



Cheney Says Bush Got “Soft” During Second Term

Former Vice President Dick Cheney is writing a memoir, and has claimed in that memoir that President George W. Bush “had gone soft” on a variety of issues during his second term, according to the August 12 Washington Post.



Pulitzer Prize-winning *Washington Post* reporter Barton Gellman reported that Cheney has signed a deal to co-write a memoir with Stephen Hayes, and for the first time agreed to criticize former President Bush because “the statute of limitations has expired” on his silence for dissent. Gellman [reported](#) that Cheney told Hayes, “When the president made decisions that I didn’t agree with, I still supported him and didn’t go out and undercut him.... Now we’re talking about after we’ve left office. I have strong feelings about what happened.... And I don’t have any reason not to forthrightly express those views.” That sentiment is about as succinct a definition of the Leninist principle of [“democratic centralism”](#) as ever was stated.

Gellman reported that Cheney’s influence in the administration waned during the second term, as President Bush felt chastened by low polling numbers and adjusted his policies slightly to mend his public profile. “In the second term, he felt Bush was moving away from him,” Gellman wrote, basing the statement upon an anonymous source. “He said Bush was shackled by the public reaction and the criticism he took. Bush was more malleable to that. The implication was that Bush had gone soft on him, or rather Bush had hardened against Cheney’s advice. He’d showed an independence that Cheney didn’t see coming. It was clear that Cheney’s doctrine was cast-iron strength at all times — never apologize, never explain — and Bush moved toward the conciliatory.” Gellman’s 2008 Pulitzer Prize was related to his reporting on former Vice President Cheney.

Gellman’s revelations raise a number of questions about the contents of Cheney’s memoir, specifically what Bush supposedly went “soft” on. Bush never closed down the secret CIA prisons or stopped torture of detainees, though he did stop the procedure of “waterboarding.” Nor did he ever cut back on his commitment to the Iraqi and Afghan wars. Cheney’s book will likely have a dual nature, interesting information, and truly disgusting anti-freedom opinions.



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