

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 16, 2002

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE STATEMENT

Robert A. DuPuy, Major League Baseball President and Chief Operating Officer, made the following statement regarding the lawsuit filed by the former limited partners of the Montreal Expos:

"Regrettably, the former limited partners of the Montreal Expos and self-styled leading citizens of Canada, now the limited partners of the Florida Marlins, have decided to engage in a public relations campaign and file a frivolous lawsuit naming among others Major League Baseball and its Commissioner.

"The suit has no basis in fact or in law. We intend to pursue our defenses vigorously and will seek sanctions against those responsible for bringing these baseless claims.

"The fact is that Major League Baseball repeatedly encouraged these limited partners to take a more active role in the Expos and, when necessary, to fund team expenses. They refused to do so despite our pleas. In the late 1990s, these limited partners were unhappy with Claude Brochu, the former General Partner. They embraced the emergence of a new owner, Jeffrey Loria, whom they brought to Baseball, not vice versa.

"When the Expos incurred operating losses during the 2000 season, the limited partners refused to participate in the 'cash calls' sought by Loria to offset those losses. Then, when they were offered the opportunity to invest money to fund the losses or pay off loans, they again refused to participate. As a result, Loria, as he had a right to do under the partnership agreement, himself funded the losses, and purchased additional interests in the club, resulting in a dilution of the limited partners' ownership interests.

"The Commissioner's Office, the Commissioner, and I had absolutely nothing to do with the losses, the 'cash calls', or the dilution of their interests. To the contrary, Major League Baseball repeatedly urged that the limited partners remain involved. Nevertheless, they repeatedly stated that they did not want to put

additional money into the club. Contrary to their statements that they are trying to preserve Baseball for Montreal, the limited partners repeatedly told us that they would not put any additional money into the Club. They told us that they did not oppose the contraction of the Montreal Expos, as long as they got paid out, but that they did not want public blame for the team's relocation or contraction. Now, despite their repeated unwillingness to step up and be accounted for when it mattered, they are attempting to blame the franchise's current situation on Major League Baseball.

"The limiteds first refused to provide additional capital when requested by Claude Brochu, the general partner who preceded Loria. They then refused to provide additional capital to Loria. They repeatedly refused to help the Montreal Expos and were unable to obtain a new stadium or feasible plan for a new stadium in the City of Montreal. Now, they are looking for a third party to blame, namely Loria and the Commissioner's Office. However, this should be a private dispute between the partners. It has nothing to do with the Commissioner's Office, nothing to do with contraction, and nothing to do with Major League Baseball's purchase of the Expos. It should be viewed for what it is -- a shameless attempt to obtain through publicity what they know they are not entitled to legally.

"Their contention that somehow the clubs or, specifically, these limited partners were unaware of the time of contraction, the identity of contraction candidates, the sale of the Montreal Expos to Major League Baseball, and the sale of the Florida Marlins to Baseball Expos Limited Partnership is wholly specious. Every decision was made in full accordance with Baseball protocol under the Major League Constitution and upon the unanimous recommendation of the Executive Council. The limited partners were aware of every step taken in the process.

"As a sign of their true motives -- rather than send a letter, or lodge a complaint with the Commissioner, or call to discuss the matter with the Commissioner's Office -- the limiteds chose to contact the media in New York the day before filing the complaint in Florida and call a press conference touting their factually incorrect assertions.

"The limited partners own a percentage of the partnership which owns the Florida Marlins. They are better off financially now than they were when they owned a comparable percentage of the Montreal Expos. Their claims are wholly without merit."

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Contact: Richard Levin or Patrick Courtney (212) 931-7878