

NOVAK'S COUNTER- PROLIFERATION PROBLEM

Thank Jeebus for public libraries, where you can get propaganda written by conservative writers without putting any incremental money in their pocket. Yesterday I exchanged Hayes for Novak. While the Novak book has clearly been vetted more closely than Novak's blabber-fest last year, I'm just on page 6 and already Novak has a big problem. Here's how Novak describes his potty-mouthed encounter with Joe Wilson's friend:

The man then goaded me with the criticism that I was soft on Bush, and argued that Ambassador Wilson "really had nailed the president on Meet the Press." He then asked what I thought of Wilson. "I think he's an asshole," I said, using the same inelegant description that had crossed my mind when I saw him lecturing in the NBC green room two days earlier. The man responded that Wilson had gone to Africa on a CIA mission and discovered intelligence that the president ignored. I blurted out the information I had just learned, telling him Wilson was no intelligence expert but had been sent on the mission to Niger by his wife, who worked on counterproliferation at the CIA. (6)

Poor little Novak got goaded into swearing...

This version is important because it differs from what Wilson's friend reported—to Wilson at least.

"Wilson's an asshole. The CIA sent him. His wife, Valerie, works for the CIA. She's a weapons of mass destruction specialist. She sent him."

But if, in fact, Novak told Wilson's friend that Plame worked in counterproliferation and the friend testified accordingly, then Novak would have to explain where he learned that from. Novak claims Armitage told him that Plame worked in counterproliferation:

Why would the CIA send Joseph Wilson, not an expert in nuclear proliferation and with no intelligence experience, on the mission to Niger? "Well," Armitage replied, "you know his wife works at CIA, and she suggested that he be sent to Niger." "His wife works at CIA?" I asked. "Yeah, in counterproliferation."

So if we were to go by Novak's story alone, the fact that Novak told Wilson's friend that Plame worked in counterproliferation would be no problem. Armitage told Novak and then Novak told Wilson's friend. Just like DC is supposed to work.