

THE ANONYMOUS COWARD CALLING HOLDER WEAK

Time has another one of those Rahm v. Holder profiles. It is notable from the slew of other ones for two reasons.

The anonymous source calling Holder a coward

First, the story features several main sources for this story: Lindsey Graham, speaking on the record.

Holder, issuing no-nonsense statements like this, on the record:

And it's Holder's experience in the law-enforcement system that makes him such a strong believer in its ability to put terrorists like KSM away forever. "We should have great faith in the resilience of our systems, the resilience of our people, the toughness that has always separated Americans from other peoples in this world, and that's what's made this country great," he says.

And at least one anonymous White House aide (AKA Rahm).

What I especially love about about that anonymous White House aide is that the guy who is too chicken to speak on the record seems to be parroting GOP attacks calling Holder weak on terror.

Republicans, meanwhile, were busy turning Holder into the poster child for White House weakness on terrorism, and some polls showed that most Americans agreed with them. "The only two people who still believe in civilian trials," says one of the meeting's attendees, "are Holder and the President."

Brave anonymous White House aide!!
Singlehandedly fighting terrorism by hiding
behind anonymity!!

**Lindsey's July (?) meeting with Holder and
December meeting with Obama**

The article also provides a useful timeline for
two meetings Lindsey had with the
Administration, first an July (or August)
meeting with Holder.

By July, Obama had asked Holder to
decide whether it was feasible to
prosecute KSM in a civilian court.
Holder chewed on that question for
weeks. Meanwhile, Obama's chief of
staff, Rahm Emanuel, who opposed
civilian trials, asked Holder to meet
with Republican Senator Lindsey Graham
of South Carolina, a key centrist vote
on matters of counterterrorism. Graham
told Holder he strongly opposed civilian
trials for the alleged 9/11 conspirators
and that they could affect his support
for closing Guantánamo Bay prison, a key
Obama goal.

And then a December meeting with Obama.

When Obama met with Graham in early
December, the Senator laid out his case
against civilian trials. But the
President said he thought Holder had the
better side of the argument. "I just
agreed to disagree with the President on
that issue," Graham told TIME.

Those meetings are interesting both for the way
they match up to the timeline of the attacks on
Holder and Greg Craig (which started in earnest
around the time of the first meeting, and
culminated in the December meeting after Craig
had been ousted.

I'd really love to know the logic for the Obama
meeting. After all, this was before the

Christmas day bombing, when the Administration was still basking in the success of the foiled Nazi plot. And it came at a time when the Democrats had 60 votes in the Senate.

So why meeting with Lindsey?

It sure suggests the push against civilian trials is more about politics than efficacy.

But we knew that.