


LINDSEY GRAHAM: FOR MCCARTHYISM BEFORE HE WAS AGAINST IT

Zachary Roth raises a really important point about Lindsey Graham (aka Rahm's Attorney General). Though in recent days Graham has come out against Liz Cheney's McCarthyism, he was one of the Republicans who started this whole witch hunt last November by signing a letter (authored by Chuck Grassley) asking for a details on those who had defended detainees in the past: 

To better understand the scope of these apparent conflicts of interest, Senator Grassley asked for the following information: (1) The names of political appointees in the Department who represented detainees, worked for organizations advocating on behalf of detainees, or worked for organizations advocating on terrorism or detainee policy; (2) The cases or projects that these appointees worked on with respect to detainees prior to joining the Justice Department; (3) The cases or projects relating to detainees that they have worked on since joining the Justice Department; and (4) A list of all political appointees who have been instructed to, or have voluntarily recused themselves from working on specific detainee cases, projects, or matters pending before the courts or at the Justice Department.

Unfortunately, your response to Senator Grassley's request was less than encouraging as you repeatedly stated you would merely "consider" the request. It is imperative that the Committee have this information so we can assure the American people that the Department is in fact formulating terrorism and

detainee policy without bias or preconceived beliefs.

In addition to the information requested at the hearing, we ask that you also provide responses to the following related questions:

(1) Have any ethics waivers been granted to individuals working on terrorism or detainee issues pursuant to President Obama's Executive Order dated January 21, 2009, titled "Ethical Considerations for Executive Branch Employees?"

(2) What are the Department's criteria for recusing an individual who previously lobbied on detainee issues, represented specific detainees, worked on terrorism or detainee policy for advocacy groups, or formulated terrorism or detainee policy? (3) What is the scope of recusal for each of the political appointees who have recused themselves from working on specific detainee cases, projects, or matters? (e.g. is an individual who previously represented a detainee recused only from matters related to that individual or from other detainees?) Please provide a detailed listing of the scope of each recusal.

Now, Zach says Graham's office has not yet responded to his inquiry for clarification on this issue.

But Zach, like me, seems to think this is a significant issue given that Graham is apparently being treated like a good faith partner on efforts to close Gitmo. Are we really going to compromise on Constitutional issues with Graham, when in six months time he could be back scaremongering with the McCarthyites again?