

Iraq-Al Qaeda Links

The partisan media is on a mission, attempting to hypnotize voters everywhere: "Repeat after me, 'There are no links between Iraq and al Qaeda.'" After the 9/11 Commission reported they were unable to confirm specific evidence of an Iraq connection to the 9/11 attacks, the lib media went bonkers, irrationally concluding that there never were any links, ever, and anyone who noticed the numerous connections was an idiot. "Al Qaeda-Hussein Link Is Dismissed," sniffed *The Washington Post*. "Panel Finds No Qaeda-Iraq Tie," declared *The New York Times*. "No Signs of Iraq-Al Qaeda Ties Found," shrugged *The Los Angeles Times*. According to a typically malicious *New York Times* editorial:

It's hard to imagine how the Commission investigating the 2001 terrorist attacks could have put it more clearly...: there was never any evidence of a link between Iraq and al Qaeda ... Now President Bush should apologize to the American people ... he is responsible for... inexcusably, selling the false Iraq-Qaeda claim to Americans ... [E]ither Mr. Bush knew he was not telling the truth, or he has a capacity for politically motivated self-deception...

The anti-link frenzy reached a new level of absurdity when an American anchorman actually scolded the new Prime Minister of Iraq, Iyad Allawi, for his stubborn refusal to bow to the "no-link" dogma:

Allawi: We know that [American soldiers being attacked in Iraq] is an extension to what happened in New York. And the war [has] been taken now to Iraq by the same terrorists. Saddam was a potential friend and partner and natural ally of terrorism.

Tom Brokaw: Prime Minister, I'm surprised that you would make the connection between 9/11 and the war in Iraq. The 9/11 Commission in America says there is no evidence of a collaborative relationship between Saddam Hussein and those terrorists of al Qaeda.

Allawi: No, I believe very strongly that Saddam had relations with al Qaeda. And these relations started in Sudan. We know Saddam had relationships with a lot of terrorists and international terrorism. Now, whether he is directly connected to the September atrocities or not, I can't vouch for this. But definitely I know that he has connections with extremism and terrorists.

Mr. Brokaw's "surprise" notwithstanding, here is just a sampling of the voluminous evidence of those connections on the public record that the no-link crowd is studiously ignoring:

Ignoring the Commission

- "With al Qaeda as its foundation, bin Laden sought to build a broader Islamic army that also included terrorist groups from Egypt, Libya, Algeria, Saudi Arabia and Oman, Tunisia, Jordan, **Iraq**, Lebanon, Morocco, Somalia and Eritrea ... With a multinational council intended to promote common goals, coordinate targeting, and authorize asset sharing for terrorist operations, this Islamic force represented a new level of collaboration among diverse terrorist groups." — 9/11 COMMISSION STAFF STATEMENT #15, *OVERVIEW OF THE ENEMY*, PAGE 3
- "Bin Laden also explored possible cooperation with Iraq during his time in Sudan, despite his opposition to Hussein's secular regime ... The Sudanese [government]... arranged for contacts between Iraq and al Qaeda. A senior Iraqi intelligence officer reportedly made three visits to Sudan, finally meeting bin Laden in 1994. Bin Laden is said to have requested space to establish training camps, as well as assistance in procuring weapons..." — 9/11 COMMISSION STAFF STATEMENT #15, PAGE 5

- "[T]here were contacts between al Qaeda and Iraq, going back clear to the early 1990s, when Osama bin Laden was in Sudan, then when he was in Afghanistan. I don't think there's any dispute about that." — EX-REP. LEE HAMILTON (D, IN), 9/11 COMMISSION VICE-CHAIR, ON ABC'S "THIS WEEK"

Ignoring past reporting

- "A Federal grand jury in Manhattan returned a 238-count indictment yesterday charging the Saudi exile Osama bin Laden in the bombings of two United States Embassies in Africa in August and with conspiring to commit other acts of terrorism against Americans abroad ... Prosecutors also unsealed an earlier indictment, issued in June ... against Mr. bin Laden ... The new indictment ... accuses Mr. bin Laden of leading a vast terrorist conspiracy from 1989 to the present, in which he is said to have been working in concert with governments, including those of Sudan, **Iraq** and Iran, and terrorist groups to build weapons and attack American military installations ... Both indictments offer new information about Mr. bin Laden's operations, including one deal he is said to have struck with Iraq to cooperate in the development of weapons in return for Mr. bin Laden's agreeing not to work against that country." — *THE NEW YORK TIMES*, NOV. 5, 1998
- "Saddam Hussein's regime has opened talks with Osama bin Laden, bringing closer the threat of a terrorist attack using chemical, biological or nuclear weapons, according to U.S. intelligence sources and Iraqi opposition officials. The key meeting took place in the Afghan mountains near Kandahar in late December [1998]. The Iraqi delegation was led by Farouk Hijazi, Baghdad's ambassador in Turkey and one of Saddam's most powerful secret policemen, who is thought to have offered bin Laden asylum in Iraq ... News of the negotiations emerged [as] the U.S. attorney general, Janet Reno, warned the Senate that a terrorist attack involving weapons of mass destruction was a growing concern. 'There's a threat, and it's real,' Ms Reno said..." — *THE GUARDIAN*, FEB. 6, 1999
- "The world's most wanted man, Osama bin Laden, has been offered sanctuary in Iraq if his worldwide terrorist network succeeds in carrying out a campaign of high-profile attacks on the West ... Now we are also facing the prospect of an unholy alliance between bin Laden and Saddam. The implications are terrifying." — *THE [GLASGOW, SCOTLAND] HERALD*, DEC. 28, 1999
- "The Iraqis, who for several years paid smaller groups to do their dirty work, were quick to discover the advantages of al Qaeda ... Israeli sources claim that for the past two years Iraqi intelligence officers were shuttling between Baghdad and Afghanistan, meeting with Ayman al Zawahiri. According to the sources, one of the Iraqi intelligence officers, Salah Suleiman, was captured last October [2000] by the Pakistanis near the border with Afghanistan." — *JANE'S INTELLIGENCE "FOREIGN REPORT"*, SEPT. 19, 2001
- "Iraqi intelligence documents discovered in Baghdad by *The Telegraph* ... found [4/26/03] in the bombed headquarters of