


## [Bush's Impeachable Offenses, Part 3](#)

The illegal leaking of 'cherry picked' info from a classified NIE

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### **Bush illegally leaked 'cherry picked' information from a classified National Intelligence Estimate. Bush subsequently feigned ignorance of his involvement, keeping the public and the investigators from seeking accountability.**

#### Charge

George W. Bush authorized the leaking of classified national secrets in violation of executive order 13292 to further a political agenda, exposing an unknown number of covert U.S. intelligence agents to potential harm and retribution while simultaneously refusing to investigate the matter;

#### 1. March 25, 2003

**President Bush signs an executive order amending (among other things) the legal method for declassifying information. After the administration released classified information, they claimed the release was legal because it had already been disclosed by the media. Ironically, the following quote from the president's own executive order eliminates this defense:**

"Classified information shall not be declassified automatically as a result of any unauthorized disclosure of identical or similar information."

**The following quotes from the executive order reveal that the process for declassifying information requires a procedure. Contrary to some people's speculation, a president can not simply declassify information via announcement to the media. One requirement is that they inform the head of the related agency (in this case, the CIA) of the planned disclosure:**

"the following [declassification instructions] shall appear on the face of each classified document ... the date or event for declassification, ... the date that is 10 years from the date of original classification, ... [or] the date that is up to 25 years from the date of original classification ..."

"Prior to public release, all declassified records shall be appropriately marked to reflect their declassification"

"In some exceptional cases, however, the need to protect such information may be outweighed by the public interest in disclosure of the information ... When such questions arise, they shall be referred to the agency head or the senior agency official. That official will determine, as an exercise of discretion, whether the public interest in disclosure outweighs the damage to the national security that might reasonably be expected from disclosure." ([F.A.S.](#))

#### 2. Prior to July 6, 2003

**President George W. Bush authorizes Lewis Libby (a former top aide to Vice President Dick Cheney) to leak information from a classified intelligence report to a *New York Times* reporter, as revealed in Libby's sworn testimony to a federal grand jury in a 39-page Fitzgerald filing on April 5, 2006.**

"Vice President advised defendant that the President specifically had authorized defendant to disclose certain information in the NIE." ([Fitzgerald filing](#))



▲ George W. Bush

3. July 8, 2003

**Lewis Libby leaks to the press classified information**

**relating to Ambassador Wilson's pre-war intelligence about Iraq's nuclear capabilities and Valerie Plame's position as a CIA operative. This is also in the 39-page Fitzgerald filing.**

"Defendant was instructed to provide what was for him an extremely rare 'on the record' statement, and to provide 'background' and 'deep background' statements, and to provide information contained in a document defendant understood to be the cable authored by Mr. [Joseph] Wilson. During the conversations that followed on July 12, defendant discussed Ms.[Valerie Plame] Wilson's employment [as a CIA operative] with both Matthew Cooper (for the first time) and Judith Miller (for the third time)." ([Fitzgerald filing](#))

4. July 18, 2003

**White House Press Secretary Scott McClellan admits to leak publicly in Press Gaggle. Additionally, he references newly released classified information. McClellan's comments make it appear as if the administration released this new information to give context to the previously leaked intelligence. This made it appear as if the previous leak was not orchestrated by the administration. He indicates that the information in the NIE was not declassified until that day – July 18. If true, this would make the President's authorization on July 6 illegal.**

Question by reporter: "Why, Scott, was the cable that was -- that derived from the debriefing of Joe Wilson not included among the declassified documents?"

MR. McCLELLAN: "[...] There is some classified information that -- well, there's some information that remains classified for national security reasons. But we felt that this information -- which is what the State of the Union statement was originally based on -- was important to share with the American people, because it could be declassified."



▲ Former White House Press Sec. Scott McClellan

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Question by reporter: "When was it actually declassified?"

MR. McCLELLAN: "It was officially declassified today." ([White House Transcript](#))

5. Sept. 29, 2003

**White House Press Secretary:**

"The President has set high standards, the highest of standards for people in his administration. He's made it very clear to people in his administration that he expects them to adhere to the highest standards of conduct. If anyone in this administration was involved in it [the leak], they would no longer be in this administration." ([White House Transcript & Video](#))

6. Sept. 30, 2003

**President Bush:**

"I don't know of anybody in my administration who leaked classified information. If somebody did leak classified information, I'd like to know it, and we'll take the appropriate action." ([White House Transcript & Video](#))

7. Sept. 30, 2003

**President Bush:**

"If there is a leak out of my administration, I want to know who it is. And if the person has violated law, the person will be taken care of. . . . I have told our administration, people in my administration to be fully cooperative. I want to know the truth. If anybody has got any information inside our administration or outside our administration, it would be helpful if they came forward with the information so we

can find out whether or not these allegations are true and get on about the business."  
[\(White House Transcript & Video\)](#)

8. Oct. 6, 2003

**President Bush:**

"We will cooperate fully with the Justice Department. ... I'd like to know who leaked, and if anybody has got any information inside our government or outside our government who leaked, you ought to take it to the Justice Department so we can find out the leaker. I have told my staff, I want full cooperation with the Justice Department. And when they ask for information, we expect the information to be delivered on a timely basis. I expect it to be delivered on a timely basis. I want there to be full participation, ... And if this helps stop leaks of -- this investigation in finding the truth, it will not only hold someone to account who should not have leaked -- and this is a serious charge, by the way. We're talking about a criminal action, ... but also hopefully will help set a clear signal we expect other leaks to stop, as well. And so I look forward to finding the truth."

Question by reporter: "What about retaliation? People are saying that it's retaliation"

PRESIDENT BUSH: "I don't know who leaked the information, for starters. So it's hard for me to answer that question until I find out the truth. You hear all kinds of rumors. And the best way to clarify the issue is for full participation with the Justice Department. ... look, I want to know. I want to know." [\[Audio Clip\]](#) [\(White House Transcript & Video\)](#)

9. Oct. 7, 2003

**President Bush:**

"This is a town of -- where a lot of people leak. And I've constantly expressed my displeasure with leaks, particularly leaks of classified information. And I want to know, I want to know the truth. I want to see to it that the truth prevail. And I hope we can get this investigation done in a thorough way, as quickly as possible." [\[Audio Clip\]](#) [\(White House Transcript & Video\)](#)

10. Oct. 7, 2003

**White House Press Secretary:**

"Let me answer what the President has said. I speak for the President and I'll talk to you about what he wants . . . If someone leaked classified information, the President wants to know. If someone in this administration leaked classified information, they will no longer be a part of this administration, because that's not the way this White House operates, that's not the way this President expects people in his administration to conduct their business." [\(White House Transcript & Video\)](#)

11. Oct. 17, 2003

**President Bush: In Cabinet Meeting responding to a question about his confidence that the leaking senior administration official will be discovered.**

"... How many sources have you had that's leaked information that you've exposed or have been exposed? Probably none. I mean this town is a -- is a town full of people who like to leak information. And I don't know if we're going to find out the senior administration official. Now, this is a large administration, and there's a lot of senior officials. I don't have any idea. I'd like to. I want to know the truth. That's why I've instructed this staff of mine to cooperate fully with the investigators -- full disclosure, everything we know the investigators will find out. I have no idea whether we'll find out who the leaker is -- partially because, in all due respect to your profession, you do a very good job of protecting the leakers. But we'll find out." [\[Audio clip\]](#)[\(White House Transcript & Video\)](#)

12. Oct. 28, 2003

**President Bush:**

"I'd like to know if somebody in my White House did leak sensitive information."  
([White House Transcript & Video](#))

13. June 10, 2004

**President Bush:**

Reporter: "Do you stand by your pledge to fire anyone found to have done so?"

President Bush: "Yes. And that's up to the U.S. Attorney to find the facts." ([State Department's Website](#))

14. July 19, 2005

**President Bush:**

"If someone committed crime, they will no longer work in my administration." ([July 19, Associated Press](#))

15. April 5, 2006

**Lewis Libby testifies to a federal grand jury about President Bush authorizing the leaking of classified information.** ([Fitzgerald filing](#))

16. Jan. 31, 2007

Later during the Lewis Libby trial, it is revealed that Cheney had written about President Bush's involvement in asking Libby to leak the NIE information.

"Thus, Cheney's notes would have read 'not going to protect one staffer and sacrifice the guy this Pres. asked to stick his head in the meat grinder because of the incompetence of others.' The words 'this Pres.' were crossed out and replaced with 'that was,' but are still clearly legible in the document." ([Jan. 31, 2007, Truthout](#))

A handwritten note in blue ink on a white background. The text is partially obscured by a large, stylized signature that appears to read "John A. ...". The visible text above the signature includes "0 1" and "you Pres.".

▲ Cheney implicates "this Pres.[ident]"

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In light of this evidence, and the other evidence in this impeachment series, how can one doubt the impeachability of this president?

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[Impeach For Peace](#)

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