

ON THE SERENDIPITY OF MIS-READINGS

Rut roh. Some White House reporter didn't read my post closely enough:

Today On Holden's Obsession With The Gaggle

By Holden Caulfield

Put Impeachment Back On The Table

Q Dana, I wanted to ask you, I know you don't want to go line-by-line with the whole book thing, the Scott McClellan book – but I'm thinking you may want to address this because there's something out there. Not having the benefit of having the book in front of me, there's an allegation apparently made by Scott in the book that a reporter shouted a question to the President, on a trip that Scott had been with him on, just as they were getting on Air Force One, and it was Valerie Plame-related. Basically, it prompted Scott to ask the President directly, "Were you the one who authorized the leaking of Valerie Plame's name?" And the President apparently told Scott, "Yes, I was."

MS. PERINO: I don't know. Obviously I wasn't there and – obviously I don't know the context. I think the – it's hard for me to say. I don't have the book in front of me either and I don't know.

But what I do know is that what we have said before, which is defending the President's decision to go to war is something that we have done repeatedly, and the suggestion that the President

had sent Joe Wilson to Africa was false. And so I don't know if that was what it was in regards to or not, so I'm – I don't know.

Q But I mean, if that's an allegation that's out there, that the President is supposedly responsible for the leaking of Valerie Plame's name, is that something you want to –

MS. PERINO: I don't think that's what Scott says in the book and I think that everyone should go back and look at it a little bit more carefully. I don't think that's what he says.

Q Can you comment more generally about whether the President has ever authorized the leaking of classified information?

MS. PERINO: I'm not aware of that, no. And I also know that President Bush would never ask anyone to knowingly go out and lie. But do we defend the President's record vigorously? Yes, you bet we do. And I think – parts of the book that suggest that there was propaganda or – you know, I just don't know how substantiated that is in the book. I would ask to – you know, where, when, how, specifically? What are you talking about, were there charts, were there et cetera that you thought were lies? And I don't think that he's saying that either. So I just question the accounts.

As I think I made clear in the post that appears to have precipitated this question, Scottie McC only explicitly said that Bush authorized the leak of the NIE:

During the interview, Scottie revealed the two things that really pissed him off with the Bush Administration. First, being set up to lie by Karl Rove and

Scooter Libby. And second, learning that **Bush had-himself-authorized the selective leaking of the NIE.**

[snip]

But now we've got George Bush, confirming that he, the President of the United States, authorized the leaks of "this information." Now, though Scottie refers, obliquely, to "this information," **he explicitly refers only to the NIE.** [my emphasis]

The rest of the post, of course, showed that the NIE story is, at least in substantive part, a cover story for what an abundance of circumstantial evidence suggests was an order, on the part of Dick Cheney, to leak Valerie Wilson's identity, too.

Of course, the odds that Dana "Pig Missile" Perino would ever give me the opportunity to ask the question, "McC says Bush authorized the NIE leak, but since the NIE leak is a cover story, does that mean he authorized the Plame leak?" are approximately nil. So I'll take this misreading of my post as a surrogate.

Because, when you look at her answer, **she refuses to deny that Bush authorized the leak of Plame's identity.**

Once she recovers from her initial shock of being asked if the President authorized the leak of CIA spy, Dana "Pig Missile" correctly states that Scottie McC didn't say Bush authorized the leak of Plame's identity.

I don't think that's what Scott says in the book and I think that everyone should go back and look at it a little bit more carefully. I don't think that's what he says.

Dana Pig Missile also correctly denies that Bush authorized leaking classified information.

Q Can you comment more generally about whether the President has ever authorized the leaking of classified information?

MS. PERINO: I'm not aware of that, no.

Remember, the idea here was that—as soon as the President authorized a leak—then the information was effectively declassified. (Sort of. It's only declassified if you agree to say it came from a Former Hill Staffer.)

But, astoundingly, Dana Pig Missile's first response, before retreating to the classic non-denial denial that the President didn't send Joe to Niger (Jeebus, Pig Missile, no one ever said Bush sent Wilson! The idea was that Cheney had sent him!) is to refuse to say no.

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But what I do know is that what we have said before, which is defending the President's decision to go to war is something that we have done repeatedly, and the suggestion that the President had sent Joe Wilson to Africa was false. And so I don't know if that was what it was in regards to or not, so I'm — I don't know.

"I don't know ... I don't know ... it's hard for me to say ... I don't know ... I don't know ... I don't know."

Dana Pig Missile may be a beautiful blond who doesn't know the difference between the Bay of Pigs and the Cuban Missile Crisis. But she's not stupid enough to get stuck in the same situation that got Scottie McC into the position of covering for the Administration's lies in the first place. She's not going to deny

something—at least not something pertaining to the Plame investigation—when she doesn't know whether it's true or not.

I look forward to how she walks this back tomorrow.