

Indictment Casts Light on Push to War

Bush official charged in CIA leak investigation

(AP) — The vice president's chief of staff, I. Lewis "Scooter" Libby Jr., was indicted Friday on charges of obstruction of justice, perjury and making false statements in the CIA leak investigation, a politically charged case that casts a harsh light on President Bush's push to war.

Libby, 55, resigned and left the White House. Karl Rove, Bush's closest adviser, escaped indictment Friday but remained under investigation, his legal status casting a dark cloud over a White House already in trouble. The U.S. military death toll in Iraq exceeded 2,000 this week, and the president's approval ratings are at the lowest point since he took office in 2001.

Bush praised Libby's service and said he is "presumed innocent and entitled to due process."

Friday's charges stemmed from a two-year investigation by special counsel Patrick Fitzgerald into whether Rove, Libby



Bush Administration official I. Lewis 'Scooter' Libby Jr. leaves his home in the back of a limousine on his way to the White House Friday.

or any other administration officials knowingly revealed the identity of CIA officer Valerie Plame or misled investigators about their involvement.

In a statement released Friday afternoon, Libby said, "I've spent much of my career working on behalf of the American people and for the safety of our citizens. I

calls, the first official to disclose this information outside the government to a reporter. And he lied about it afterward, under oath, repeatedly."

have conducted my responsibilities honorably and truthfully, including with respect to this investigation."

He added, "I am confident that at the end of this process I will be completely and totally exonerated."

In his charges, Fitzgerald accused Libby of lying about his conversations with reporters, not outing a spy.

"Mr. Libby's story that he was at the tail end of a chain of phone calls, passing on from one reporter what he heard from another, was not true. It was false," the prosecutor said. "He was at the beginning of the chain of the phone

Libby's indictment is a political embarrassment for the president, paving the way for a possible trial renewing the focus on the administration's faulty rationale for going to war against Iraq—the erroneous assertion that Saddam Hussein possessed weapons of mass destruction.

The indictment could also mean that Cheney, who prizes secrecy, will be called upon as a witness to explain why the administration launched a campaign against Plame's husband, diplomat Joseph Wilson, a critic of the war who questioned Bush's assertion that Iraq had sought nuclear material.

The grand jury indictment charged Libby with one count of obstruction of justice, two of perjury and two of making false statements. If convicted on all five, he could face as much as 30 years in prison and \$1.25 million in fines.

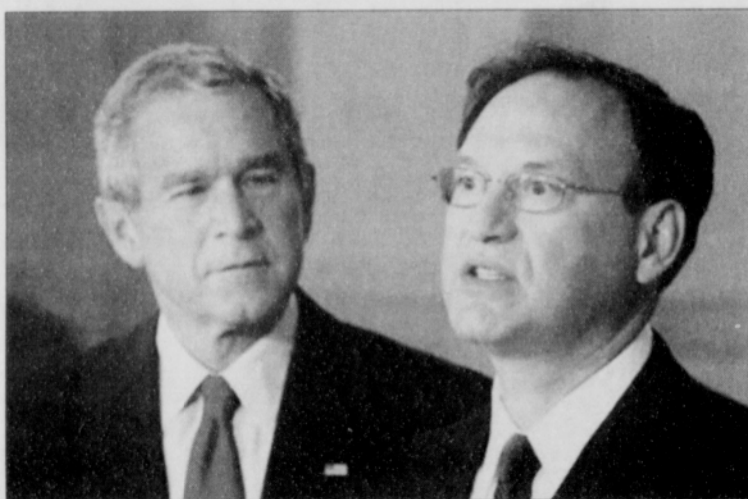
Democrats suggested the indictment was just the tip of the iceberg. Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., said the case was larger than Libby and "about how the Bush White House manufactured and manipulated intelligence in order to bolster its case for the war in Iraq and to discredit anyone who dared to challenge the president."

Conservative Judge Nominated

Bush pick unites party, divides nation

(AP) — President Bush nominated Appeals Court Judge Samuel Alito to the Supreme Court on Monday, hoping to usher in a historic new era of judicial conservatism while ending a Republican divide that doomed an earlier pick.

Members of the Senate's Democratic minority signaled a potentially bruising confirmation battle ahead, with abortion a key issue. Sen. Harry Reid of Nevada, the party's leader, asked whether Alito was "too radical for the American people" and wondered aloud "why



President Bush introduces Appeals Court Judge Samuel Alito as his latest pick for the Supreme Court.

those who want to pack the court with judicial activists are so much more enthusiastic about him" than Harriet Miers.

Bush, naming a replacement for Justice Sandra Day O'Connor four days after Miers withdrew her name, said Alito "has a deep understand-

ing of the proper role of judges in our society."

"He understands that judges are to interpret the laws, not to impose their preferences or priorities on the people," the president said. Within hours, Alito collected support from many of the critics who had opposed Miers.

Alito's politically conservative views were not in dispute. "Of course he's against abortion," his 90-year-old mother, Rose, told reporters at her home in Hamilton, N.J.

Despite the unguarded comments of a proud mother, Sen. Arlen Specter, who will chair Judiciary Committee hearings, told reporters in the Capitol, "There is a lot more to do with a woman's right to choose than how you feel about it personally." The Pennsylvania Republican cited adherence to legal precedent in rulings over 30 years upholding abortion rights.

Later, after a private meeting, Specter said, "I have no reason to catalogue him as an ideologue."

Alito pledged at the White House to uphold the duty of a judge to "interpret the Constitution and the laws faithfully and fairly."



An Iraqi woman and her children walk past a U.S. soldier covering other soldiers from possible sniper fire Sunday at a checkpoint in Mosul, north of Baghdad.

Deadly Month for U.S. Troops

(AP) — Seven U.S. troops were killed by bombs near Baghdad, the military said Monday, making October the bloodiest month for Americans in Iraq since January. U.S. jets struck insurgent targets near the Syrian border and at least six people were killed.

Four soldiers from the Army's Task Force Baghdad soldiers died Monday when their patrol struck a roadside bomb in Youssifiyah, 12 miles south of Baghdad in an area known as the "triangle of death."

Two other soldiers from the 29th Brigade Combat Team were also killed in a bombing Monday near Balad, 50 miles north of Baghdad. The U.S. military also said a Marine was killed Sunday near Amiriyyah, 25 miles west of Baghdad.

A week after the U.S. death toll since the March 2003 invasion passed the 2,000 mark, it rose to at least 2,026 with the attacks; they brought to 93 the number of Americans to die in October, the highest since 107 died in January.

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Treatment of Detainees Defended

(AP) — Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld on Tuesday defended the government's decision not to permit United Nations human rights investigators to meet with detained terror suspects at Guantanamo Bay.

Last week the Pentagon invited three U.N. experts to visit the detention facilities in Cuba. But while the experts said they were happy the invitation finally came after more than three years of requests, they said they would not go if they could not interview prisoners.

Rumsfeld told a Pentagon news conference that it was not appropriate to give U.N. investigators the same extensive access at Guantanamo that has been granted to officials of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Rumsfeld also was asked why he believes some of the detainees have been conducting a hunger strike.

"What they're trying to do is



Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice during a press briefing at the Pentagon Saturday. (AP photo)

capture press attention, obviously, and they've succeeded," he replied.

Seven of the detainees on the hunger strike are hospitalized and being force-fed, according to the government.

Many of the nearly 500 prison-

ers at Guantanamo Bay have been held more than 3 1/2 years without charge or access to lawyers. Most were captured in the Afghanistan war, suspected of ties to the al-Qaida terrorist network or the Taliban regime ousted by U.S. forces in late 2001.

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