

BREAKING NEWS! CIA'S SPOOKS LIE AND DECEIVE!

I shouldn't be snarky, because this NYT article describing how John Kiriakou managed to frame the entire debate on torture with his false claims about waterboarding on ABC is quite good.

His ABC interview came at an especially delicate juncture in the debate over the use of torture. Weeks earlier, the nomination of Michael Mukasey as attorney general was nearly derailed by his refusal to comment on the legality of waterboarding, and one day later, the C.I.A. director testified about the destruction of interrogation videotapes. Mr. Kiriakou told MSNBC that he was willing to talk in part because he thought the C.I.A. had "gotten a bum rap on waterboarding."

At the time, Mr. Kiriakou appeared to lend credibility to the prior press reports that quoted anonymous former government employees who had implied that waterboarding was used sparingly. In late 2007, Mr. Ross began pursuing Mr. Kiriakou for an interview, "leaning on him pretty hard," he recounted.

On Dec. 10, in the subsequent interview, Mr. Kiriakou told Mr. Ross that he believed the waterboarding was necessary in the months after the 9/11 attacks. "At the time I was so angry," he told Mr. Ross. "I wanted so much to help disrupt future attacks on the United States that I felt it was the only thing we could do."

My favorite part is the quotes from Brian Ross, admitting he didn't ask the most obvious follow-

ups.

Mr. Kiriakou was the only on-the-record source cited by ABC. In the televised portion of the interview, Mr. Ross did not ask Mr. Kiriakou specifically about what kind of reports he was privy to or how long he had access to the information. "It didn't even occur to me that they'd keep doing" the waterboarding, Mr. Ross said last week. "It doesn't make any sense to me."

He added, "I didn't give enough credit to the fiendishness of the C.I.A."

Golly gee! Brian Ross seems to say, whodathunk that those professional liars at the CIA would lie to me?

And, in a throwback to the Pulitzer-prize winning story on the Rent-a-General program that no one wants to talk about, Stelter goes onto note that ABC hired this guy who ~~lied his ass off~~* provided false information to them. (More recently, John Kerry's Senate Foreign Relations Committee has hired this trained liar.)

But here's the thing. To quote our current President, why look backwards? Why not look forward? Because those trained ex-spook liars are doing it again!

As I pointed out the other day, the public record makes it pretty clear that the CIA did not notify Congress about torture before they started—and in a Congressional briefing given after waterboarding Abu Zubaydah 83 times, they did not reveal they had already started waterboarding. According to both Porter Goss' account and Nancy Pelosi's, it appears, CIA and the Bush Administration violated laws requiring Congressional notice.

But rather than tell that story and largely through the considerable manipulation and deceit skills of Porter Goss, the press wants to cover the "drama" of Goss' and Pelosi's purportedly

conflicting stories.

What was it Bush said? Fool me once, and figure you can play me for a fool again?

*Spencer has pointed out to me that we don't know whether Kiriakou—or those in CIA who told him this story—lied. So I've changed this language.