

White House Suggests Palin Made Light of Son's Arrest

The White House pushed back on Thursday against former Republican vice presidential candidate Sarah Palin's comments on domestic violence, saying the issues she raised on the campaign trail are some the Obama administration takes "quite seriously."

Palin's son was arrested on suspicion of assaulting a woman and carrying a gun while intoxicated, police in the family's Alaska hometown said on Tuesday.

In a speech she made Wednesday to support leading Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump, Palin linked her son's charges to his experience in the U.S. military and blamed the Obama administration for not doing enough to support its veterans.

"I can certainly relate to the families who ... feel these ramifications of PTSD," she said according to media reports, using an acronym referring to post-traumatic stress disorder.

"And it makes me realize more than ever it is now or never for the sake of America's finest that we have a commander in chief who will respect them."

White House spokesman Josh Earnest, asked about the comments at a news briefing on Thursday, said the instinct of many people is to "make light" of some of the rhetoric on the campaign trail, particularly from Palin.

"The fact is domestic violence is not a joke. Gun violence is not a joke. Problems with addiction are not a joke and the ... sacrifices that many of our men and women in uniform make, for our safety and security, are not a joke."

Earnest said while the fodder may come easy, “in this case, the issues that she’s talking about are quite serious and are certainly issues that we take quite seriously here.”

He did not know if the president had seen the remarks, Earnest added.

(Editing by Cynthia Osterman)

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