

Two Torture Architects On Obama's National Security Team

By [Steve Watson](#)

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White House Press Secretary Josh Earnest was grilled Wednesday by a reporter over the fact that while Obama has denounced the details revealed in the Senate CIA torture report, two of the architects of the policy are still on his national security team.

Earnest was given the third degree by Fox News' Ed Henry, who demanded to know why both current CIA head John Brennan and FBI head James Comey, who were instrumental in the development of enhanced interrogation techniques policy under George W. Bush, still hold prominent roles under the Obama administration.

"Following up on Jon's questioning about John Brennan, you also have as the FBI Chief, James Comey, who served in the Bush Justice Department and helped endorse the legal memo, the legal memo blessing waterboarding and other enhanced techniques." Henry noted.

"How could the President appoint John Brennan and James Comey to two of the most sensitive jobs in the administration CIA and FBI if he believes they endorsed un-American tactics?" Henry asked.

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Earnest gave a stock reply saying that both Brennan and Comey are reliable and have strong records when it comes to keeping the country safe.

Henry pressed on with his line of questioning, asking "But you don't see any contradictions that you're attacking Bush administration policies but you have two of the architects of those policies serving?"

Again, Earnest gave a stock answer, avoiding the question and saying the President has confidence in both men.

Henry then caught Earnest out again, drawing him into an admission that the current

administration fundamentally disagrees with former vice president Dick Cheney, who has said that the torture policy makes America safer.

“Why does this President’s CIA director basically agree with Dick Cheney that these tactics saved lives? Your CIA director agrees with him.” Henry said.

“For questions about Mr. Brennan’s position on these issues I would direct you to the CIA” Earnest said, again avoiding the question.

Henry then interrogated Earnest over the Obama drone policy, noting “You have repeatedly talked about moral authority. So can you explain how the President believes that it’s un-American to use these techniques, but it was okay to ramp up the drone policy?”

“Basically thousands of people around the world, innocent civilians, were killed. What’s the moral equivalency there? How do you have moral authority when innocent civilians are killed by drones?” Henry urged.

Once again, Earnest gave a stock answer, saying that the Obama administration goes “to great lengths to protect the lives of innocent civilians,” and that “there are significant checks and balances included in the system.”

As we have previously noted, the Obama White House has merely [sought to protect](#) Bush administration officials and CIA agents from prosecution for torture and sexual abuse. Obama and Holder signed off on [granting final immunity](#) to the CIA torturers. As we have discovered, this is because top Democrats like Nancy Pelosi are [complicit in the illegal torture program](#) because they gave their approval for it to be instituted in the first place.

The media has not even broached the fact that this information has been public for five years now. Indeed, at the beginning of 2010, government accountability group Judicial Watch obtained and released a CIA report via a FIOA lawsuit, that revealed leading members of Congress were briefed specifically on the torture program between 2002 and 2007, and signed off their approval on it.

The report (embedded below) reveals that at least 68 members of Congress were briefed by the CIA regarding the interrogation program, including specific “enhanced interrogation techniques” (EITs). The report shows that by the end of 2002, one year after the 9/11 attacks, most senior members of the House and Senate committees, including Diane Feinstein, were engaged in meetings solely focused on EITs.

Interrogation Briefings to the Hill

Date	Subject	Committee	Members
24-Apr-2002	Ongoing interrogations of Abu Zubaydah	HPSCI	Douglas Bereuter Leonard Boswell Richard Burr Michael Castle Gary Condit Peter Hoekstra Nancy Pelosi Silvestre Reyes
24-Apr-2002	Discussion of debriefing of Abu Zubaydah and references to techniques	SSCI	Chairman Bob Graham Evan Bayh Mike Dewine Jon Kyl John Rockefeller Richard Shelby Fred Thompson
30-Jul-2002		SSCI	
7-Aug-2002	Mention of EITs to include examples	SSCI	
20-Nov-2002		SSCI	
4-Dec-2002	Interrogation of Bin al-Shibh and	HPSCI	
4-Sep-2002	EITs	HPSCI	Chairman Goss Ranking Member Harman
9-Sep-2002	EITs	SSCI	Chairman Graham Vice Chairman Shelby
27-Sep-2002	EITs	SSCI	Chairman Graham Vice Chairman Shelby

Interrogation Briefings to the Hill

Date	Subject	Committee	Members
4-Feb-2003	EITs	HPSCI	Chairman Goss Ranking Member Harman
4-Feb-2003	Detailed briefing on EITs	SSCI	Chairman Roberts
5-Feb-2003	Detainee Interrogation Activities	HPSCI	Chairman Goss Ranking Member Harman
10-Feb-2003		HPSCI	
27-Feb-2003		SSCI	
11-Jul-2003		SSCI	
Summer 2003	EITs	HPSCI	Chairman Goss Ranking Member Harman
		SSCI	Chairman Roberts Vice Chairman Rockefeller
4-Sep-2003	EITs	HPSCI	Chairman Goss Ranking Member Harman
		SSCI	Chairman Roberts Vice Chairman Rockefeller
4-Sep-2003	GTC Interrogation Programs	HPSCI	Chairman Goss Ranking Member Harman

15-Mar-2006	Status of program, suspension of EITs, value of Intelligence, DTA, need for new legislation	SSCI	Chairman Roberts Vice Chairman-Rockefeller Evan Bayh Christopher Bond Saxby Chambliss Russell Feingold Dianne Feinstein Chuck Hagel Carl Levin Trent Lott Barbara Mikulski John Warner
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[CIA Interrogation Briefings 02232010](#)

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