

BARB MIKULSKI AND STEPHEN PRESTON SEEM TO DISAGREE OVER WHETHER DAVID PETRAEUS “JERKED AROUND” CONGRESS

A big part of Stephen Preston’s response to Mark Udall’s questions about whether he supports adequate disclosure to Congress consists of insisting the CIA Directors he worked with – Leon Panetta, David Petraeus, presumably Mike Morell as Acting Director, and John Brennan – have supported full disclosure to Congress.

Doing a better job of congressional notification and ensuring the proper provision of information concerning covert action and other intelligence activities to the Intelligence Committees has been a top priority of the Directors under which I have served, starting with Director Panetta, and one that I have fully supported.

[snip]

What we regard as proper practice today is driven by faithful application of the National Security Act of 1947. It is also informed by the very high priority the Directors under which I have served have placed on doing a better job of congressional notification and ensuring the proper provision of information concerning covert action and other intelligence activities to the Intelligence Committees. To repeat, I have fully supported these efforts and, if confirmed, will be fully committed to such efforts with respect to the Armed Services Committees.

While it may or may not be true that the Directors under whom Preston has served have not engaged in the kind of manipulative briefings that characterized the torture program, every time I read these assurances from Preston I remembered what Barb Mikulski said at John Brennan's confirmation hearing.

Now, I want to get to the job of the CIA director. I'm going to be blunt – and this would be no surprise to you, sir.

But I've been on this committee for more than 10 years. And with the exception of Mr. Panetta, I feel I've been jerked around by every CIA director.

I've either been misled, misrepresented, had to pull information out, often at the most minimal kind of way, from Tenet, with his little aluminum rods to tell us that we had weapons of mass destruction in Iraq to Porter Goss, not worth coming.

You know the problems we've had with torture. The chair has spoken eloquently about it all the way.

And, quite frankly, during those questions, they were evaded, they were distorted, et cetera.

While she didn't name him as she did Tenet and Goss, neither did she except David Petraeus, like she did Leon Panetta.

This would seem to suggest that Mikulski has a very different understanding of Petraeus' commitment to briefing Congress than Preston claims to have.