

RAHM SPOKE TO HIS BLEEPING BLEEP TWIN

As Gregg posted at the mother-ship, Chicago's Fox affiliate reported today that Rahm did speak to Blagojevich, a seeming soulmate who likes to say fuck as much as Rahm does. There's a couple of interesting points about this report.

A source familiar with the investigation confirmed for Fox Chicago News that Rahm Emanuel did in fact have multiple conversations with Governor Rod Blagojevich and his Chief of Staff John Harris about the Senate seat. The source says there was a list of names given to the Governor's office of candidates that would be acceptable to President-elect Barack Obama. The conversations happened after the FBI wiretaps were in place and after Emanuel was named Obama's Chief of Staff early last month. The timing of the conversations made it likely, the source says, that the phone conversations were recorded and are in the hands of the FBI.

Note that this is the same outlet that reported on Tuesday that,

CONATY: We did receive a tip this morning that perhaps all of this came together so quickly because the Governor may have reached out to Rahm Emanuel, the president-elect's chief of staff, in attempting to leverage filling the Senate seat. And it may have been Rahm Emanuel who tipped the scale and made this move as quickly as it did.

The reporter who reported it is different, but the outlet is the same (and Tuesday's reporter used the first person plural, so the actual recipient of the Rahm tips may be the same). Of course, Rahm called that first report "over-

zealous reporting," but since "over-zealous" is different from inaccurate, Fox may have gone back to it.

Now look at the details this source provides. Rough dates for the contacts: after October 22, when the taps were placed, and after November 6, when Rahm was named Chief of Staff, which certainly is in line with the appearance that someone spoke to Obama's team on November 10 and that Blago was planning to speak with Rahm on November 13. But if the source's dates are correct, then Rahm spoke to Blago only after Blago started plotting his demands on November 3. In other words, if you needed any more assurances than you already had, Blago (or JJJ's emissary, on October 31) dreamt up selling the Senate seat, not Rahm.

To get a better sense of who this source might be, look at the type of information the source knows, and doesn't know. There was a list given to the Governor. The conversations took place after November 6. Though the source speculates that the conversations may be on tape (based on the timing of the calls), he doesn't actually know. This person is probably not law enforcement, since he knows about the list was exchanged but not whether the conversations were intercepted on the wiretaps.

Given that this Fox channel got the earlier leak, I'm inclined to believe this is Rahm or a close affiliate, back to his leaking ways. Just one thing makes me doubt that: the source's seeming confidence that the calls were picked up on the taps. Only someone from Blago's team, after all, would know whether those conversations happened when Blago was in one of the two rooms in his campaign office that were bugged or using the landline at his home that was tapped.

Though there is one detail that may have led someone with Rahm's intelligence to conclude that those calls were picked up: this detail from Fitz' complaint.

...nor does this affidavit set forth other calls where ROD BLAGOJEVICH and others discussed a possible appointment to the Senate seat based on considerations other than financial gain for ROD BLAGOJEVICH and his family, discussions which took place with greater frequency after efforts to arrange for a private job for ROD BLAGOJEVICH in exchange for appointing a particular candidate to the open Senate seat did not meet with success.

If Rahm—or whoever leaked this—knows there was discussion of a non-monetary exchange after the time when Rahm told Blago he'd get only appreciation, this detail would suggest that the Blago-Rahm calls were picked up. And, given the potentially associated leak that Rahm tipped Fitz to Blago's extortion, this raises the possibility that this non-monetary stuff is even more interesting than the monetary stuff. Fitz almost suggests that Blago got frantic after Rahm refused to make him Ambassador to Serbia; given how crazy he already was, who knows what Blago may have proposed in desperation to try to get value out of that Senate seat?!?!

In any case, I rather suspect that Rahm is doing some pre-emptive leaking (or maybe he just hadn't leaked anything for a day or two and he was jonesing for a fix). This puts out the news that Obama's team handed a list to Blago (given the timing, this probably happened after Rahm told Blago they would only give Blago "appreciation" in exchange for the nomination of Valerie Jarrett as Senator). It confirms there were multiple calls. And it warns that those calls may have shown up on wiretaps.

We may not learn much more when Obama releases an official list of contacts in the coming days. Though, if the non-monetary asks are juicier than the monetary ones, I do hope Fitz will let us know what they are one of these days.