

# HJC: SCOTT MCCLELLAN TESTIMONY



Shoot, they snuck in and restarted the hearing while I was vomiting after the FISA vote. Watch along on CSPAN3 or the HJC feed.

Ric Keller is complaining that Scottie raised Bush's forgetfulness about his use of cocaine in the book.

Robert Wexler up. Your book raises questions about Admin, avoids accountability. How Scooter revealed identity of Plame. Inconceivable that Libby acted alone. President and VP have denied ordering this leak. You state that you cannot believe Bush ordered the leak. You do not defend Cheney in your book. Why not.

SM He keeps things close. I do not know his involvement. Cloud over VP. There's a lot of suspicion there. Questions not answered.

RW VP could have authorized the leak.

SM Can't rule it out.

RW We know Cheney tried to cover up leak. Cheney called you. VP starts to write, President asked Libby to stick neck in meat-grinder. Cheney is the only one left. The only suspect to have ordered the leak. More than enough to open up impeachment hearings. Pardon power to deflect investigation. Would be an abusive crime of highest order. Thank you for exposing some of the lies.

Goodlatte: Were you fired?

SM Three proposals for book.

Goodlatte: number of TV appearances? Should you have raised the allegations in the book earlier?

Linda Sanchez: Firing US Attorneys, pressure US Attorney PatFitz. To your knowledge, when Rove suggest to fire USAs, he had already appeared

before GJ in Plame. Aware of conversations about firing Fitz?

SM No

Sanchez Bush's promise to fire people. What prompted Bush to raise the bar?

SM Rove's involvement.

Sanchez Who should he have fired?

SM Rove

Sanchez Was Libby involved in getting you to vouch for him in press?

SM Yes. He talked to me, he also did talking points.

Sanchez Campaign to sell war, fall 2002. When did Bush decide US would go to war against Iraq.

SM Late November 2002. (Using Woodward as source.)

Issa Not going to be easy on you not going to be hard on you. It's a good read. You said you reflected for a period of time before you wrote the book. Had you reacted sooner you could have had an effect on the Administration. If you don't say anything, you're not going to have an effect on Administration. Had you reflected until November 5, then had the book come out. Would you have had an effect without affecting the election in process.

[Surprisingly, Issa isn't making any of the hits he might on intelligence, he's just whining that McC is going to make the Republicans lose the election.]

Issa Why can't you be George Will and write the essay early enough to affect the policy debate in real time?

SM I needed to give the full context.

Issa Not a timely fashion to affect this administration.

SM It could.

Issa My statement will stand. (Shorter Issa; the Administration is not going to start telling the truth now.) Next Administration will put a spokesperson. What guidance? Not part of spin? Report only prepared statement?

Sheila Jackson Lee Proud of you as a fellow Texas. Series of questions. Have you been paid to come to this hearing. Oath seriously? Truth? Distinguish payments made for book and willingness to come before us? Do you believe that Pres in instances of sincerity or belief misrepresented to American people facts? Iraq war?

SM less than candid, less than honest.

SJL telling an untruth?

SM Not completely truthful

SJL Hearings that would be in context of impeachment would be warranted on basis of untruth

SM Do not support impeachment

SJL instances of untruth being spoken.

SM Permanent campaign

SJL Wilson. Prior to leak of Plame's status, did you participate in discussion about Wilson and charges he had made?

SM Not directly involved. Talking points.

SJL What did you represent to public?

SM Still Deputy PS.

SJL Was Wilson treated fairly?

SM Wrong to start with anonymous effort to discredit him.

SJL Issue with Libby with issue of leaking. Intentional action inside White House?

SM I don't think President involved. In terms of intentional effort with Libby? A lot of suspicion.

SJL Leak did generate out of WH

SM At least three from WH

SJL Do American people need an airing?

SM Better to have the truth. Suspicion wouldn't be there. Bad strategy to keep info from public.

SJL WMD became singular prong to be frightened into conceding to war on Iraq. How much misrepresentation of threat of WMD?

SM Massive marketing effort on WMD and Al Qaeda. Reality not as urgent or serious as portrayed.

Lungren What your purpose is, being here? Not subpoenaed?

SM To shed light on this episode.

Lungren My colleagues refer to impeachment 4 different times. Impeachment off table. Whether what we're doing is Kucinich light? Asking you questions and extrapolate statements that members can infer lead to impeachment. You're not here for this purpose?

SM No.

Lungren Not here in AUMF on Iraq. Violation of sovereignty of Kuwait. [yadda yadda yadda, other reasons we went to war]

SM Larger chief rationale were WMD and Al Qaeda. Where the emphasis was. Senate Intelligence Committee reflected that in recent report.

Steve Cohen Bush came with great potential. What events or people led him astray.

SM Saw this that the Washington game is played. Partly based on what he saw happen with his father.

Cohen VP put on team bc of experience in Washington. Was VP most responsible for deterring Bush from being great President.

SM Some negative influences, including VP. I don't know if I could judge between Cheney and Rove. Cheney foreign policy and economic, Rove

political operation.

Cohen Any decisions or people that used blackberries so as to not

SM I knew people who had RNC emails. I believe I would have sent emails to both of Rove's accounts.

Cohen Any policies to avoid govt oversight? Indirectly?

SM No.

Cohen Focus on Iran?

SM Views of people within the Admin pretty well known.

Cohen President no funerals of soldiers killed. Privvy to any discussions of why not.

SM He didn't want to pick or choose one funeral over another.

Cohen Previous Presidents attended funerals. So there was a decision to attend none?

SM Where do you draw the line? That's the way he decided to approach it.

Cohen When did he give up golf?

SM No discussion of it.

Cohen Swiftboating Kerry?

SM I wouldn't have been involved?

Cohen Firing USAs?

SM After I left.

Cohen What did people edit out of book that we should know about? You said number of civilian casualties you should have spoken up. What else?

SM Lockstep on policy, You're not encouraged to speak up about it.

Tom Feeny Regardless of motives, inference and speculation. In terms of speculation and opinion. When press secretary goes out, shortly after leaves WH, this book will set precedent

for Press Secretaries to have more or less access to what behind decision making.

SM If they take the right lessons, more access.

Feeny Did the President have any knowledge of Libby or Rove.

SM I don't believe so based on my conversations with the President.

Delahunt I don't think McC is suggesting we share info with the enemy. Important to share info with American people. Much for all of us to learn. What struck me the most was your statement, Bush Administration lacked real accountability bc Bush did not embrace openness. I concur with that. This committee and my own have had constant problems. Currently a significant international agreement discussed between Iraq and US, significant implications, despite their own rules, there has been zero, 1/100 consultation with Congress. Secret declassification that no one else knew about. Is this how we operate a democracy.

SM One of the problems, how compartmentalized.

Delahunt You and Paul O'Neill come after the election to give an account of the process?

Steve King I pray we'll never be a democracy, I pray it remains a representative govt. Mistake or lie. "The British govt has learned" blah blah blah. Mistake or lie?

SM I think President thought it to be credible. I don't know what every individual knew as they passed it on.

King CIA report from Wilson. This report directly contradicts Joseph C Wilson. References Ibrahim Mayaki.

SM I don't know if I've seen it before. In October 2002, CIA Director said take out Niger information.

King Recognizing backpedaling on part of WH. If you had to trust Wilson or Bush, where would you put your trust. What is your advice to your

successors. At what point they should tell the world. Does Pres have to put Press Sec into cubicle. Could you not have taken some of this to the grave with you and done the country a favor.

Hank Johnson Over 5000 requests for commutation. Of those, prior to Libby, Bush granted 3 petitions for commutation. He actually denied 4108 of those, others closed without presidential action. Reluctance to grant mercy is consistent with Bush's conduct wrt death penalty cases. All of a sudden we've got White House confidant Libby. An attempt to silence Libby. A misleading of American public. On the same day that Libby found out that Appeals Court would not reverse the judge's decision, Bush issued a commutation, without consultation of his own DOJ he decided to issue consultation of that prison sentence. Do you believe that?

SM I can understand why people view it that way.

Johnson Any reason to think that would not be reasonable scenario.

SM We haven't had any answers to those questions.

Johnson Lament permanent campaign culture. What were real strategic motives in misleading us into war in Iraq.

SM In president's view, transform Middle East.

Johnson Any mention of vast oil reserves?

SM No

Betty Sutton War only when necessary, Iraq not necessary. Did war become inevitable?

SM Yes.

Sutton Talk about momentum. None of negative repercussions considered. Any discussions about cost and lost life?

SM Lindsey's comment

Sutton Did you ever become aware of those

discussions.

SM Not something emphasized.

Sutton Not about making the case. Any concern about what would be unacceptable loss of life?

SM No.

Sutton VP may have viewed removal of Saddam opportunity to give US more control over Iraq's oil reserves.

SM Hard to know what VP's rationale was. If Iraq didn't have large reserves, wouldn't have been on the national security radar.

Sutton Anything specific?

SM VP's involvement in energy issues.

Brad Sherman Not on how Valerie Plame's name exposed, but why. Goal to discredit Wilson. Question legitimacy of how he was selected. Another to punish him. Did anyone make the statement that VP revealed to teach Wilson a lesson or VP's name revealed to undermine credibility of Wilson.

SM Undermine credibility.

Sherman Nov 2004 Gitmo detainees treated humanely. When did you learn that waterboarding being used?

SM Maybe after I left, discussion beforehand. In terms of my knowledge, I was using Admin talking points.

Sherman So long as you were PS, you thought they were being treated humanely. A few occasions where info turned out false. I wonder whether any occasions not revealed where statements false or misleading.

SM I think I included everything.

Sherman Any advice on how to reduce partisan nature.

SM Embrace of openness and forthrightness.



Artur Davis Let me circle around a person, Rove. You stated Rove encouraged you to repeat a lie. Indicated you've known him for some time. Committee extended invitation to Rove. I'm willing to talk, only if no oath, no cameras, no notes. Based on what you know does it surprise you that Rove wants limitations on circumstances.

SM An effort to stonewall the whole process.

Davis Would you trust Rove to tell the truth if not under oath.

SM Can't say I would

Davis Not under oath.

SM I would hope he would. I'd have concerns about that.

Davis Did testify before GJ under oath. You don't believe he told the complete truth to the GJ.

SM I don't know.

Davis Karl only concerned about protecting himself from possible legal action. Do you believe he is capable of lying to protect himself from legal jeopardy.

SM He certainly lied to me.

Davis Do you believe he is capable of lying to protect himself from political embarrassment.

SM he did in my situation, so the answer is yes.

Davis: Admin came up with reasons to go to war. So conscious of spin, that it would shade facts. You know this committee has been investigating USAs. Is the Bush Administration capable of coming up with false cover story.

SM Hesitate, no direct knowledge. No broad sweeping statement.

Davis if it were suggested that Admin come up with cover story to conceal its true motives. Have you seen them do that before.

SM In VP Leak episode, instead of hidnig behind cover of legal proceedings, interested in stonewalling.

Davis WRT Rove, allegations Rove may have attempted to influence prosecution of at least one person. How long have you known Rove?

SM Early 90s.

Davis Sense of politics and people on other side?

SM Bare-knuckled politics.

Davis Capable of influencing prosecution.

SM Hesitate to speculate.

Davis Delahunt, to announce that no criticism of president, unpatriotic and servile. Teddy Roosevelt. I end with that bc I suspect there are some who tell you you read yourself out of your party. There is another tradition in Republican party.

Tammy Baldwin: Bush came to Washington and playing game by existing rules rather than transforming them. President intentionally broken the rules. I mean laws and Constitution. I believe his conduct raises serious questions in relation to principle elements of democracy. How were you prepped for briefings with the Press. With whom did you speak? For example, the war, Abu Ghraib? Potus and VP?

SM Depends on situation, sometimes directly with Potus, sometimes getting info from policy person. Or participate in meetings.

Baldwin Do you believe you were used to intentionally mislead.

SM Part of permanent campaign. Washington accepts spin and manipulation.

Baldwin During tenure stated on more than one occasion, President does not condone torture. Care to comment on torture.

SM Would not make today knowing what I know

today. Relying on assurances from others.

Baldwin Were you intentionally used to mislead the public.

SM Certain individuals who believe those words are the case.

Baldwin Any conversations in violation of federal law, not obstruction or perjury.

SM No direct knowledge.

Franks There's a feeling in my heart that if you thought you were misleading, you should have spoken up at that time. I'm having a real struggle about that. Comments in your book, Fleischer, something doesn't make sense. Not once did Scott approach me with misgivings. If you really thought you were doing something that was wrong, that was the time to say it.

SM Buildup to war, given Admin benefit to doubt. My role was to speak to the President, not for myself. In regards to intelligence, not a question of whether pressured, how it was used, that was a problem. Not open about caveats, case was greatly overstated.

Franks In your original book proposal, fairness is defined by establishment media. Defend their reporting as fair bc both sides covered. In your book you state differently.

SM I talk about these issues on bipartisanship. I was looking to put responsibility everywhere else but where it belonged.

Franks Very simple, do you believe Bush is honest and decent man.

SM Decent man. [did not say honest]

Wasserman Schultz Wasn't the crime, but the coverup. The real crime the way the war was packaged. Reference to Bush's philosophy to coercive democracy. Do you think there was a conclusion at the outset, fit facts to convince public and press and Congress that Saddam imminent threat. Who involved in deception, who distortion?

SM Can't get in the heads.

Wasserman-Schultz A minute ago implied some did not intentionally deceive.

SM I can't rule that out.

W-S Who can you indicated engaged in deception.

SM No direct knowledge.

W-S You musth have an idea.

SM No direct knowledge.

W-S DO you think that Karl Rove lied to the President. Do you think Cheney lied?

SM Rove, yes.

W-S Rove lied on other policy matters.

SM We'd have to go on issues.

W-S who should be brought before this committee,

SM VP, not shared publicly. SL, Rove, Fleischer, others that have not shared everything. It would be a benefit if everything was known.

Ellison Has this damaged some of your personal relationships

SM Yes

Ellison Some people not talking to you

SM And a number still good friends

Ellison other lucrative opportunities, just trying to help your country. What are the lessons here?

Ellison Part of solution active Congress?

SM White House committed to government in sunshine willing to be accountable to the people

Ellison Circle the wagons. Tolerance for dissident points of view.

SM Once policy set, not tolerance for different views.

Ellison Daniel Levin, Do you know him? Rewrote

Addington or Yoo

SM Dealt with Counsel's office on that.

Ellison Addington and Yoo gave license to these enhanced interrogation methods. Any conversations before drafting of policies.

SM No I shared it.

Conyers: A week to submit for the record.