

Report: Saddam and Al Qaeda Enemies, Not Collaborators

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On Sept. 11, 2001, Bush articulated the so-called Bush Doctrine: “We will make no distinction between the [terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbor them](#).” Declassified portions of the [Senate Intelligence Committee’s Phase II report](#) released Friday make definitively clear that Iraq never qualified for inclusion in the Doctrine.

Al Qaeda was [responsible](#) for the 9/11 terrorist acts. Key portions of the new Intel Committee report indicate that Bush attacked an Iraqi regime that not only lacked an operational relationship with al Qaeda, but was hostile toward the terrorist network. By making the strategic mistake of attacking Iraq, Bush’s policy accomplished the goals of the al Qaeda network. Here’s what the [report](#) says:

[Bin] Ladin generally opposed collaboration [with Baghdad]. (p. 65)

*According to debriefs of multiple detainees—including Saddam Hussein and former Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz—and capture documents, **Saddam did not trust al-Qa’ida or any other radical Islamist group and did not want to cooperate with them.** (p. 67)*

*Aziz underscored Saddam’s distrust of Islamic extremists like bin Ladin, stating that when the Iraqi regime started to see evidence that Wahabists had come to Iraq, **“the Iraqi regime issued a decree aggressively outlawing Wahabism in Iraq and threatening offenders with execution.”** (p. 67)*

*Another senior Iraqi official stated that **Saddam did not like bin Ladin because he called Saddam an “unbeliever.”** (p.73)*

*Conclusion 1: ... Postwar findings indicate that Saddam Hussein was distrustful of al-Qa’ida and viewed Islamic extremists as a threat to his regime, refusing all requests from al Qa’ida to provide material or operational support. **Debriefings of key leaders of the former Iraqi regime indicate that Saddam distrusted Islamic radicals in general, and al Qa’ida in particular...** Debriefings also indicate that Saddam issued a general order that Iraq should not deal with al Qa’ida. No postwar information suggests that the Iraqi regime attempted to facilitate a relationship with bin Ladin. (p. 105)*

*Conclusion 5: ... Postwar information indicates that **Saddam Hussein attempted, unsuccessfully, to locate and capture al-Zarqawi and that the regime did not have a relationship with, harbor, or turn a blind eye toward Zarqawi.** (p. 109)*