

TWO TIDBITS ON TROOPERGATE

You've no doubt heard that the terrorism prosecutor brought in to cover-up TrooperGate lied when he claimed that Walt Monegan was going "rogue" when he went to DC to try to secure funds to prosecute rape.

An internal government document obtained by ABC News appears to contradict Sarah Palin's most recent explanation for why she fired her public safety chief, the move which prompted the now-contested state probe into "Troopergate."

Fighting back against allegations she may have fired her then-Public Safety Commissioner, Walt Monegan, for refusing to go along with a personal vendetta, Palin on Monday argued in a legal filing that she fired Monegan because he had a "rogue mentality" and was bucking her administration's directives.

"The last straw," her lawyer argued, came when he planned a trip to Washington, D.C., to seek federal funds for an aggressive anti-sexual-violence program. The project, expected to cost from \$10 million to \$20 million a year for five years, would have been the first of its kind in Alaska, which leads the nation in reported forcible rape.

The McCain-Palin campaign echoed the charge in a press release it distributed Monday, concurrent with Palin's legal filing. "Mr. Monegan persisted in planning to make the unauthorized lobbying trip to D.C.," the release stated.

But the governor's staff authorized the trip, according to an internal travel document from the Department of Public Safety, released Friday in response to

an open records request.

The document, a state travel authorization form, shows that Palin's chief of staff, Mike Nizich, approved Monegan's trip to Washington D.C. "to attend meeting with Senator Murkowski." The date next to Nizich's signature reads June 18.

But we knew that was going to happen. This is Vindictive Firing 2, the Farcical Sequel. And we're moving into the phase where they try to throw lie on top of lie to cover up their original abuse of power.

I'm more interested, frankly, in the news from Andrew Halcro that Murlene Wilkes did not blow off her subpoena.

French stated that of the fourteen subpoenas that were issued, six were served and seven were not and the last was for cell phone records for Frank Bailey that had been turned over to the special investigator Steve Branchflower by the cell phone company.

In addition, French said that John Bitney, Palin's former legislative liason, had already appeared and given a deposition to Branchflower and another person subpoenaed, **Murlene Wilkes, an owner of a workers compensation claim adjustment firm that was allegedly pressured by the governor's office, agreed to show up today with her attorney.** [my emphasis]

You see, ever since Steve Branchflower revealed that he believed Murlene Wilkes may have had "financial incentive" to lie to him when he interviewed her earlier in his investigation, I have wondered whether Branchflower understood those "financial incentives" to be explicit, or simply the worries of a state contractor trying not to piss off the governor. If it was the

former, then this thing will blow wide open on October 10 when Branchflower releases his report.

In any case, even the fancy NY terrorism prosecutor doesn't appear, yet, to have succeeded in squelching this investigation.

Update: Confused last names fixed, per FrankProbst.