

Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf's resignation Monday brings to an end an extraordinarily close relationship between Musharraf and the George W. Bush administration, in which Musharraf was lavished with political and economic benefits from the United States despite policies that were in sharp conflict with U.S. security interests.

Vice President Dick Cheney and the neoconservative-dominated Bush Pentagon were aware of the intimate relationship between Musharraf's regime and both the Taliban and al Qaeda. But al Qaeda was not a high priority for the Bush administration.

After 9/11, the White House created the political myth that Musharraf, faced with a clear choice, had "joined the free world in fighting the terrorists". But as Asia expert Selig S. Harrison has pointed out, on Sep. 19, 2001, just six days after he had supposedly agreed to U.S. demands for cooperation against the Taliban regime and al Qaeda, Musharraf gave a televised speech in Urdu in which he declared, "We are trying our best to come out of this critical situation without any damage to Afghanistan and the Taliban."

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