

I DUNNO. IT LOOKS LIKE A BANANA REPUBLIC TO ME.

I suspect Zalmay Khalilzad doesn't care to lose all his credibility in the international community just so Condi doesn't have to admit she lost her latest fight with Cheney (or did she lose a fight with Olmert?). At least, that's what I surmise from his snarky response to Madame Secretary's attempt to blame him, Khalilzad, for introducing a resolution at the UN that the Administration later withdrew (h/t Holden).

Washington's U.N. envoy denied on Tuesday he had acted alone in handing the Security Council a Middle East resolution he later pulled after Israel objected.

The United States withdrew the draft, which hailed the results of a November 27 Middle East peace conference in Annapolis, Maryland, last Friday in what the New York Times and Washington Post newspapers called an embarrassing about-face.

Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad dismissed what he said were media reports he had submitted the draft resolution "on my own," without consulting the State Department or Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

"With all due respect, there is nothing with those reports," he told journalists. "I talked to the secretary of state a few hours before I came to the council. We were very well coordinated with people in Washington."

"I don't know whether the secretary of state had seen the text but I had talked with her and I'm sure she was fully

briefed. The same applied to my colleagues," Khalilzad said.

"We don't just write a text in the mission and come and present it to people. We are an organized government, institutionalized. We are not a banana republic."

See, I'm amused that Khalilzad (who as a good neocon might not care for the Annapolis conference in the first place) got so testy. But also, c'mon, you've got the State Department looking foolish in front of the UN. You've got former Bush Administration officials fighting over whether and how they used midterm elections to lie us into war. What happened to that legendary but illusory Bush discipline?

After all, once you remove the gleaming facade of a government run like a business, you're pretty much left with massive corruption and incompetence. You know, a banana republic.