

Voice Of God Revealed To Be Cheney On Oval Office Intercom

HUMOR

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WASHINGTON, DC—Telephone logs recorded by the National Security Agency and obtained by Congress as part of an ongoing investigation suggest that the vice president may have used the Oval Office intercom system to address President Bush at crucial moments, giving categorical directives in a voice the president believed to be that of God.

Enlarge Image

President Bush sits at his desk in the Oval Office, where he received messages from an intercom voice identifying itself as "God" and thought to have been Vice President Cheney (below).

While journalists and presidential historians had long noted Bush's deep faith and Cheney's powerful influence in the White House, few had drawn a direct correlation between the two until Tuesday, when transcripts of meetings that took place in March and April of 2002 became available.

In a transcript of an intercom exchange recorded in March 2002, a voice positively identified as the vice president's identifies himself as "the Lord thy God" and promotes the invasion of Iraq, as well as the use of torture in prisoner interrogations.

A close examination of Bush's public statements and Secret Service time logs tracking the vice president reveals a consistent pattern, one which links Bush's belief that he had received word from God with Cheney's use of the White House's telephone-based intercom system.

Officials privately acknowledged that there is reason to believe that the vice president, as God, urged Bush to sign legislation benefiting oil companies in 2005.

"There's a lot of religious zeal in the West Wing," said a former White House staffer who spoke on the condition of anonymity. "It's possible that the vice president has taken advantage of that to fast-track certain administration objectives."

An ex-Treasury Department official and longtime friend of Cheney was asked to comment on the vice president's possible subterfuge. "I don't know. I certainly don't think it's something [Cheney] planned," he said. "I do know that Mr. Bush was unfamiliar with a phone-based intercom, and I suppose it is possible that Dick took advantage of that." A highly placed NSA official who has reviewed the information released Tuesday said Cheney masked his clipped monotone, employing a deeper, booming voice.

Enlarge Image

Vice President Cheney.

Said the NSA source: "It sounded as though the speaker, who identified himself as God, stood away from the intercom to create an echo effect."

On Capitol Hill, sources are expressing surprise that Cheney, a vice president with more influence than any other in U.S. history, would have resorted to such deception.

"The vice president has a lot of sway in this administration," said a former White House aide. "But perhaps when President Bush was particularly resolute and resistant to mortal persuasion, the vice president chose to quickly resolve disputes in his favor with a halfdecent God impression."

For many, the revelation explains Bush's confusion in the wake of Hurricane Katrina.

"I was very surprised by the president's slow response in New Orleans," political commentator Bill Kristol said. "The president told me that he was praying every day in his office, but had received no reply. I had no idea what he meant, but of course, it all makes sense now."

At the time of Katrina, Cheney was on a fly-fishing trip, from which he returned on Sept. 1.

According to highly placed White House sources, Bush's senior advisers are trying to shield the president from the news. Aides are concerned that too harsh an awakening might shake Bush's faith, which has been a central part of his life for nearly 20 years.

"It's hard to tell the leader of the free world that he has been the butt of an elaborate and long-term ruse," a former staffer said. "Maybe it would be easier to take if it came from Cheney's God voice."

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