

OH, IT WAS ERIC EDELMAN LECTURING HILLARY??

Update: Thanks to Scarecrow for directing everyone over here—but don't miss Hillary's response to Edelman. She hits all the right notes.

I didn't realize, at first, when I heard that Hillary had been lectured that public discussion of withdrawal reinforced enemy propaganda, who was doing the lecturing.

Premature and public discussion of the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Iraq reinforces enemy propaganda that the United States will abandon its allies in Iraq, much as we are perceived to have done in Vietnam, Lebanon, and Somalia. Such talk understandably unnerves the very same Iraqi allies we are asking to assume enormous personal risks in order to achieve compromises on national reconciliation, amending the Iraqi constitution, and other contentious issues. Fear of a precipitate US withdrawal also exacerbates sectarian trends in Iraqi politicians as factions become more concerned with achieving short-term tactical advantages rather than reaching the long-term agreements necessary for a stable and secure Iraq.

But now I discover it was Eric Edelman, Under Secretary of Defense for Policy. That makes a whole lot more sense—and really dictates the proper response.

You see, Edelman is kind of a poor man's Dougie Feith. A total shill—and Cheney asset—though apparently with less flair for propaganda. He's the bright guy who first suggested leaking Plame's identity to rebut Joe Wilson. And, as it turns out, he realized after he suggested to

Libby that the information in question may have been classified.

After a June 2003 article about Iraq and the uranium issues that caused concern to Edelman and Libby, Edelman asked Libby whether information about how the Wilson trip came about could be shared with the press to rebut allegations that the Vice president sent Wilson. Edelman testified that Libby responded by indicating that there would be "complications" at the CIA in disclosing that information publicly. Ambassador Edelman indicated that he understood that he and Libby could not further discuss the matter because they were speaking on an open telephone line and Edelman understood that this might involve classified information.

Edelman then went on to write a leniency letter, hailing Libby's loyalty, with no concern that—as the guy who first suggested the leak—the invocation of loyalty reeked of impropriety. You can't take someone like that seriously!

The proper response to such a lecture, it seems to me, is to point out what a hack Edelman is, to suggest that this is just Dick Cheney lying to the American people again. And an attempt to hide the fact that the war party Has. No. Plan. B.