

THE WILKES FIRESTORM

Chrisc, who thankfully made it safely through the San Diego fires, didn't let them distract her from the matter at hand: the Wilkes trial. Mark Geragos took the opportunity of a big natural disaster to sneak his client onto the stand to testify—apparently taking the government by surprise. I'll review a few of the details, but I'd like to compare the account of Seth Hettana and that of Allison Hoffman.

HOT AND COLD RUNNING CLASSIFICATION

According to the NYT, the White House has very generously allowed the entire SJC to view the documents justifying the domestic wiretapping program—at least that's what Tony Fratto says.

The White House on Thursday offered to share secret documents on the National Security Agency's domestic surveillance program with the Senate Judiciary Committee, a step toward possible compromise on eavesdropping legislation.

RAZED

Okay, I mean this to be an honest question. The NYT has scary pictures up—courtesy of William Broad, who was glued to Judy's hip on Mobile Bioweapons Lab stories in summer 2003—showing that the purported nuclear reactor the Israelis took out in Syria has been razed to the ground.

That offers proof, the accompanying article states, that the Syrians were up to no good, and that the bombed site was a nuclear

TRYING TO PEEL THE HAGGIS

The White House must be trying to peel Scottish Haggis away from the Democrats on the SJC who oppose granting the telecoms immunity for illegally spying on citizens. Why else show Leahy and Specter the family jewels—the justification for the domestic wiretap program—without sharing them with the rest of SJC?

The White House has offered leaders of the Senate Judiciary Committee access to legal documents related to the National Security Agency's warrantless surveillance program,

SHORTER GOP: IT'S OKAY IF MALIKI'S GOVT SUPPORTS INSURGENTS, SO LONG AS IT'S NOT OUR MONEY

I'd like to return to an interchange between Waxman and Condi from the hearing today. Condi made a very generous offer to let Waxman's committee review documents pertaining to corruption. Waxman pointed out that that offer did not allow the committee to discuss what it

discovered in those documents publicly.

He raised the example of whether Iraqis were laundering money for use in militias.

THE GUARDS HAVE LEFT THE COUNTRY

The NYT has an interesting article telling the story of the Blackwater guards involved in the September 16 shooting. It does a great work getting the views of 6 current and former Blackwater guards in spite of the company's policy gagging them.

But there are two details, above all, that deserve more attention (particularly since the article simply presents them, without raising any questions about what they mean).

THE UNITED STATES OF AT&T WANTS SATELLITES NOW, TOO

Well, here's another reason AT&T is so desperate for retroactive immunity. It'd suck to have their bid to acquire a satellite TV company derailed as consumers realized AT&T is using that technology to spy on them, huh?

AT&T has been consulting lawyers in Washington about how long it would take to get government approval to purchase either EchoStar Communications Corp.

CONDI MUST BE PREPARING A DOG AND A PONY

There are a number of clues that reveal how panicked the State Department—and Condi and those parts of the Administration not trying to undercut Condi at every turn—is about the threats to Blackwater’s continued presence in Iraq. For the first time as Secretary of State, Condi is making the rounds of Congressional committees, even deigning to visit her arch-nemesis Henry Waxman.

WHAT RILEY SAID ABOUT ROVE

Let’s take a look at what Rob Riley had to say about Karl Rove’s involvement in Don Siegelman’s investigation and prosecution in his affidavit. In the midst of an affidavit full of “I don’t remember” and “I don’t recall,” Riley says some very specific things about Rove.

The first mention comes toward the end of a very long, very hedged statement about the phone call on November 18, 2002.

MADAME SECRETARY

FINALLY ACCEPTS AN INVITATION

Frankly, I've been holding my breath since I first saw this (tentatively) on Selise's weekly hearing schedule. After all, Waxman has been trying to get Condi Rice to appear before the Oversight Committee since early spring. But they've now announced the hearing, so I'm breathing again.

The Committee on Oversight and Government Reform will hold a hearing entitled, "The State Department and the Iraq War" on Thursday morning, October 25, 2007, in 2154 Rayburn