if any, he had passed these notions and
9 ideas and his recommendations on up through channels
10 before he went public?

11 MR. ELROD: The record reflects in a truncated
12 fashion, since this comes up from summary judgment, the
13 record reflects that the petitioner made some efforts
14 within the organization through his representative in
15 the manpower office to obtain some alleviation as to his
16 personal problem. And at -- as he observed that he was
17 not alone in being misclassified or a round -- or a
18 square peg in a round hole, it ate on him. And he went
19 public.

20 After a series of proceedings, administrative
21 proceedings, Mr. Bush's having gone public eventually
22 was perceived to be within the protection of the First
23 Amendment.

24 I understand that the government from its --

25 QUESTION: It was perceived by -- perceived by

1 whom, Mr. Elrod?

2 MR. ELROD: By the what was then called the
3 Appeals Review Board of what was then called the Civil
4 Service Commission. That happened in mid-passage. This
5 lawsuit, the Bivens claim and all, was already pending,
6 not before the administrative proceedings had begun but
7 they were pending concurrently because an Alabama
8 statute of limitations would, in my judgment, possibly
9 have cut off one of the claims that is not present
10 before the Court had the suit not been filed when it was
11 filed. I say not present before the Court, it's not
12 included within the petition. It's in the record.

13 As I understand the government's brief in this
14 case, the government concedes what it candidly describes
15 as petitioner's well -- the well-established
16 constitutional right which the petitioner asserts. What
17 the government disputes is the petitioner's right -- or
18 is whether the petitioner has a Bivens-type remedy for
19 the impairment of that right.

20 In effect, the government currently, in
21 defense of an opinion rendered on remand by a Court of
22 Appeals, currently espouses the second branch of the
23 Carlson against Green formulation as to whether an
24 alternative remedy or as to whether there is a basis for
25 barring or defeating at the threshold a Bivens-type

1 claim. And that second ground, of course, is that
2 Congress had manifested its intent. I don't want to get
3 into an area of semantics, but it specifically --
4 explicitly states, but I will say clearly manifests its
5 intent that an alternative remedy which it has adopted
6 is intended as a substitute for a Bivens-type action and
7 is viewed by Congress --

8 QUESTION: Mr. Elrod.

9 MR. ELROD: Yes, ma'am.

10 QUESTION: I suppose it's your position on
11 behalf of Mr. Bush that what was lacking here was a
12 right to obtain compensatory damages for embarrassment
13 or anxiety resulting from the demotion, and the failure
14 to have a means of getting punitive damages and
15 attorney's fees. Is that right?

16 MR. ELROD: In damage terms --

17 QUESTION: Those are the elements that are
18 lacking in the Civil Service remedies?

19 MR. ELROD: It is --

20 QUESTION: And is it your position then that
21 denying Mr. Bush the right to get those elements of
22 damages violates the Constitution?

23 MR. ELROD: It is my position that it would,
24 although I am speaking to a judicial tribunal, that it
25 would be an invidious kind of distinction.

1 QUESTION: Well, would it violate the
2 Constitution --

3 MR. ELROD: Yes, ma'am, I think it would.

4 QUESTION: -- to -- and what provision of the
5 Constitution?

6 MR. ELROD: I did not -- it would -- it would,
7 in my judgment, and I realize that I am venturing where
8 in -- rushing in where some people fear to tread -- in my
9 judgment, a decision that the denial of the dignitary
10 elements of a government employee's claim in a
11 Bivens-type suit otherwise well grounded, assuming that,
12 of course, as we will upon summary judgment, that
13 denying him that would be denying a discrete isolated
14 group of people the same protection of the law that the
15 citizenry at large has.

16 QUESTION: An equal protection clause --

17 MR. ELROD: Access of courts --

18 QUESTION: -- violation?

19 MR. ELROD: -- whether it be viewed as part of
20 equal protection or as an extension of freedom of
21 expression. Prisoners have access to court. Aliens
22 have access to court on Bivens-type claims. Only,
23 apparently, government employees, if the lower court is
24 correct, so far as a class, as a discrete class, those
25 who have had the benefits of Civil Service remedies

1 which come down on the bottom line to reinstatement and
2 back pay.

3 QUESTION: Well, if a government -- a
4 government employee who was beat up or unreasonably
5 searched by FBI people would certainly have a Bivens
6 claim.

7 MR. ELROD: Yes, sir, he would, and he would
8 not be covered by any Civil Service act that I know of.

9 QUESTION: No, because the Civil Service
10 doesn't purport to regulate -- the Civil Service doesn't
11 purport to regulate that relationship. But the Civil
12 Service Act certainly can be argued, don't you think, to
13 regulate the relationship between the government as
14 employer and its employees from the Pendleton Act on?

15 MR. ELROD: That act -- that argument has
16 certainly surface plausibility. I am not sure that it
17 applies in this case. I am sure that there -- that the
18 government as employer has been interested in civilian
19 employees since even before the adoption of the
20 Pendleton Act.

21 I think the government does have other
22 interests as an employer than it has -- from those that
23 it has in some other capacity.

24 I suggest to this Court -- I submit to this
25 Court that the Civil Service remedies which the

1 government postulates here as a bar to the maintenance
2 of a Bivens suit in the premises of this case do not
3 meet the test standard prescribed by this Court in
4 Carlson against Green, for as Justice O'Connor pointed
5 out, among other things, they afford no recompense
6 whatever with respect to the dignitary elements of the
7 petitioner's claim.

8 And we consider that interest in personality,
9 how it is shielded by the Bill of Rights. And we would
10 consider the policy often enunciated by this Court, a
11 policy of maximizing the vindication of constitutional
12 rights.

13 QUESTION: Well, your position necessarily
14 means, I take it, that in unlawful discharges or
15 demotions or failure to get a promotion that was due,
16 the Civil Service remedy enacted by Congress is not the
17 exclusive remedy?

18 MR. ELROD: It is unless it's constitutional
19 deprivation bar.

20 QUESTION: Unless what?

21 MR. ELROD: Unless the promotion -- the
22 adverse action, as they used to call it, I think we
23 call it unwarranted or unjustified now -- unless the
24 adverse action is unconstitutional, the Bivens -- there
25 is no Bivens remedy, of course. The administrative

1 remedies are excluded.

2 QUESTION: Bivens had nothing to do with an
3 employee of the government, did it?

4 MR. ELROD: Sir?

5 QUESTION: The Bivens remedy, as defined in
6 the Bivens case, was not a remedy for government
7 employees, was it?

8 MR. ELROD: As -- in the Bivens case it was a
9 remedy for Webster Bivens, who as the Court perceived,
10 or a majority of the Court, no other remedy that was
11 made. In Carlson against Green, which expanded Bivens,
12 as I perceive it, it was stated that Bivens established
13 that a citizen, the victim of an unconstitutional -- of
14 unconstitutional deprivation had a right of action,
15 sounding and damages -- I am paraphrasing, of course --
16 against --

17 QUESTION: A citizen -- a citizen who was not
18 an employee, however. Is that not true?

19 MR. ELROD: So far as I know, this is the --
20 the first employee case to reach this Court with a --
21 where a government employee was asserting a Bivens-type
22 claim.

23 QUESTION: Well, he might -- the government
24 employee might, as Justice Rehnquist suggests, have a
25 Bivens-type claim in some circumstances. The question

1 is whether he has a Bivens-type claim arising out of
2 government conduct or alleged government conduct for
3 which other remedies have been provided.

4 MR. ELROD: Well, with some deference, I
5 suggest that I have failed adequately to state what we
6 are complaining about. Your perception probably is
7 absolutely accurate on the basis of what I have said. I
8 want to make it abundantly clear that what we complain
9 of is something that took place before the wheels of the
10 governmental machinery were engaged.

11 It is a tort antecedent to the engagement of
12 the wheels of that machinery. It is a tort by one in
13 place of power where the other -- in a place where the
14 -- the tortfeasors entering into the conspiracy would
15 otherwise not have any meaning unless he were in that
16 place of power.

17 We are not complaining about the personnel
18 action as qua personnel action. We are complaining
19 about a tort by Doctor or Mr. Lucas in concocting and
20 arranging and procuring what amounts by -- by analogy to
21 the malicious prosecution of administrative proceedings.

22 QUESTION: Mr. Elrod, in the Bivens case,
23 following up on the Chief Justice's question, there was
24 no other remedy available to Bivens, was there?

25 MR. ELROD: There -- arguably, the New York

1 remedy as tort law remedies were rather meaningless, and
2 of course, the --

3 QUESTION: Well, you realize that my next
4 question is going to be that this one wasn't remedyless?

5 MR. ELROD: He had -- he had --

6 QUESTION: You had a remedy in your case.

7 MR. ELROD: He had a remedy. He had a partial
8 remedy just as --

9 QUESTION: Well, how do you say this is a
10 Bivens case? The Bivens case didn't have but one remedy.

11 MR. ELROD: Well, in Carlson --

12 QUESTION: Your case has two remedies.

13 MR. ELROD: In Carlson, Mr. Justice Marshall,
14 in Carlson against Green, the first issue assumed that
15 the allegations of the complaint would support an action
16 under the Federal Tort Claims Act. Notwithstanding
17 that, this Court held that the remedies were cumulative
18 and parallel and that the, as I -- as I perceive Green,
19 the ruling, and that the FTCA claim or remedy did not
20 bar a Bivens remedy.

21 QUESTION: Well, why do you say it's a
22 Bivens-type case?

23 MR. ELROD: Because it's directly under the
24 Constitution --

25 QUESTION: You're relying on another case, not

1 Bivens.

2 MR. ELROD: Well, Bivens is an extension of
3 Carlson. It's a Bivens type. We would speak of
4 Clifford Trust and Totten Trust and so forth. It's
5 taken on a generic secondary meaning. An action brought
6 directly under the Constitution without intervening
7 enactment by Congress authorizing the federal courts to
8 entertain such an action.

9 QUESTION: Mr. Elrod, I suppose one could say
10 that there are some advantages in going the Bivens
11 route, if you have it, over the administrative route.
12 But there are other advantages in going the
13 administrative route over the Bivens route. Am I
14 correct in --

15 MR. ELROD: Eminently so, sir. As a practical
16 matter, I do not know why anybody other than a pioneer
17 would start a Bivens-type suit, a crusader, a pioneer,
18 or a Don Quixote.

19 QUESTION: Now, did he recover some \$30,000 in
20 back pay before he was reinstated?

21 MR. ELROD: At the time of his reinstatement
22 under the Back Pay Act, as amended, he received full pay.

23 QUESTION: And that amounted to some \$30,000?

24 MR. ELROD: Some \$30,000. It's not in this
25 record, but it had to be true. Upon which he paid taxes

1 and upon which his insurance was deducted.

2 He has -- his economic losses, while they
3 embrace the matter of attorney's fees and of lost leave
4 time, they are not of great moment in this case. The
5 dignitary elements are: the right of the individual to
6 -- to be free from this type of tyrannical action by a
7 middle-level martinet.

8 QUESTION: On your theory, is it not true that
9 a great, great number of employee discharges or failures
10 to get promotions or tenure or whatever in government
11 might well be open to both the Civil Service remedy and
12 the remedy that you are seeking here? That is, in many,
13 many cases, the allegations -- in 27 years I have seen
14 hundreds of them now in the federal courts -- many, many
15 cases the allegation is that the boss was biased, that
16 the hearing board was not impartial, that somebody was
17 out to get him and that sort of thing. All those would
18 add up to a Bivens tort claim, at least, too, would they
19 not?

20 MR. ELROD: On paper. Particularly since
21 Harlow against Nixon -- or rather Fitzgerald against
22 Harlow, I should think that they would be rather easily
23 disposed of, if not on motion to dismiss, then by -- on
24 motion for summary judgment interposed by a government
25 lawyer at no expense to the defendant.

1 QUESTION: Well, in 1883, if that was the year
2 when Congress created what we now call the Civil Service
3 System, was not the purpose of providing a remedy that
4 would be inexpensive and fair and not put him -- put the
5 employee to going into the courts?

6 MR. ELROD: I don't read anything in the
7 Pendleton Act that has anything to do with remedies. I
8 may have misread it. It created a merit system,
9 partially eliminated the spoils system, said that people
10 who habitually used too much alcohol couldn't be
11 employees, and created a Civil Service Commission. And
12 then over the course of time we have the housekeeping
13 details gradually developing until we have some remedies
14 coming in with more to follow.

15 QUESTION: Prior to that -- prior to that
16 there was no real remedy at all, was there?

17 MR. ELROD: Initially, it was hortatory ,
18 insofar as -- in remedial terms.

19 The government in this case, I don't believe,
20 will make or has made any serious pretense of
21 demonstrating that Congress explicitly has provided an
22 alternative remedy. I said this was an alternative for
23 a Bivens-type remedy, in effect.

24 I do not read the several successive Civil
25 Service statutes to which the government refers as

1 occupying the field or as evincing an intention on the
2 part of Congress to preclude this Court from inferring
3 remedies. Bivens was decided in 1971. Congress has
4 been in session several times since then. In 1974 it
5 adopted the -- amended the Federal Tort Claims Act by
6 creating a remedy which it explicitly stated to be
7 parallel -- I suppose I could I get into the quagmire of
8 the legislative history -- for which there is some data
9 to support the conclusion that it conceived it was
10 creating a parallel remedy.

11 In 1978, which -- in an act which take effect
12 -- took effect after the effective date of Mr. Bush's
13 reinstatement, Congress undertook to enact
14 whistle-blower protection legislation. It did not in
15 terms exclude Bivens, nor do I -- I submit did it
16 manifest an intent to occupy the field. But Congress
17 has left Bivens in place for whatever the claimant.

18 Now, we have then a civil servant who either
19 has or doesn't have the -- is entitled or is not
20 entitled to the same measure of recovery for the same
21 wrong as the citizenry at large. If he's not -- I
22 frankly do not perceive a viable reason why he shouldn't
23 be -- but if he's not, we all need to know it.

24 The -- we have a civil servant who is either
25 entitled to full recovery -- in full recovery against

1 the federal functionary as he would be against a state
2 functionary under 1983 28 -- 42 U.S.C. in 1983, the
3 Civil Rights Act. There is no question that recovery
4 could be had, that they could carry out under the Civil
5 Rights Act or under the Common Law analogues of
6 malicious prosecution.

7 This alternative, this postulated remedy does
8 not make Mr. Bush whole, it does not deter like-minded
9 bureaucrats from doing by some other means what we aver
10 that Dr. Lucas did in this case.

11 QUESTION: Mr. Elrod, do you suppose Congress
12 could expressly adopt remedies saying that they intended
13 to provide a cause of action here that would be a
14 substitute for Bivens but a cause of action that would
15 not grant punitive damages or attorney's fees?

16 MR. ELROD: Yes, ma'am.

17 QUESTION: Would that be all right?

18 MR. ELROD: I have to --

19 QUESTION: So it isn't a constitutional
20 requirement thing that these remedies be provided.

21 MR. ELROD: It's a constitutional requirement
22 that all litigant assemblies situated receive similar
23 treatment.

24 QUESTION: So Congress couldn't provide
25 something otherwise even if it expressly intended to do

1 so?

2 MR. ELROD: It could limit it to government
3 employees, in my judgment.

4 QUESTION: Congress could not --

5 MR. ELROD: Without some demonstration --

6 QUESTION: -- expressly limit a remedy to
7 government employees, in your view, under the
8 Constitution?

9 MR. ELROD: Not -- and not in view of the
10 careful treatment which this Court has given similar
11 problems in such cases as CSC against Letter Carriers
12 and in BMW against Mitchell where it has searched and
13 strained and required experiential empirical data to
14 justify the restriction.

15 CHIEF JUSTICE BURGER: Mr. Geller.

16 ORAL ARGUMENT OF KENNETH S. GELLER, ESQ.,
17 ON BEHALF OF THE UNITED STATES, RESPONDENT

18 MR. GELLER: Thank you, Mr. Chief Justice, and
19 may it please the Court:

20 The fundamental flaw in petitioner's position
21 is that it starts from the erroneous premise that a
22 cause of action for damages based on an alleged
23 constitutional violation is an essential ingredient of
24 the constitutional right itself.

25 Based on this faulty assumption which confuses

1 rights and remedies, petitioner asks as he did a moment
2 ago why should federal employees be deprived of this
3 right when state employees, for example, in a comparable
4 situation would be able to bring a personal damages
5 action in federal court.

6 And the answer is an obvious but nonetheless
7 extremely important one. State employees can bring suit
8 because Congress in Section 1983 has expressly
9 legislated a cause of action for damages.

10 Now, Congress has not done so with respect to
11 federal employees such as petitioner. Instead, Congress
12 has set up an elaborate and comprehensive administrative
13 mechanism, followed by judicial review, as a means of
14 remedying adverse personnel decisions in federal
15 employment, including personnel decisions alleged to be
16 based on some unconstitutional motivation.

17 Now, this administrative scheme can provide
18 adequate make-whole relief, and it represents the
19 product of literally a century's worth of careful
20 balancing of the rights of federal employees and the
21 demands of the federal employment relationship. And we
22 submit that it would be an unwarranted intrusion into an
23 area plainly reserved to Congress if this Court were to
24 create an additional damages remedy superimposed on top
25 of the remedy Congress has provided, absent any

1 statutory authority to do so.

2 Now, this case is, of course, merely the
3 latest in a series of constitutional damages actions
4 that this Court has considered in the dozen years since
5 Bivens was decided. But it's important to realize at
6 the outset that this case is fundamentally different
7 from any of the prior cases. This case is unlike Bivens
8 itself because in Bivens Congress hadn't addressed the
9 remedial question at all. The argument made in Bivens
10 was that the claimant in that case should be relegated
11 to his remedies under state tort law.

12 And this case is also unlike Davis against
13 Passman because in Davis the claimant was expressly
14 included -- excluded by Congress from a comprehensive
15 statutory remedial scheme and would have been left
16 entirely remedyless absent the Bivens action.

17 Finally, it is unlike Carlson against Green
18 because in Carlson Congress had set up a judicial remedy
19 that was not designed with constitutional violations in
20 mind and was plainly intended to serve as a complement
21 to rather than as a replacement for a Bivens remedy.

22 Now, in each of these cases, before allowing a
23 Bivens remedy, the court ensured that Congress either
24 had not addressed the question of what remedy to provide
25 or had addressed it in a way that was not intended to

1 occupy the field. The court, in effect, was legislating
2 interstitially. It was carrying out Congress' intent by
3 providing a remedy in a case properly within its
4 jurisdiction, but in a way that didn't frustrate
5 Congress' primary lawmaking power.

6 Now, the question here is very different.
7 Congress has provided an express statutory remedy. That
8 remedy is in the Civil Service laws. And it's expressly
9 designed to deal with, among other things,
10 constitutional violations of the kind alleged by
11 petitioner here. And Congress has done so in a
12 comprehensive way that really leaves very little doubt
13 that that remedy is intended to be exclusive.

14 We believe that Congress' intent should be
15 followed here as well as it was in Bivens, Davis, and
16 Carlson.

17 Now, the Court has organized uniquely into
18 Congress' intent in the past by essentially asking two
19 questions: First, does there exist another federal
20 remedy equally effective in the view of Congress?
21 Second, if there is no other available remedy, are there
22 nonetheless special factors counseling hesitation such
23 that Congress couldn't have intended the courts to
24 intrude into a particular area simply based on the power
25 of the jurisdictional ground?

1 And we believe that both questions lead to the
2 answer given by the Court of Appeals in this case.

3 QUESTION: What ground did the Court of
4 Appeals go on?

5 MR. GELLER: The Court of Appeals focused on
6 the -- on the second ground, the counseling hesitation,
7 although in the course of it it described the very
8 comprehensive Civil Service remedies that -- that the --
9 that federal employees have -- have available to it. I
10 think the court might have done that on remand after
11 this Court decided Carlson against Green because there
12 was a statement in Carlson about requiring an explicit
13 statement by Congress.

14 QUESTION: So they didn't -- they didn't come
15 out with the ultimate conclusion that you suggest in
16 your first argument that Congress intended the remedy
17 provided to be exclusive?

18 MR. GELLER: Well, they didn't in those terms,
19 Justice White, but both questions are really designed to
20 answer the same question, which is: What is the intent
21 of Congress? Did Congress intend the courts to --

22 QUESTION: So you are just presenting one
23 ground, not --

24 MR. GELLER: We rely on both grounds here,
25 although we think that the -- the way to analyze this

1 case is to look and see as the court did in Bivens and
2 Davis and in Carlson whether there was some other
3 adequate remedy available to the claimant, and if there
4 is, and if Congress intended that remedy to be
5 exclusive, that's really the end of the judicial inquiry.

6 QUESTION: Well, if we disagree with that, if
7 we didn't embrace the Court of Appeals' rationale, you
8 nevertheless suggest we affirm on --

9 MR. GELLER: Absolutely, yes. We argue --

10 QUESTION: -- the ground you present?

11 MR. GELLER: Yes. We argue both, we argue
12 both of these points below. And as I say, there are
13 really separate ways of answering the same question,
14 which is: What was Congress' intent?

15 Let me say that this is at bottom just a
16 federal employment dispute. Petitioner was given a
17 two-job grade demotion from GS-14 to GS-12 following a
18 disagreement with officials in his agency about internal
19 agency practices. Now, his superiors claim he was
20 demoted for publicly making false and misleading
21 statements about his job that disrupted his agency's
22 activities and undermined employee morale.

23 And petitioner claims on the other hand that
24 he was in fact demoted simply for justifiably criticizing
25 his superiors.

1 This is the sort of dispute that in the
2 private sector would be resolved internally or by
3 contract or arbitration or something like that. And in
4 the federal employment sphere as well, the court has
5 been extremely deferential to the executive branch and
6 to Congress in settling these courts of -- these kinds
7 of internal employment disagreements.

8 So even in the absence of any guidance by
9 Congress, we think that this is an area that counsels
10 hesitation in the implication of a Bivens remedy. But
11 here we don't have congressional silence at all. What
12 we have is an extremely elaborate, comprehensive,
13 adequate system of administrative and judicial remedies
14 that Congress has set up precisely to deal with the sort
15 of question that is raised in this case.

16 Aggrieved employees can challenge adverse
17 personnel actions, and including personnel actions
18 claimed to violate their constitutional rights. They
19 can pursue -- pursue those remedies through two layers
20 of administrative review, followed by judicial review.
21 And if they eventually prevail, they are entitled to
22 complete make-whole relief. They can get back pay, as
23 Mr. Bush did, reinstatement, restoration of all
24 employment benefits, correction of any personnel records.

25 The Congress clearly thought when it was

1 passing the Back Pay Act, it was passing complete
2 perfecting legislation to make the employee whole. And
3 this Court said much the same thing in Samson against
4 Murray and Arnett against Kennedy.

5 In fact, it's quite peculiar in a sense that
6 the petitioners would argue that a Bivens action is more
7 effective than -- than what Congress has already
8 provided for someone who claims -- whose claim is based
9 -- basically an employment dispute. Someone who claims
10 he was demoted or fired, it would seem that any remedy
11 that didn't include something like reinstatement would
12 be ineffective. And yet we're told here today that the
13 only effective remedy is a constitutional damages action.

14 Indeed, petitioner pursued these very remedies
15 and, I said -- as I said a moment ago, received
16 reinstatement, back pay, and restoration of all benefits.

17 Now, we submit that when Congress has spoken
18 as clearly as it has here, there is simply no room left
19 for the Court to legislate interstitially. There is no
20 need for the Court to create a damages remedy to
21 vindicate constitutional rights, because Congress has
22 already announced the remedy it believes should be
23 applied in that situation. And that remedy is plainly
24 an adequate one.

25 If the Court's statement in Bivens, Carlson

1 and Davis about Congress' ability to substitute for a
2 Bivens remedy with something that it believes to be
3 equally effective means anything, it has to mean that
4 Congress can do what it did in this case in the case of
5 federal employees.

6 And I think what the Court meant in Carlson
7 when it talked about an explicit statement, requiring
8 explicit statement by Congress, I don't think the Court
9 meant anything more than Congress had to be legislating
10 with the Constitution in mind, unlike, for example, in
11 Carlson against Green, where the claim was that a tort
12 claim remedy was a substitute for a Bivens action even
13 though Congress in passing that tort claims remedy
14 certainly wasn't legislating with the Constitution in
15 mind. In fact, it wasn't even enough under the tort
16 claims remedy to prove a constitutional violation, the
17 plaintiff had to mold his claim into the form of a
18 common law tort in order to recover.

19 But here the Civil Service remedies are
20 clearly addressed to, among other things, constitutional
21 violations. In fact, as we point out, one of the early
22 Civil Service laws, the Lloyd and Fallon Act, was passed
23 to prevent the sort, the same sort of adverse personnel
24 actions that petitioner Bush claims he suffered in this
25 case, where Congress was concerned that Presidents Taft

1 and Roosevelt had issued gag orders preventing executive
2 branch employees from -- from complaining to Congress
3 about abuse or mismanagement in the Federal Government.

4 So we think that what Congress has done here
5 is in -- it is to pass a remedy that certainly in its
6 view, and the Court said in Carlson against Green that
7 it has to be equally effective in the view of Congress,
8 not in the view of plaintiffs or even in the view of
9 this Court. And we think that that is what they have
10 done here and that the Court of Appeals therefore
11 properly affirmed the dismissal of petitioner's
12 complaint for failure to state a cause of action
13 directly under the Constitution. And we would ask that
14 that judgment be affirmed.

15 If there are no further questions?

16 CHIEF JUSTICE BURGER: Thank you.

17 Do you have anything further, Mr. Elrod? You
18 have 4 minutes remaining.

19 ORAL ARGUMENT OF WILLIAM HARVEY ELROD, ESQ.,

20 ON BEHALF OF WILLIAM BUSH, PETITIONER

21 MR. ELROD: May I submit to the Court a close
22 and careful collation of the legislative materials which
23 the government itself cites in this case will not
24 disclose that Congress has ever done more in the area of
25 remedies for the type of grievance that Mr. Bush has

1 than it did for the type of grievance that Mrs. Green
2 had in Carlson against Green.

3 I submit that it is erroneous to say that we
4 complain of a personnel action. We complain of the
5 procuring of this personnel action which resulted in our
6 being punished for having exercised a constitutionally
7 protected freedom.

8 CHIEF JUSTICE BURGER: Thank you, gentlemen.
9 The case is submitted.

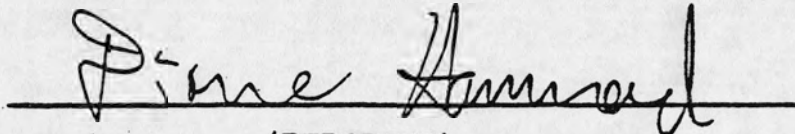
10 (Whereupon, at 2:27 p.m., the case in the
11 above-entitled matter was submitted.)
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CERTIFICATION

Alderson Reporting Company, Inc., hereby certifies that the attached pages represent an accurate transcription of electronic sound recording of the oral argument before the Supreme Court of the United States in the Matter of: WILLIAM C. BUSH, Petitioner v. WILLIAM R. LUCAS # 81-469

and that these attached pages constitute the original transcript of the proceedings for the records of the court.

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