

EMPTYWHEEL EXPLAINS AGAIN AND AGAIN AND AGAIN ABOUT OBSTRUCTION OF JUSTICE

Here's my Guardian column explaining all the involvement of Cheney and Bush in the Plame outing—which explains why Bush didn't want Libby to lose his ability to refuse to testify.

On June 9, 2003, just one day after his national security advisor, Condoleezza Rice, got beaten up on the Sunday shows for claiming no one in the administration knew that the Niger intelligence was bunk, George Bush expressed concern about the allegations. Scooter Libby passed on that concern to vice president Cheney. Bush's concern set off a chain of events that ended up in the outing of a CIA spy, Valerie Plame, and the indictment and conviction of Scooter Libby.

Yesterday, George Bush attempted to prevent that chain of events from continuing any further. He commuted Scooter Libby's 30-month sentence. Rather than serving time in jail, Libby will remain free, with a fine and probation as the only remaining punishments for lying and obstructing a criminal investigation. But the real effect of Bush's actions is to prevent Libby from revealing the truth about Bush's – and vice president Cheney's – own actions in the leak. By commuting Libby's sentence, Bush protected himself and his vice president from potential criminal exposure for their actions in the CIA Leak. As such, Libby's commutation is nothing short of

another obstruction of justice.

[snip]

There are many unanswered questions about the roles of the president, the vice president, and Libby in the leak of Valerie Plame's identity. Did Bush really ask Libby to take the lead on all this? Did the president declassify Plame's identity so Libby could leak it to the press? Did Cheney learn – and tell Libby – that Plame was covert? Those questions all point squarely at Bush and Cheney personally. But because of Bush's personal intervention, he has made sure that Scooter Libby won't be answering those questions anytime soon.

And here's a link to my appearance on Democracy Now this morning.

Â