

POPPY BUSH'S VIRGIN BORN INTELLIGENCE KNOWLEDGE

Jack Goldsmith links to an interesting document from the RummyLeaks library: then Chief of Staff Donald Rumsfeld's memo to President Ford reviewing possible candidates to replace William Colby as head of the CIA.

But Goldsmith doesn't call out the most amusing part of the memo: the way that Rummy asserts that Poppy has the intelligence experience to do the job without pointing out where he got that experience.

Where Rummy thought someone had real experience with the CIA he laid that out: Harold Brown's experience with the NRO and SALT, his and John Foster's experience with Defense Research and Engineering, Douglas Dillon's membership on the Rockefeller Committee on the CIA, William Baker and Robert Galvin's service on the Presidential Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, Melvin Laird's service on the Appropriations and Armed Services Committees and Gale McGee's service on Foreign Relations and Appropriations Committees, Stanley Resor's service as Secretary of the Army and as member of the Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions delegation, Elliott Richardson's service as Secretary of Defense. Every single member of the Council on Foreign Relations had that detail noted. For a number of these (particularly those with a research focus, Rummy explained precisely how the experience applied).

But Rummy doesn't really explain how Bush acquired his general familiarity with intelligence.

This is perhaps most obvious when you compare Rummy's description of Bob Dole's qualifications with those of Bush.

| Robert J. Dole: 52 years old (this month); U.S. Senator (R-Kansas); Past

Chairman, RNC; Lawyer, WWII Service.

Pros: Strong “law and order” image.
Confirmable.

Cons: No background in intelligence; no management experience; RNC post raises question over politicization potential.

[snip]

George Bush: 51 years old; Member of Congress; US Ambassador to the UN and subsequently to USLO Peking; Oil producer; Politician.

Pros: Experience in government and diplomacy; generally familiar with the components of the intelligence community and their missions; management experience; high integrity and proven adaptability.

Cons: RNC post lends undesirable political cast.

After all, at this point of their life, these men shared many of the same resume points: they are nearly exact contemporaries, with World War II experience (though Rummy didn’t mention Poppy’s), time in Congress, and service at the head of the RNC. Yet according to Rummy, Bush had the intelligence experience to lead CIA and Dole did not.

Now, obviously, Bush’s service as Ambassador to the UN and—to an even greater degree—as Ambassador to China would clearly have put him in positions at the front line of the Cold War.

But of course Bush’s most direct experience to be Director of the CIA came from that innocuous other resume point: “oil producer.” Heck, Rummy doesn’t even note by name Bush’s leadership of Zapata Oil, which was reportedly a cover for Bay of Pigs preparation. Russ Baker even found a J. Edgar Hoover note indicating that “Mr. George Bush of the Central Intelligence Agency” was briefed on concerns that the Kennedy

assassination would encourage anti-Castro groups to strike at Cuba.

Rummy doesn't explain any of that background. But then, had he done so, he probably couldn't have claimed (as he did) that "all 23" candidates "are outsiders to the CIA."