



MONDAY, JULY 25, 2005

No Debate: Bush Misled America

by Michael in New York on [7/25/2005 08:09:00 PM](#)

This little detail is buried halfway down in a story about Rovegate, also known as "Rove Endangers National Security Scandal" and/or "[Bush Misleads America In Runup To War Scandal](#)." (The last one is the most important.)

The White House response began at 9:30 a.m. on July 7, a Monday, as Mr. Fleischer briefed the press at the White House. "There is zero, nada, nothing new here," he said of Mr. Wilson's claims. But under questioning, Mr. Fleischer's account became murkier. **He seemed to concede, before backing away, that Mr. Bush's entire statement about Saddam Hussein's search for uranium in Africa might have been flawed.**

By evening, as Air Force One lifted off, officials on the plane were calling The Times and The Washington Post to make it clear that they no longer stood behind Mr. Bush's statement about the uranium - the first such official concession on the sensitive issue of the intelligence that led to the war.

So no debate, people. Joe Wilson came forward with his op-ed and appearances on Sunday talk shows to say the President lied to the American people in his State of the Union address. Bush made flat claims that he KNEW he didn't have the evidence to back up. The only proof we need? The very next day, the White House spokesperson Ari Fleischer started to admit Bush's central claim might have been flawed. The very next day, they were calling the biggest newspapers in the country to "make clear" they did not stand behind that claim.

One day after Joe Wilson's public comments, Bush admitted he couldn't back up what he said. They've tried to prevaricate and lie and whitewash this admission. They've smeared Joe Wilson and attacked his wife and endangered his children and weakened national security all in an attempt to discredit it. But the White House never has and never will take back that retraction. They can't.

If Bush wants to claim vindication, let him make that charge about Hussein trying to get uranium in Niger all over again. If he can't, he should apologize to Joe Wilson and fire Rove and Scooter and whomever else is involved.

If anyone wants to pretend Joe Wilson was wrong, they've got to argue with Bush first. Bush retracted the very words Wilson objected to. So argue with Bush. Not Wilson.



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