

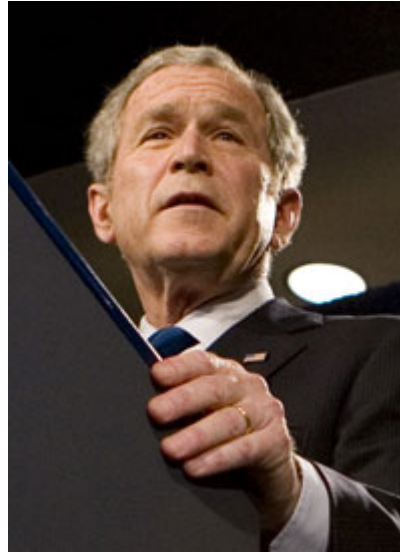


Written by [Gary Benoit](#) on December 8, 2008

Bush Says Saddam Hussein Was Not Connected to 9/11

Really? Well, Bush *has* acknowledged in the past that Saddam Hussein did not attack us on 9/11. For example, in response to a question on September 17, 2003, Bush [stated](#): “We’ve had no evidence that Saddam Hussein was involved with the September 11th [attacks].”

But how frequently did Bush make this acknowledgement? Not often, at least not publicly. Instead, he repeatedly (and much more memorably) juxtaposed references to the 9/11 terror attacks to those of Saddam Hussein, thereby helping to create the false impression that Saddam Hussein was connected to 9/11.



For instance, on January 31, 2003, President Bush stated: “The strategic view of America changed after September the 11th. We must deal with threats before they hurt the American people again. And as I have said repeatedly, Saddam Hussein would like nothing more than to use a terrorist network to attack and to kill and leave no fingerprints behind.”

And on March 6, 2003, he stated: “If the world fails to confront the threat posed by the Iraqi regime, refusing to use force, even as a last resort, free nations would assume immense and unacceptable risks. The attacks of September the 11th, 2001 showed what the enemies of America did with four airplanes. We will not wait to see what terrorists or terrorist states could do with weapons of mass destruction.”

Statements of this type, repeated over and over again by Bush and by others in his administration, helped to plant the idea in the public mind that there was indeed a Saddam-9/11 link without the administration explicitly saying that this link existed.

Many Americans were also led to believe that Saddam Hussein was connected to the 9/11 attacks because of the Bush administration’s repeated references to an al-Qaeda-Iraq connection. For example, on February 5, 2003, Bush’s then-Secretary of State Colin Powell [said](#) in his presentation to the UN Security Council, warning against the Saddam Hussein threat: “Iraqi officials deny accusations of ties with al-Qaeda. These denials are simply not credible.” Yet in a January 8, 2004 press conference, Powell acknowledged: “I have not seen smoking-gun, concrete evidence about the connection.”

The lack of evidence notwithstanding, many Americans supported the Bush administration’s decision to go to war against Iraq because they mistakenly believed that Saddam Hussein was connected to 9/11 either directly or through al-Qaeda. But if Saddam was not involved with 9/11 — and if the administration did not explicitly accuse Saddam of involvement with 9/11 — then what reason did the administration give for launching an offensive war against Iraq? We all know the answer to that question: President Bush and other administration officials repeatedly insisted that Saddam Hussein threatened the world with dangerous weapons of mass destruction and that he needed to be disarmed pursuant to United Nations Security Council resolutions.



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“Saddam Hussein and his weapons are a direct threat to this country, to our people, and to all free people,” President Bush claimed on March 6, 2003. Then on March 17, 2003, days before launching the invasion of Iraq, Bush said: “Intelligence gathered by this and other governments leaves no doubt that the Iraq regime continues to possess and conceal some of the most lethal weapons ever devised.”

But the reputed WMDs were never found, and the administration eventually backed away from the claim. Consider this exchange between President Bush and Diane Sawyer on ABC News’ *Primetime* program on December 16, 2003:

DIANE SAWYER, ABC News: — stated as a hard fact that there were weapons of mass destruction as opposed to the possibility that he could move to acquire those weapons still.

PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH: So what’s the difference?

SAWYER: Well —

BUSH: The possibility that he could acquire weapons — if he were to acquire weapons, he would be the danger.

SAWYER: What would it take to convince you he didn’t have weapons of mass destruction?

BUSH: Saddam Hussein was a threat, and the fact that he has gone means America is a safer country.

SAWYER: And if he doesn’t have weapons of mass destruction, someday —

BUSH: You can keep asking the question. I’m telling you, I made the right decision for America.

To this day, Bush has yet to back away from his position that he made “the right decision for America” by launching an offensive war against a country that had not attacked us. He may now claim that he’s said “many times” that Saddam Hussein was not connected to 9/11, but that does not change the fact that the administration’s war propaganda — with the help of a complicit media - misled many to believe that Saddam was involved.

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