

ANONYMOUS SOURCES CLAIM POLISH PRESIDENT DIDN'T KNOW OF TORTURE SITE

Remember the Polish prosecutor who got fired as he was preparing to charge top members of the Democratic Left Alliance party for their complicity in America's torture site? The same newspaper that broke that story—Gazeta Wyborcza—just reported former President Aleksander Kwasniewski's purported explanation of his role in the torture site: complete ignorance.

"Aleksander Kwasniewski did not know what was going on there," an informant has told Gazeta Wyborcza.

Prosecutors in Warsaw are currently considering whether to bring charges against Kwasniewski and other left wing politicians for allegedly allowing al-Qaeda suspects to be held and tortured in Poland. Kwasniewski has always said he had no knowledge of the CIA activity.

[snip]

President Aleksander Kwasniewski only found out about the 'black site' at the Stare Kiejkuty intelligence base, near the Szczytno-Szymany airport, over 100 kilometres from Warsaw, when President George W. Bush thanked him for Poland's assistance in the 'war against terror', the daily reports.

While on a visit to Poland in June 2003, Bush thanked Kwasniewski for the help Warsaw had given Washington in its fight against terrorism.

But so profuse was Bush's thanks that Kwasniewski realised that "something was not right," as Poland had only sent a

limited number of troops to Afghanistan and Iraq, to his knowledge.

Hmmm.

Here's the most "profuse" thanks that Bush offered Poland in his public comments while in Poland (even as he affirmed his "belie[f] in human rights, and justice under law" and hailed historic fights against evil in Europe).

And Poland has led the effort to increase anti-terror cooperation amongst central and eastern European nations. And America is grateful.

Now I could see some confusion about this statement on Kwasniewski's part if he didn't know what Poland had done to lead the anti-terror effort in Central Europe. But this one comment is not all that profuse. And it was delivered on May 31, 2003, not in June.

Which makes me wonder whether the real profuse thanks came in private comments, perhaps the following day.

A more interesting detail of timing, however, is that Bush's comments came at a time when the CIA Inspector General was already investigating the treatment of Abd al-Rahim al-Nashiri on Polish soil.

I suppose it's remotely possible that no one told the Polish President the CIA had taken over an old Soviet era prison to conduct its torture (though I doubt it—Bush's speech also seems laden with quid pro quos about support for NATO and EU membership). But I would bet there was more that raised Kwasniewski's concern than just purportedly newfound knowledge of the prison.