

ROVE ALL-BUT CONFIRMS HE DID TALK TO NON-DOJ PEOPLE ABOUT SIEGELMAN

In a classic non-denial denial, Karl Rove makes it clear that he did talk to people about Siegelman's prosecution—even while he denies that he spoke to anyone **in DOJ** about it.

As I posted three minutes before TPM posted these "exclusively" (huh), Rove has submitted answers to questions that Lamar Smith decided to ask him about Siegelman, in lieu of actually showing up before Congress and answering questions that someone without an interest in covering up Republican politicized prosecutions might ask.

We can talk about these documents in more detail in comments (and I'll post a timeline in a follow-up post). But here's the most important part of the question and answers. Smith repeatedly asks Rove whether or not he ever communicated with:

Department of Justice officials, State of Alabama officials, **or any other individual** about the investigation, indictment, potential prosecution, prosecution, conviction, or sentencing of Governor Siegelman

And repeatedly, Rove answers that he has never directly or indirectly communicated with:

Justice Department or Alabama officials [] about the investigation, indictment, potential prosecution, prosecution, conviction, or sentencing of Governor Siegelman

Rove would not make the same denials about talking to "any other individuals" he did about

DOJ and Alabama officials.

Now to be fair to old Turdblossom, Rove does add this caveat, repeatedly:

nor have I asked any other individual to communicate about these matters on my behalf

But that's not the same thing as answering whether he spoke to anyone about it all.

So, even with Rove's careful parsing, even having gotten questions tailor made to allow Rove to squirm out of answering real questions on this matter, he basically refuses to deny that he communicated about Siegelman's prosecution with other people. Rove doesn't even deny he spoke to Bill Canary or Rob Riley (Rob is the son of the governor, and therefore not an Alabama official) about it, which is one of the central implications of all the allegations out there!

It was a nice trick, Lamar Smith, to try to pretend that Rove had answered real, antagonistic questions about his involvement in the Siegelman affair. But I think all you've accomplished is to make it clear that he was, in fact, involved in the plot to prosecute Governor Siegelman.

[As a reminder, Governor Siegelman will chat with us tomorrow at 12ET/9PT, so we'll get the opportunity to ask him what he thinks of this wild parsing.]