

THE LATEST RAHMLINOLOGY

I wonder how Greg Craig—ousted from the Administration because he tried to do the right thing on Gitmo—feels about this.

In December 2008, Obama, Emanuel and Republican Sens. John McCain (Ariz.) and Lindsey O. Graham (S.C.) met in Obama's transition headquarters in Chicago to discuss detainee policy. According to Graham, Obama turned to him at one point and said, " 'I'm going to need your help closing Guantanamo Bay. . . . I want you and Rahm to start talking.' " They did, and as the discussions progressed, Emanuel grew wary that closing the U.S. military prison in Cuba was possible without opening a slew of other politically sensitive national security problems " 'This stuff is like flypaper,' " Graham recalled Emanuel saying. " 'It will stick to you.' "

Graham said Emanuel was well aware that his and any other Republican support for closing Guantanamo Bay hinged on keeping alleged Sept. 11 mastermind Khalid Sheik Mohammed out of civilian court.

According to a person familiar with the conversations, who discussed the confidential deliberation on the condition of anonymity, Emanuel made his case to Obama, articulating the political dangers of a civilian trial to congressional Democrats. Attorney General Eric H. Holder Jr. presented a counterargument rooted in principle, for civilian trials.

The implication, of course, is that Rahm met with the two Republicans on his own. If so, at the very time Rahm was letting Lindsey Graham demand the shredding of the Constitution, Greg

Craig was executing the ham-handed report that, though transparently lame, managed to free Rahm of the taint of Rod Blagojevich.

Rahm wouldn't have survived into the first days of this Administration without Craig's work. Some gratitude, Rahm.

And remember how one of the reasons why Craig was ousted was because he wasn't consulting with Congress enough? Well, it sounds like that was a problem, for Rahm, because that's how he fancied he'd control the process.

"During this whole civilian-trial debate, Rahm's gut instincts knew that taking KSM to New York for civilian trials was going to be a misstep," Graham said. "He has a better ear for domestic politics on this issue than anybody in the administration, quite frankly."

With the Justice Department in charge, Emanuel tried to keep tabs on the process through Graham. "He'd say: 'How's it going? Did you tell them they were going to lose you?' And in terms a sailor could understand."

One administration official close to Emanuel did not dispute that Obama had overruled Emanuel on some key policy issues. "It's not germane what the discussion was beforehand, what his idea was, because once a decision is made, he puts himself whole-hog behind it," the official said of Emanuel. "It would be difficult for people to discern what his [original] position was."

Except that it was not difficult at all. It has been clear since August that Rahm has been actively undermining Craig and Holder's efforts to hew to the rule of law. Doing so, in fact, with the guy who lost the election in 2008, John McCain, who still behaves at every turn like someone trying to take down his political

opponent. That's who Rahm has been sleeping with in his efforts to thwart the rule of law.

No wonder we're seeing so many artificial "Save Rahm!!" stories.