# CHENEY'S LATEST DISTORTIONS

*In January 2004, Vice President Dick Cheney did a round of media interviews with NPR and others in which he reinforced his claims of a connection between Saddam Hussein and Al Qaeda. To back these claims up, he cited documents already discredited as "inaccurate" by the Bush Administration.*

## SADDAM-AL QAEDA CONNECTION

**CLAIM:** "There's overwhelming evidence there was a connection between al Qaeda and the Iraqi government. I am very confident that there was an established relationship there."  - Vice President Cheney, 1/22/04

**FACT:** According to documents, "Saddam Hussein warned his Iraqi supporters to be wary of joining forces with foreign Arab fighters entering Iraq to battle U.S. troops. The document provides another piece of evidence challenging the Bush administration contention of close cooperation between Saddam's regime and al Qaeda terrorists." [NY Times, 1/15/04]

**FACT:** "CIA interrogators have already elicited from the top Qaeda officials in custody that, before the American-led invasion, Osama bin Laden had rejected entreaties from some of his lieutenants to work jointly with Saddam." [NY Times, 1/15/04]

**FACT:** "Sec. of State Colin Powell conceded Thursday that despite his assertions to the United Nations last year, he had no 'smoking gun' proof of a link between the government of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and terrorists of al-Qaeda.'I have not seen smoking-gun, concrete evidence about the connection,' Powell said." [NY Times, 1/9/04]

**FACT:** "Three former Bush Administration officials who worked on intelligence and national security issues said the prewar evidence tying Al Qaeda was tenuous, exaggerated and often at odds with the conclusions of key intelligence agencies." [National Journal, 8/9/03]

**FACT:** Declassified documents "undercut Bush administration claims before the war that Hussein had links to Al Qaeda." [LA Times, 7/19/03].

**FACT:** "The chairman of the monitoring group appointed by the United Nations Security Council to track Al Qaeda told reporters that his team had found no evidence linking Al Qaeda to Saddam Hussein." [NY Times, 6/27/03]

**FACT:** "U.S. allies have found no links between Iraq and Al Qaeda.'We have found no evidence of links between Iraq and Al Qaeda,' said Europe's top investigator. 'If there were such links, we would have found them. But we have found no serious connections whatsoever.'" [LA Times, 11/4/02]

## YASIM ALLEGATION

**CHENEY CLAIM:** "Abdul Rahman Yasim arrived back in Iraq and was put on the payroll and provided a house, safe harbor and sanctuary.  So Saddam Hussein had an established track record of providing safe harbor and sanctuary for terrorists." – Vice President Cheney,  1/22/04

**FACT:** "Even if the new information holds up — and intelligence and law enforcement officials disagree on its conclusiveness — the links tying Yasin, Saddam and al-Qaeda are tentative." [USA Today, 9/17/03]

## SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

**CHENEY CLAIM:** "You ought to go look at an article that Stephen Hayes did in the Weekly Standard here a few weeks ago, that goes through and lays out in some detail, based on an assessment that was done by the Department of Defense and forwarded to the Senate Intelligence Committee some weeks ago. That's your best source of information" to justify the Saddam-Al Qaeda claim. – Vice President Cheney, 1/9/04

**FACT:** "Reports that the Defense Department recently confirmed new information with respect to contacts between al Qaeda and Iraq in a letter to the Senate Intelligence Committee are inaccurate. Individuals who leak or purport to leak classified information are doing serious harm to national security; such activity is deplorable and may be illegal." [DoD, 11/15/03]