

MCCAIN OWES PELOSI AN APOLOGY

Back in May, when Nancy Pelosi was pointing out, correctly, that she had not been briefed that the CIA was already in the torture business, John McCain joined the rest of his party in suggesting that Pelosi could have prevented the torture. He suggested that his efforts—he focuses on 2005, ignoring that he basically capitulated on a Nuremberg Defense in the Detainee Treatment Act—were successful in preventing torture.

"Let me just tell you — I was briefed on it — and I vehemently objected to it. We did the Detainee Treatment Act, which prohibited cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment. So we felt, I certainly felt, I could act on it."

He dismissed her claim she was barred from acting on what she learned in the briefings with a shrug.

"I'm sure she has her argument and we'll see if the American people agree."

Today it's McCain's turn to insist he did all he could to prevent torture. In the Time article I cited earlier, McCain is left to insist, futilely, that he complained specifically about the proposed use of sleep deprivation.

An aide to McCain said that in meetings with Hayden and others, McCain raised the story of Orson Swindle, a friend of McCain's who suffered forced sleep deprivation through stress positions as a captive of the North Vietnamese.

Of course, we now know that between the CIA and Steven Bradbury, the torture apologists were actually using McCain's name **in support** of the use of sleep deprivation. Presumably, then, those two detainees with whom sleep deprivation

was used in August 2007 and October 2007 were abused in spite of McCain's complaints.

Neither of these politicians were heroes in their opposition to torture. But the public record makes it clear that Pelosi measured the Bushies much better than McCain: even opposition like that McCain voiced was turned into support for abuse.

And its time both the Democrats and the Republicans opposing torture acknowledged that fact, because it's a key step to holding those responsible for torture accountable.