CHENEY 'FESSES UP THAT RAPPORT, NOT TORTURE, GOT INTELLIGENCE

Greg Sargent catches Cheney parsing carefully about whether the two CIA documents he's trying to get released will prove that torture works.

> The key moment came when his interviewer said: "You want some documents declassified having to do with waterboarding." Cheney replied:
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>> "Yes, but the way I would describe them is they have to do with the detainee program, the interrogation program. It's not just waterboarding. It's the interrogation program that we used for high-value detainees. There were two reports done that summarize what we learned from that program, and I think they provide a balanced view."

Greg speculates:

> My bet is Cheney is planning to cite the valuable intel in the docs and say that the program — *of which torture was only a part* — was responsible for producing it. He'll fudge the question of whether the torture itself *was actually responsible for generating that information*. Cheney is as experienced as any Washington hand at using precise language to obfsucate, and this is the game plan. You heard it here first.

Greg's right—Cheney's making a key retreat off his claims. That's because we know the CIA got a ton of intelligence from some of the detainees,

particularly KSM. But I've shown repeatedly, with my half-completed review of the KSM intelligence used in the 9/11 Report, that the bulk of this information came long after KSM was waterboarded in March 2003. The first big chunks of intelligence came from him in July 2003, and there were big chunks in the months that followed. This is important because the CIA started using rapport as well as abuse. Though we don't know when they did so, it is likely that much of the intelligence they got from KSM came at least partly because of this rapport based interrogation.

So I'm not surprised that the program—including rapport—got intelligence. I'm just curious why Cheney is backtracking on his big claims now.