

CONDI'S SUNDAY SHOWS

I'm going to continue my series on Scottie McC's chronology, but I wanted to talk about two more details surrounding the September 27 weekend first. This post is about what Condi knew and when she knew it.

I pointed out last week that it appears that Condi testified to having some kind of conversation with Bush about Rove's involvement in the Plame leak.

Waxman tells us what is redacted in Scottie's interview report.

In his FBI interview, Mr. McClellan told the FBI about discussions he had with the President and the Vice President. These passages, however, were redacted from the copies made available to the Committee.

And he implies that that's what was redacted from the other interviews, as well.

Similar passages were also redacted from other interviews.

There are no sound reasons for you to withhold the interviews with the President and the Vice President from the Committee or to redact passages like Mr. McClellan's discussions with the President and the Vice President.

From which we might conclude that those redacted passages in the Rove, Libby, Cathie Martin, and Condi interview reports are, at the very least, about

conversations with Bush or Cheney, and possibly, discussions specifically about the exoneration of Rove and Libby.

We know Rove could have testified about this—Scottie McC's book tells us that Rove told Bush directly that he was "innocent." Similarly, we know that Libby had such conversations with Cheney—in fact, passages describing those conversations appear, totally unredacted, in the grand jury testimony.

I'm not surprised that Cathie Martin had a conversation with (probably) Cheney about the leak. After all, the one email that had been destroyed and was subsequently turned over to prosecutors shows Martin and Jenny Mayfield closely watching for Scottie's exoneration of Libby. So we know that Mayfield and Martin were following that exoneration.

But Condi? We know almost nothing about Condi's testimony.

Now I'm just guessing from the context that that testimony might pertain to a conversation between Rice and Bush about which of Bush's top aides had claimed to be innocent of the leak. Wouldn't it be interesting if Bush went out of his way to tell Condi that Rove didn't leak Plame's name?

Which is why I find it all the more interesting that Scottie McC was asked—in his February 6, 2004 grand jury appearance—whether he had told Condi to exonerate Rove on the Sunday shows on September 28, 2003.

But there were a couple of questions they had not asked [in his FBI interviews]. Zeidenberg asked whether I'd told Condi Rice that she should say that Karl was not involved before she went on the Sunday talk shows back on September 28, 2003. (Rice hadn't in fact

addressed this specific topic on those shows.)

I thought hard. I knew I'd spoken to Condi that Saturday—the same Saturday I'd called Rove after first learning that he'd spoken to Novak and he'd assured me he had not been involved in leaking classified information—as I usually did with administration officials ahead of their Sunday show appearances. It was a way to prep them for responses to likely questions and make sure everyone was on the same page; we knew the Sunday Post piece would likely prompt questions about possible White House involvement in the leak. Had I coached Condi on what to say to Karl Rove?

I said I might have but could not remember with certainty. I indicated it was more likely I told her what I'd said publicly, and suggested she could refer back to what I said without getting into it herself.

For some reason, Peter Zeidenberg had been led to believe that Scottie McC might have been instructing Condi to exonerate Rove on the Sunday shows (and remember, by this point, they would have had a slew of talking point documents the likes of which this White House used to prep for things like Sunday shows).

Using that information—and the suggestion from Waxman that some of Condi's testimony, potentially related to conversations with George Bush about exonerating Rove or Libby, was redacted—let's tweak the chronology I did in this post.

September 16: Rove tells Scottie McC he wasn't one of Novak's sources

September 26: NBC leaks news of investigation

September 27: Allen calls Rove, implying Rove is one of the 2 officials implicated in the 1X2X6 article; Rove tells Scottie McC a different story than he told him on September 16, admitting he talked to Novak, but denying he confirmed Plame's identity

September 27: Someone apparently instructs Rice "that she should say that Karl was not involved" on the Sunday shows

September 28: The WaPo reports the 1X2X6 story

September 29: George Bush tells Scottie McC that "Rove didn't do it"

Someone was wandering around instructing people to say "Rove didn't do it." And Scottie McC doesn't think it was him.