

April 2, 2008

Mr. Scott Pelley
"60 Minutes"
524 West 57th St.
New York, NY 10019

Dear Scott:

Thanks for taking the time to visit Monday. In years past, you have struck me as a professional who wanted to get his story right and wasn't just looking for sensational opportunities to boost ratings. When you ran your story with Dana Jill Simpson on February 24, my reaction was to leave the issue alone with a straightforward denial. After all, I don't know the woman, don't recall ever meeting her and certainly didn't ask her to do anything.

As I told you Monday, the more I reflected on the story, the more questions I had. After all, Ms. Simpson's time on camera was brief – just enough to say I'd asked her to stalk the Governor and get pictures.

I raised a number of my questions yesterday in our call, but in most instances, I received no answer or an unsatisfactorily vague one. So let me try again.

In the course of your interview, did you ask Ms. Simpson in what campaigns she worked as "an operative" with me? When we first met? When I first asked her to take on previous campaign tasks, as she alleged in her interview? And if so, did you check out her claims by, perhaps, calling the candidates in question or their campaign managers, reviewing campaign expenditure reports to see if her name appeared or checking with the DeKalb County Republican chairman or activists (such as the Moore campaign chairman, an effort she told the Judiciary Committee she was active in) to see if she was really "an operative?"

Did you ask when and where her supposed 2001 meeting with me took place at which she was asked to follow Siegelman and photograph him? If so, did you make any effort to see if she could document when and where the meeting was?

And if you were personally convinced by her answers that there was a good likelihood of such a meeting, did you try to figure out if there was any way that I was likely to have been available for such a meeting? Is there a reason you did not avail yourself of the offer I made to your producers of having access to my calendars for that day (and a couple of other days, in order to hide from me the date she claimed for our meeting)?

Didn't it strike you as foolish for me to have asked someone with no particular experience to undertake a task requiring adroit surveillance and shadowing skills, a mission with such potential to blow up in everyone's faces?

Then consider Dan Jill Simpson's September 14, 2007 interview with the House Judiciary Committee that followed an extensive interview by a Democratic committee lawyer. Did it not bother you Ms. Simpson failed to mention the claim she made to you for your February 24, 2008 story? After all, wouldn't that be something Congressman John Conyer's people would find interesting?

Don't you find it odd that in 143 pages of testimony she said nothing about having worked with me in campaigns, nothing about being asked by me to undertake various tasks, nothing about my supposedly having asked her to follow Governor Siegelman and photograph him in a compromising position, nothing about having had meetings with me? In fact, she never says she knows me or has met me. Don't you find that odd?

In fact, did you read the transcript? Did you try to ascertain if there was any evidence that would lead a reasonable person to believe the claims she made to the Judiciary Committee staff about Don Siegelman, Terry Butts, Judge Fuller and others were likely to be accurate? Did it matter to you that following the release of her interview, as one observer has written, that "every single person whose name Simpson invokes as she spins her stories says that she is either lying or deluded?" Are you aware that list of people denying her claims includes Don Siegelman, whom she claims repeatedly urged her to provide her original affidavit?

In fact, did you try to discover whether there was any evidence she did shadow Don Siegelman? Travel records, itineraries, or expense reports that showed Ms. Simpson's travel from Northeastern Alabama matched up with the Governor's schedule? You told me she told people at the time she was shadowing Siegelman: is that proof enough in your mind that she actually was?

Did you ever consider that the Governor's security detail might have taken note of an ample-sized, redheaded woman who kept showing up at his events with a camera? Did you talk with the Alabama Department of Public Safety? In fact, did you ever ask her how she attempted to find him in a compromising position? Was it her practice to shadow him late at night when he was on the road? Peek through hotel windows? Were you satisfied she actually did what she was supposedly asked to do?

Since your broadcast, she has said she has phone records of calls to "Virginia and Washington" that corroborate her charges. Have you made an effort to review those records and ascertain whether she does have more evidence?

April 2, 2008
Page Three

And finally, how much work do you personally do on your "60 Minute" stories? Do you leave the legwork up to your producers while you stay focused on your on-camera presence? They called me in October, five months before you appeared on the air. It seemed to me they were then trying to figure out whether to pursue the story. Was that good enough for you?

Or as a journalist, do you like to get personally involved in your stories and talk with its principal figures, dig into all the evidence and come to a professional judgment that what someone has told you has merit and enough weight to put it on the air? Do you feel that maybe at some point as those five months came to a close, it would have been the responsible thing to do to call a subject of your report and say, we have someone who says this and we've done our legwork that leads us to believe that might be the case? Or do you feel if a charge is sensational enough, thoroughly checking it out yourself isn't a necessity?

These are a lot of questions, but they boil down to one: did you ask yourself these before you went on the air?

Sincerely,

Karl Rove

Cc: Sean McManus