

PICK WHICH WH PRESS SECRETARY IS LYING

Sometime between now and when the Rules and Bylaws Committee starts tomorrow, I hope to argue that Scottie McC is still, um, shading the truth in his presentation of the facts about the Plame outing.

But for now, I'll let you guys weigh in whether you think the former White House Press Secretary or the current one is lying.

Here's what Scottie McC said in a book chat posted at 12:00 PM:

Washington: Did you inform the White House at any time about your intention to write the memoir? If so, what was the reaction then?

Scott McClellan: The White House reviewed the final manuscript for classification and privilege issues. After the review I met with some members of the White House counsel's office at their request to discuss the review. As I expected, there were no issues relating to classified information. They did bring up some issues relating to what they might consider executive privilege, including presidential conversations and conversations between senior advisers to the president. [my emphasis]

And here's what Dana "Pig Missile" said in a press briefing time stamped at 12:42 PM:

MS. PERINO: We've been out on the road; I've missed the podium greatly. But as I said all along, that the President expressed disappointment and sadness at the situation, surprise by the charges that he has read about that are in the book.

And we've known for a while that this is what the tone of the book would be. Of course last November we knew because of the excerpt that came out, and then more recently, as with all manuscripts, the White House Counsel's Office has an opportunity to look at manuscripts for any possible classified information or any means for executive privilege to be asserted. None of them were in this case. So we've known for a little bit of time that this was coming. [my emphasis]

So which was it? Did the White House invoke executive privilege about "presidential conversations and conversations between senior advisors to the president," or didn't it?

Of course, there's always option "C," none of the above. It's possible (crazy, I know) that neither is lying. It's possible the White House tried to say Scottie McC couldn't publish ... say ... a conversation he had with the President about authorizing the Plame leak and ... say ... a conversation between senior advisors Turdblossom and Scooter. It's possible the White House tried to say those things were protected by executive privilege and Scottie McC's lawyers simply said, "you're joking, right?"

Update: The plot thickens! I didn't see the asterisk in the press briefing:

* Scott McClellan submitted a copy of his book to the White House for a review in keeping with his obligations as an official holding a security clearance. Mr. McClellan met with legal staff from the National Security Council and White House Counsel's Office on May 2. The outcome of the review was discussed with the same kind of specificity that is the norm for this kind of material and subject matter. No edits or changes were requested and to the extent that he made any changes after the meeting it was his option and choice as the author.

Update: And then there's this from Scottie McC's chat:

Manchester, Conn.: Scoot, earlier you mentioned White House review of "privilege" issues. Were any subjects omitted because of those concerns? If so, what were those subjects?

Scott McClellan: No. They can only prevent me from printing classified national security information. I listened to what they had to say about issues of executive privilege and made the decision to keep things the way I had written them.