

A THOUSAND WORDS



Remember this photo? This particular version is from Stephen Crowley of the New York Times—it's part of a slideshow they've got up to commemorate the demise of Turdblossom. Go look through the slideshow and tell me whether you think they're emphasizing the centrality of scandal to Rove's tenure (there's a hot picture of Rove and Luskin in there, for example, walking out of Prettyman).

In addition to Crowley's, there are a number of other versions of this photo. I've always wondered whether the photo (all versions of it) wasn't intended as a key to the secrets of the Administration, one the insider journalists all know the meaning of but won't share it with us.

Indulge me, for the moment, and pretend that it is such a key. Let's review the status of the people involved:

Scottie McClellan: Will go down in history as the least credible shill since Ron Zeigler,Â Scottie had the unenviable role of telling the press that he had talked to Rove and Libby and they had assured Scottie they had nothing to do with the Plame leak. Scottie left the White House in April 20, at the same time Rove lost his policy portfolio, and just days before Karl Rove's last appearance before the grand jury. For the record, Scottie's departure was weepy, though not so weepy as Turdblossom's was today.

Turdblossom: Say ... did you hear that Turdblossom will be leaving the White House at the end of the month?

Scooter Libby: Libby, of course, was the first person in this picture to leave, back in October 2005 before he got his get-out-of-jail-free card. He's now a convicted felon. Notably, Libby is the one person in this picture who's not a member of the Texas Mafia (assuming they gave

Cheney membership in his first paycheck while CEO of Halliburton).

Dan Bartlett: Remember Bartlett? He was the last member of Bush's inner circle to step down unexpectedly, in his case at the beginning of June (not long after Rove's right-hand chick Sara Taylor departed, it should be said). Just for kicks, look how closely Bartlett's comments, upon stepping down, resemble Rove's: the "spend more time with family" excuse, the focus on his long-standing ties to Bush, the denial he'll work in any 2008 campaign. Though Bartlett, unlike Rove, isn't going to write a book. When Bartlett left, they brought in Ed Gillespie, who has gotten the White House out of certain legal jams in the past.

Harriet Miers (she's hiding behind Bartlett): Miers went from being glorified secretary to White House Counsel to SCOTUS nominee, but things went downhill from there. (Say, did you know Miers withdrew her name from consideration for SCOTUS just one day before Libby was indicted?) At the beginning of the year she resigned (effective the end of January), and after some time, she ended up back at the same firm she worked at before going to the White House. Like Rove, she was intimately involved in firing 9 or more US Attorneys, and also like Rove, when she was subpoenaed to appear before Congress, she refused.

Which leaves one person, in this entire photo, still employed by the White House: **Dick Cheney**. Now, have no idea what this photo means even if it is some kind of key to the Administration. But I find it awfully curious that Dick alone remains in this Administration.