CONYERS TO ROVE: NO, IT'S NOT AN OPEN BOOK TEST…

(Updated with Conyers video—did I mention he seems cranky of late?)

…And, besides, we want to see you sweat.

Karl Rove, still trying to back out of Robert Luskin's taunt that Rove would be happy to testify, tried to get John Conyers to settle on written responses to questions. Conyers, who's **finally** beginning to lose his temper, said no.

> Our position remains, however, that since your client has made a number of on-the-record comments on these subjects to the media, and in light of your (now modified) statement that Mr. Rove would be willing to testify, we can see no justification for his refusal to speak on the record to the Committee. Please contact Committee counsel or respond in writing no later than May 21 as to whether your client will make himself available to the Committee for questioning.
>
> [snip]
>
> Your letter also suggests that we address written questions to Mr. Rove, which may reflect a misunderstanding of Committee procedure. Although we do often address written questions to witnesses, **that occurs after live testimony**, which is critical in order to allow the follow up and give-and-take that is necessary to inquiries of this nature. Since you indicate Mr. Rove is now willing to submit written answers to questions, which by definition would be recorded in a manner similar to a transcript, we do not understand why he

> would not submit to providing transcribed answers to live questions, as he has done in media interviews. [my emphasis]

Actually, Conyers would even agree to an almost-open-book test, providing Rove the questions before he testified.

> We are willing to consider other possible accommodations, such as providing a list of initial questions that may be asked.

I thought Turdblossom was smarter than this—why does he need so much help to pass a simple little test?

One answer may have to do with scope. Rove is on the hook, of course, for all his blabbing about the Siegelman affair. But he appears to want to limit all questions to that narrow subject, something Conyers is unwilling to let him do.

> We are writing in response to your May 9 letter with respect to the invitation to Karl Rove to testify before the House Judiciary Committee concerning the politicization of the Department of Justice, including allegations regarding the prosecution of former Governor Don Siegelman. Because your letter appears to reflect several misunderstandings concerning the subjects we wish to question Mr. Rove about…
>
> [snip]
>
> As our previous letters have made clear, the Siegelman case is a principal reason for our invitation to Mr. Rove. But as we have also explained, that issue cannot be separated from the broader concerns about politicization within the Department and the U.S. Attorney firings, and Mr. Rove has made on-the-record comments to the media about all

> these interrelated matters. This is different from the case of Harriet Miers, who has not made such public statements and has not been linked to the Siegelman case.

I'm pretty sure Robert Luskin would be pulling his hair out about now, if he had any. It's a really tough sell to argue that Rove can blab all he wants about Siegelman, but it's still privileged material. But Conyers is clearly using Karl's Siegelman comments to haul Karl's fat ass into HJC to at least force him to answer questions about his role in firing David Iglesias, and others.

I also can't help but wonder whether Karl wants to limit testimony to Siegelman because of something he noticed on HJC's website. HJC has put PatFitz's QFRs right there alongside all the material on politicized prosecutions. The only thing PatFitz mentioned regarding politicized prosecutions had to do with the revelations that have since come out in the Rezko trial—revelations that put at least 3 people, some of them solidly corrupt Republicans like Turdblossom, on the record with hearsay evidence about Rove working to fire PatFitz. And since Rove has already sent his BFF Michael Isikoff out to figure out what evidence there is against him, it sure seems like Rove doesn't want to testify about the conversations he had with Bob Kjellander about firing Patrick Fitzgerald.

Luskin has probably resigned Turdblossom to having to testify in some sense or another, given all the blabbing Rove has done. But he sure seems intent on keeping these other damaging things out of it.