

MISSING EMAILS: ADDINGTON'S SEARCH TERMS

Among the documents introduced at the trial was a draft version of the search that David Addington requested Keith Roberts of the Office of Administration to do on the emails on the OVP server. This is not a final version—it is what Addington sent to Deputy Special Counsel Roos to get his approval before he submitted it to Roberts to do his search. So hopefully Roos fixed some of the glaring holes in the email search—I don't know.

In any case, here are the searches Addington requested in order to elicit emails on or to journalists from June 1 to October 31, 2003 and Joe and Valerie Wilson from October 1, 2003 until January 23, 2004 (I'm having a few technical issues, so this isn't an image; make sure you click through to see the PDF):

First Search

Search for email messages created between June 1, 2003 and October 31, 2003, inclusive through use of the following search terms:

"_Novak_"
"_Royce_"
"_Phelps_"
"_Leiby_"
"Mike_Allen"
"Dana_Priest"
"Glenn_Kessler"
"Matthew_Cooper"
"_Dickerson_"
"_Calabresi_"
"Michael_Duffy"
"_Carney_"
"Evan_Thomas"
"Andrea_Mitchell"
"Chris_Matthews"
"_Russert_"

"Campbell_Brown"
"_Kristof_"
"_Sanger_"
"Judith_Miller"
"_Hitt_"
"_Gigot_"
"John_Solomon"
"Jeff_Gannon"
"Talon_News"

Second Search

Search for e-mail messages created between October 1, 2003 and January 23, 2004, inclusive, through use of the following search terms:

"Joseph_C._Wilson" or
"Joseph_wilson" or "Joe_wilson"
or "Ambassador_wilson" or
"Amb._Wilson" or "Amb_Wilson" or
"Plame_" or "Niger_"

Now, once again, I don't know whether this search for emails used these precise search terms, but if it did, here are the gaping holes which the search wouldn't cover:

Journalist Names

For the journalists with unusual last names, Addington requests a search of those last names, which would be the most expansive search. Such journalists include Russert, Sanger, and Kristof—all names that, by the time this thing was done (and certainly before for Paul Gigot and Timmeh Russert)—were probably self explanatory without the first name. Curiously, the list of last name searches includes Dickerson; that's surprising because John Dickerson's last name is neither so unique nor his role in this story so central (unless you're trying to make Ari Fleischer the fall guy) that it should be self-standing.

But notice some of the journalists for whom

Addington submits first and last name, in quotes, that would return just that string: Judith Miller, Matthew Cooper, and Andrea Mitchell. This search will probably return any email from or to these journalists, picking up email signatures with their full names. But it will not pick up references about them referring only to their last name. When Libby writes down Dick's order to leak to Judy Miller, Libby uses only her last name, Miller, in the reference. Similarly, the search will not pick up references to their first and last name if the reference uses the more commonly used nicknames Judy and Matt. When Cathie Martin addresses Cooper in an email, she refers to him as Matt.

This search is designed in such a way such that it would not return easily conceivable materials on three key players in the story: Judy, Cooper, and Andrea Mitchell.

Capitalization

~~This one I'm less sure about less sure of my eyes and of how this would work in a search. But my eyeball of the PDF (remember to look at the original PDF) indicates that for the three most likely searches on Joe Wilson-Joseph, Joe, and Ambassador Wilson Addington did not capitalize the "W" in his last name. This actually looks like it may be because of data loss in the conversion from Word to PDF. Further, it depends on how and where they search, whether the search would be case sensitive or not, but if it were, a search using these terms would return almost nothing on Joe Wilson.~~

~~Note, it's pretty clear that earlier searches those for emails before October 1 did return Wilson's name in searches. This subpoena was designed to scrutinize any email discussions about Wilson after the start of the investigation.~~

Never mind-I see in Addington's instructions that he specifies the searches are to be case insensitive.

Wilson

Finally, as with Judy, Cooper, and Mitchell, this search would not return another whole universe of emails, those that refer to Wilson simply as Wilson. While Addington is careful to search on Plame by itself, he does not request a search for Wilson. This is particularly striking since, by this point, OVP seemed to be referring to Wilson, as a single word, almost as a curse word by this point.

Like I said, I'm least concerned about the capitalization issues than by the way this search leaves out the nicknames Matt and Judy and leaves out any reference to Miller, Cooper, Mitchell and Wilson by their last name alone. If the search were done using these terms, it may well have left out the most important and interesting emails referring to any of these four people.