

PELOSI: CIA TOLD US WATERBOARDING “WAS NOT BEING EMPLOYED”

Pelosi has confirmed something I've been pointing out for weeks. When the CIA briefed Pelosi and Goss on September 4, 2002, it told them that waterboarding was not being employed.

The CIA comes to Congress and withholds information about the timing and the use of this subject. We later find out that it had been taking place before they even briefed us about the legal opinions and told us that they were not being used. This is a tactic—a diversionary tactic—off of those who conceived, developed, and implemented these policies, which all of us long opposed.

[snip]

Of all the briefings that I have received at this same time, earlier, they were misinforming the American people there were weapons of mass destruction in Iraq and it was an imminent threat to the United States. I, to the limit of what I could say to my caucus, told them, the intelligence does not support the imminent threat that this Administration is contending. Whether it's on the subject of what's happening in Iraq, whether it's on the subject of techniques used by the intelligence community on those they are interrogating, every step of the way, the Administration was misleading the Congress.

And that is the issue. And that is why we need a truth commission.

[snip]

Yes, I am saying that they are

misleading—the CIA was misleading the Congress. And at the same time, the Administration was misleading the Congress on weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.

Hello!?!?!? Press corpse!?!?! This has been clear—at least to one Dirty Fucking Hippy Blogger—for weeks (and Porter Goss’ statements—which speak of waterboarding prospectively, do not refute them). You think maybe it’s time to report on the crimes CIA and Dick Cheney covered up finally, rather than masturbating over what you consider a simulating partisan spat?

Here’s Pelosi’s prepared statement—I’ll post the questions when they get it done:

Throughout my entire career, I am proud to have worked for human rights, and against the use of torture, around the world.

As Ranking Member of the Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee in the 1990s, I helped secure the first funding for the Torture Victims Relief Act to assist those suffering from the physical and psychological effects of torture.

I unequivocally oppose the use of torture by our government because it is contrary to our national values.

Like all Members of Congress who are briefed on classified information, I have signed oaths pledging not to disclose any of that information. This is an oath I have taken very seriously, and I have always abided by it.

The CIA briefed me only once on some enhanced interrogation techniques, in September 2002, in my capacity as

Ranking Member of the House Intelligence Committee.

I was informed then that Department of Justice opinions had concluded that the use of enhanced interrogation techniques was legal. The only mention of waterboarding at that briefing was that it was not being employed.

Those conducting the briefing promised to inform the appropriate Members of Congress if that technique were to be used in the future.

Congress and the American people now know that contrary opinions within the Executive Branch concluded that these interrogation techniques were not legal. However, those opinions were not provided to Congress.

We also now know that techniques, including waterboarding, had already been employed, and that those briefing me in September 2002 gave me inaccurate and incomplete information.

At the same time, the Bush Administration was misleading the American people about the threat of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.

Five months later, in February 2003, a member of my staff informed me that the Republican chairman and new Democratic Ranking Member of the House Intelligence Committee had been briefed about the use of certain techniques which had been the subject of earlier legal opinions.

Following that briefing, a letter raising concerns was sent to CIA General Counsel Scott Muller by the new Democratic Ranking Member of the House Intelligence Committee, the appropriate person to register a protest.

But no letter could change the policy.

It was clear we had to change the leadership of the Congress and the White House. That was my job.

When Democrats assumed control of Congress in 2007, Congress passed legislation banning torture and requiring all government agencies to abide by the Army Field Manual. President Bush vetoed this bill barring the use of torture. An effort to overturn his veto failed because of the votes of Republican Members.

We needed to elect a new President. We did; and he has banned torture.

Congress and the Administration must review the National Security Act of 1947 to determine if a larger number of Members of Congress should receive classified briefings so that information can be utilized for proper oversight and legislative activity without violating oaths of secrecy.

I have long supported creation of an independent Truth Commission to determine how intelligence was misused, and how controversial and possibly illegal activities like torture were authorized within the Executive Branch.

Until a Truth Commission is implemented, I encourage the appropriate committees of the House to conduct vigorous oversight of these issues."