Government Exhibit 1A

GOVERNMENT EXHIBIT 1A 05 Cr. 394(ID)

Grand Jury Exhibit 3A

The New York Times, May 6, 2003



1 of 1 DOCUMENT

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May 6, 2003, Tuesday, Late Edition - Final

SECTION: Section A; Page 31; Column 1; Editorial Desk

LENGTH: 736 words

HEADLINE: Missing In Action: Truth

BYLINE: By NICHOLAS D. KRISTOF; E-mail: nicholas@nytimes.com

BODY:

When I raised the Mystery of the Missing W.M.D. recently, hawks fired barrages of reproachful e-mail at me. The gist was: "You *&#*! Who cares if we never find weapons of mass destruction, because we've liberated the Iraqi people from a murderous tyrant."

But it does matter, enormously, for American credibility. After all, as Ari Fleischer said on April 10 about W.M.D.: "That is what this war was about."

I rejoice in the newfound freedoms in Iraq, But there are indications that the U.S. government souped up intelligence, leaned on spooks to change their conclusions and concealed contrary information to deceive people at home and around the world.

Let's fervently hope that tomorrow we find an Iraqi superdome filled with 500 tons of mustard gas and nerve gas, 25,000 liters of anthrax, 38,000 liters of botulinum toxin, 29,984 prohibited munitions capable of delivering chemical agents, several dozen Scud missiles, gas centrifuges to enrich uranium, 18 mobile biological warfare factories, long-range unmanned aerial vehicles to dispense anthrax, and proof of close ties with Al Qaeda. Those are the things that President Bush or his aides suggested Iraq might have, and I don't want to believe that top administration officials tried to win support for the war with a campaign of wholesale deceit.

Consider the now-disproved claims by President Bush and Colin Powell that Iraq tried to buy uranium from Niger so it could build nuclear weapons. As Seymour Hersh noted in The New Yorker, the claims were based on documents that had been forged so amateurishly that they should never have been taken seriously.

I'm told by a person involved in the Niger caper that more than a year ago the vice president's office asked for an investigation of the uranium deal, so a former U.S. ambassador to Africa was dispatched to Niger. In February 2002, according to someone present at the meetings, that envoy reported to the C.I.A. and State Department that the information was unequivocally wrong and that the documents had been forged.

The envoy reported, for example, that a Niger minister whose signature was on one of the documents had in fact been out of office for more than a decade. In addition, the Niger mining program was structured so that the uranium diversion had been impossible. The envoy's debunking of the forgery was passed around the administration and seemed to be accepted -- except that President Bush and the State Department kept citing it anyway.

"It's disingenuous for the State Department people to say they were bamboozled because they knew about this for a year," one insider said.

Another example is the abuse of intelligence from Hussein Kamel, a son-in-law of Saddam Hussein and head of Iraq's biological weapons program until his defection in 1995. Top British and American officials kept citing

information from Mr. Kamel as evidence of a huge secret Iraqi program, even though Mr. Kamel had actually emphasized that Iraq had mostly given up its W.M.D. program in the early 1990's. Glen Rangwala, a British Iraq expert, says the transcript of Mr. Kamel's debriefing was leaked because insiders resented the way politicians were misleading the public.

Patrick Lang, a former head of Middle Eastern affairs in the Defense Intelligence Agency, says that he hears from those still in the intelligence world that when experts wrote reports that were skeptical about Iraq's W.M.D., "they were encouraged to think it over again."

"In this administration, the pressure to get product 'right' is coming out of O.S.D. the Office of the Secretary of Defense," Mr. Lang said. He added that intelligence experts had cautioned that Iraqis would not necessarily line up to cheer U.S. troops and that the Shiite clergy could be a problem. "The guys who tried to tell them that came to understand that this advice was not welcome," he said.

"The intelligence that our officials was given regarding W.M.D. was either defective or manipulated," Senator Jeff Bingaman of New Mexico noted. Another senator is even more blunt and, sadly, exactly right: "Intelligence was manipulated."

The C.I.A. was terribly damaged when William Casey, its director in the Reagan era, manipulated intelligence to exaggerate the Soviet threat in Central America to whip up support for Ronald Reagan's policies. Now something is again rotten in the state of Spookdom.

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Grand Jury Exhibit 3B

The Washington Post June 12, 2003 Thursday



1 of 1 DOCUMENT

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The Washington Post

June 12, 2003 Thursday Final Edition

SECTION: A SECTION; Pg. A01

LENGTH: 1381 words

HEADLINE: CIA Did Not Share Doubt on Iraq Data;

Bush Used Report Of Uranium Bid

BYLINE: Walter Pincus, Washington Post Staff Writer

BODY:

A key component of President Bush's claim in his State of the Union address last January that Iraq had an active nuclear weapons program — its alleged attempt to buy uranium in Niger — was disputed by a CIA-directed mission to the central African nation in early 2002, according to senior administration officials and a former government official. But the CIA did not pass on the detailed results of its investigation to the White House or other government agencies, the officials said.

The CIA's failure to share what it knew, which has not been disclosed previously, was one of a number of steps in the Bush administration that helped keep the uranium story alive until the eve of the war in Iraq, when the United Nations' chief nuclear inspector told the Security Council that the claim was based on fabricated evidence.

A senior intelligence official said the CIA's action was the result of "extremely sloppy" handling of a central piece of evidence in the administration's case against then-Iraqi President Saddam Hussein. But, the official added, "It is only one fact and not the reason we went to war. There was a lot more."

However, a senior CIA analyst said the case "is indicative of larger problems" involving the handling of intelligence about Iraq's alleged chemical, biological and nuclear weapons programs and its links to al Qaeda, which the administration cited as justification for war. "Information not consistent with the administration agenda was discarded and information that was [consistent] was not seriously scrutinized," the analyst said.

As the controversy over Iraq intelligence has expanded with the failure so far of U.S. teams in Iraq to uncover proscribed weapons, intelligence officials have accused senior administration policymakers of pressuring the CIA or exaggerating intelligence information to make the case for war. The story involving the CIA's uranium-purchase probe, however, suggests that the agency also was shaping intelligence on Iraq to meet the administration's policy goals.

Sen. Bob Graham (D-Fla.), former chairman of the Select Committee on Intelligence and a candidate for president, yesterday described the case as "part of the agency's standard operating procedure when it wants to advance the information that supported their [the administration's] position and bury that which didn't."

Armed with information purportedly showing that Iraqi officials had been seeking to buy uranium in Niger one or two years earlier, the CIA in early February 2002 dispatched a retired U.S. ambassador to the country to investigate the claims, according to the senior U.S. officials and the former government official, who is familiar with the event. The sources spoke on condition of anonymity and on condition that the name of the former ambassador not be disclosed.

During his trip, the CIA's envoy spoke with the president of Niger and other Niger officials mentioned as being

involved in the Iraqi effort, some of whose signatures purportedly appeared on the documents.

After returning to the United States, the envoy reported to the CIA that the uranium-purchase story was false, the sources said. Among the envoy's conclusions was that the documents may have been forged because the "dates were wrong and the names were wrong," the former U.S. government official said.

However, the CIA did not include details of the former ambassador's report and his identity as the source, which would have added to the credibility of his findings, in its intelligence reports that were shared with other government agencies. Instead, the CIA only said that Niger government officials had denied the attempted deal had taken place, a senior administration said.

"This gent made a visit to the region and chatted up his friends," a senior intelligence official said, describing the agency's view of the mission. "He relayed back to us that they said it was not true and that he believed them."

Thirteen months later, on March 8, Mohamed ElBaradei, director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, informed the U.N. Security Council that after careful scrutiny of the Niger documents, his agency had reached the same conclusion as the CIA's envoy. ElBaradei deemed the documents "not authentic," an assessment that U.S. officials did not dispute.

Knowledgeable sources familiar with the forgery investigation have described the faked evidence as a series of letters between Iraqi agents and officials in Niger. The documents had been sought by U.N. inspectors since September 2002 and they were delivered by the United States and Britain last February.

The President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, a panel of nongovernment experts that is reviewing the handling of Iraq intelligence, is planning to study the Niger story and how it made its way into Bush's State of the Union address on Jan. 28. In making the case that Iraq had an ongoing nuclear weapons program, Bush declared that "the British government has learned that Saddam Hussein recently sought significant quantities of uranium from Africa."

That same month, Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld and national security adviser Condoleezza Rice also mentioned Iraq's alleged attempts to buy uranium, and the story made its way into a State Department "fact sheet" as well.

Rep. Henry A. Waxman (Calif.), the ranking Democrat on the Government Reform Committee and a leading administration critic, wrote the president June 2 asking why Bush had included the Niger case as part of the evidence he cited against Iraq. "Given what the CIA knew at the time, the implication you intended -- that there was credible evidence that Iraq sought uranium from Africa -- was simply false," Waxman said.

The CIA's decision to send an emissary to Niger was triggered by questions raised by an aide to Vice President Cheney during an agency briefing on intelligence circulating about the purported Iraqi efforts to acquire the uranium, according to the senior officials. Cheney's staff was not told at the time that its concerns had been the impetus for a CIA mission and did not learn it occurred or its specific results.

Chency and his staff continued to get intelligence on the matter, but the vice president, unlike other senior administration officials, never mentioned it in a public speech. He and his staff did not learn of its role in spurring the mission until it was disclosed by New York Times columnist Nicholas Kristof on May 6, according to an administration official.

When the British government published an intelligence document on Iraq in September 2002 claiming that Baghdad had "sought significant quantities of uranium from Africa," the former ambassador called the CIA officers who sent him to Niger and was told they were looking into new information about the claim, sources said. The former envoy later called the CIA and State Department after Bush's State of the Union speech and was told "not to worry," according to one U.S. official.

Later it was disclosed that the United States and Britain were basing their reports on common information that originated with forged documents provided originally by Italian intelligence officials.

CIA Director George J. Tenet, on Sept. 24, 2002, cited the Niger evidence in a closed-door briefing to the Senate intelligence committee on a national intelligence estimate of Iraq's weapons programs, sources said. Although Tenet told the panel that some questions had been raised about the evidence, he did not mention that the agency had sent an envoy to Niger and that the former ambassador had concluded that the claims were false.

The Niger evidence was not included in Secretary of State Colin L. Powell's Feb. 5 address to the Security Council in which he disclosed some intelligence on Iraq's alleged weapons programs and links to al Qaeda because it was considered inaccurate, sources said.

Even so, the Voice of America on Feb. 20 broadcast a story that said: "U.S. officials tell VOA [that] Iraq and Niger signed an agreement in the summer of 2000 to resume shipments for an additional 500 tons of yellow cake," a reference to the uranium. The VOA, which is financed by the government but has an official policy of editorial independence, went on to say that there was no evidence such shipments had taken place.

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1 of 1 DOCUMENT

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July 6, 2003, Sunday, Late Edition - Final

SECTION: Section 4; Page 9; Column 1; Editorial Desk

LENGTH: 1454 words

HEADLINE: What I Didn't Find in Africa

BYLINE: By Joseph C. Wilson 4th, United States ambassador to Gabon from 1992 to 1995, is an international business consultant.

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

BODY:

Did the Bush administration manipulate intelligence about Saddam Hussein's weapons programs to justify an invasion of Iraq?

Based on my experience with the administration in the months leading up to the war, I have little choice but to conclude that some of the intelligence related to Iraq's nuclear weapons program was twisted to exaggerate the Iraqi threat.

For 23 years, from 1976 to 1998, I was a career foreign service officer and ambassador. In 1990, as charge d'affaires in Baghdad, I was the last American diplomat to meet with Saddam Hussein. (I was also a forceful advocate for his removal from Kuwait.) After Iraq, I was President George H. W. Bush's ambassador to Gabon and Sao Tome and Principe; under President Bill Clinton, I helped direct Africa policy for the National Security Council.

It was my experience in Africa that led me to play a small role in the effort to verify information about Africa's suspected link to Iraq's nonconventional weapons programs. Those news stories about that unnamed former envoy who went to Niger? That's me.

In February 2002, I was informed by officials at the Central Intelligence Agency that Vice President Dick Cheney's office had questions about a particular intelligence report. While I never saw the report, I was told that it referred to a memorandum of agreement that documented the sale of uranium yellowcake — a form of lightly processed ore — by Niger to Iraq in the late 1990's. The agency officials asked if I would travel to Niger to check out the story so they could provide a response to the vice president's office.

After consulting with the State Department's African Affairs Bureau (and through it with Barbro Owens-Kirkpatrick, the United States ambassador to Niger), I agreed to make the trip. The mission I undertook was discreet but by no means secret. While the C.I.A. paid my expenses (my time was offered pro bono), I made it abundantly clear to everyone I met that I was acting on behalf of the United States government.

In late February 2002, I arrived in Niger's capital, Niamey, where I had been a diplomat in the mid-70's and visited as a National Security Council official in the late 90's. The city was much as I remembered it. Seasonal winds had clogged the air with dust and sand. Through the haze, I could see camel caravans crossing the Niger River (over the John F. Kennedy bridge), the setting sun behind them. Most people had wrapped scarves around their faces to protect against the grit, leaving only their eyes visible.

The next morning, I met with Ambassador Owens-Kirkpatrick at the embassy. For reasons that are understandable,

the embassy staff has always kept a close eye on Niger's uranium business. I was not surprised, then, when the ambassador told me that she knew about the allegations of uranium sales to Iraq — and that she felt she had already debunked them in her reports to Washington. Nevertheless, she and I agreed that my time would be best spent interviewing people who had been in government when the deal supposedly took place, which was before her arrival.

I spent the next eight days drinking sweet mint tea and meeting with dozens of people: current government officials, former government officials, people associated with the country's uranium business. It did not take long to conclude that it was highly doubtful that any such transaction had ever taken place.

Given the structure of the consortiums that operated the mines, it would be exceedingly difficult for Niger to transfer uranium to Iraq. Niger's uranium business consists of two mines, Somair and Cominak, which are run by French, Spanish, Japanese, German and Nigerian interests. If the government wanted to remove uranium from a mine, it would have to notify the consortium, which in turn is strictly monitored by the International Atomic Energy Agency. Moreover, because the two mines are closely regulated, quasi-governmental entities, selling uranium would require the approval of the minister of mines, the prime minister and probably the president. In short, there's simply too much oversight over too small an industry for a sale to have transpired.

(As for the actual memorandum, I never saw it. But news accounts have pointed out that the documents had glaring errors — they were signed, for example, by officials who were no longer in government — and were probably forged. And then there's the fact that Niger formally denied the charges.)

Before I left Niger, I briefed the ambassador on my findings, which were consistent with her own. I also shared my conclusions with members of her staff. In early March, I arrived in Washington and promptly provided a detailed briefing to the C.I.A. I later shared my conclusions with the State Department African Affairs Bureau. There was nothing secret or earth-shattering in my report, just as there was nothing secret about my trip.

Though I did not file a written report, there should be at least four documents in United States government archives confirming my mission. The documents should include the ambassador's report of my debriefing in Niamey, a separate report written by the embassy staff, a C.I.A. report summing up my trip, and a specific answer from the agency to the office of the vice president (this may have been delivered orally). While I have not seen any of these reports, I have spent enough time in government to know that this is standard operating procedure.

I thought the Niger matter was settled and went back to my life. (I did take part in the Iraq debate, arguing that a strict containment regime backed by the threat of force was preferable to an invasion.) In September 2002, however, Niger re-emerged. The British government published a "white paper" asserting that Saddam Hussein and his unconventional arms posed an immediate danger. As evidence, the report cited Iraq's attempts to purchase uranium from an African country.

Then, in January, President Bush, citing the British dossier, repeated the charges about Iraqi efforts to buy uranium from Africa.

The next day, I reminded a friend at the State Department of my trip and suggested that if the president had been referring to Niger, then his conclusion was not borne out by the facts as I understood them. He replied that perhaps the president was speaking about one of the other three African countries that produce uranium: Gabon, South Africa or Namibia. At the time, I accepted the explanation. I didn't know that in December, a month before the president's address, the State Department had published a fact sheet that mentioned the Niger case.

Those are the facts surrounding my efforts. The vice president's office asked a serious question. I was asked to help formulate the answer. I did so, and I have every confidence that the answer I provided was circulated to the appropriate officials within our government.

The question now is how that answer was or was not used by our political leadership. If my information was deemed inaccurate, I understand (though I would be very interested to know why). If, however, the information was ignored because it did not fit certain preconceptions about Iraq, then a legitimate argument can be made that we went to war under false pretenses. (It's worth remembering that in his March "Meet the Press" appearance, Mr. Cheney said that Saddam Hussein was "trying once again to produce nuclear weapons:") At a minimum, Congress, which authorized the use of military force at the president's behest, should want to know if the assertions about Iraq were warranted.

I was convinced before the war that the threat of weapons of mass destruction in the hands of Saddam Hussein

required a vigorous and sustained international response to disarm him. Iraq possessed and had used chemical weapons; it had an active biological weapons program and quite possibly a nuclear research program — all of which were in violation of United Nations resolutions. Having encountered Mr. Hussein and his thugs in the run-up to the Persian Gulf war of 1991, I was only too aware of the dangers he posed.

But were these dangers the same ones the administration told us about? We have to find out. America's foreign policy depends on the sanctity of its information. For this reason, questioning the selective use of intelligence to justify the war in Iraq is neither idle sniping nor "revisionist history," as Mr. Bush has suggested. The act of war is the last option of a democracy, taken when there is a grave threat to our national security. More than 200 American soldiers have lost their lives in Iraq already. We have a duty to ensure that their sacrifice came for the right reasons.

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LOAD-DATE: July 6, 2003

Grand Jury Exhibit 8

What I Didn't Find in Africa

By Joseph C. Wilson 4th

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MAUREEN DOWD

Ritalin For America

My mind was wandering the other day when I saw a TV ad that said I should see a mental health professional if my mind was wandering.

The ad said I might have Adult a friend who got a diagnosis of A.A.D.D. His wife had complained he wasn't paying enough attention to her and sent him to a doctor, who prescribed Ritalin for spousal atten-tion deficit disorder. My friend lost weight, became more focused on his work and left his complaining wife.

The law of unintended side effects. Ritalin abuse is rampant with children, as well as teenagers and college students, who like the extra stamina to study for exams, lose weight, ramp up performance to get in an lvy League college or stay awake while getting drunk. When I grew up, there was no Ritalin; just a big nun with a ruler, warning you not to be "dreamy" or "a bold, brazen piece."

If you think about it, a lot of characters in literature probably had A.A.D.D. If Biff had been on Ritalin, he could have passed those math tests, and Willy Loman would not have got into the despondence that led to his fatal car crash. This gives new meaning to the maternal admonition, "Attention must be paid."

And what about Wile E. Coyote? That is one distracted doggle.

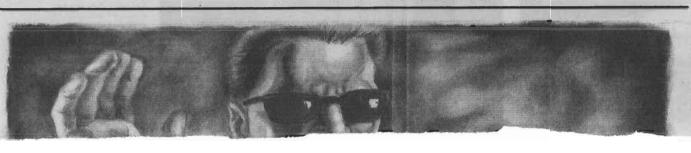
I went online to take "Dr. Grohol's Psych Central Adult A.D.D. Quiz." The questionnaire asked if moods have high and lows." Well, yes. It asked if "I am distressed by the

Attention must be paid -009501 empire.

disorganized way my brain works."

Reading over the questions, I realized America has A.A.D.D. The country has always had a pinball attention span, even before the Internet and cable TV accelerated it.

The New Republic recently



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What I Didn't Find

By Joseph C. Wilson 4th

WASHINGTON

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In February 2002, I was informed by officials at the Central Intelligence Agency that Vice President Dick Cheney's office had questions about a particular intelligence report. While I never saw the report, I was told that it referred to a memorandum of agreement that documented the sale of uranium yellowcake — a form of lightly processed ore — by Niger to Iraq in the late 1990's. The agency officials asked if I would travel to Niger to check out

Joseph C. Wilson 4th, United States ambassador to Gabon from 1992 to 1995, is an international business consultant. the story so they could provide a response to the vice president's office.

After consulting with the State Department's African Affairs Bureau (and throughgit with Barbro Owens-Kirkpatrick, the United States ambassador to Niger). Pagreed to make the trip. The mission I undertook was discreet but by no means secret. While the C.I.A. paid my expenses (my time was

There was no Lraq-Niger uranium deal.

offered pro bono), I made it abundantly clear to everyone 1 met that I was acting on behalf of the United States government.

In late February 2002, I arrived in Niger's capital, Niamey, where I had been a diplomat in the mid-70's and visited as a National Security Council official in the late 90's. The city was much as I remembered it. Seasonal winds had clogged the air with dust and sand: Through the haze, I could see camel carayans crossing the Niger River, (over the John F. Kennedy bridge), the setting sun behind them Most people had wrapped scarves around their faces to protect against the grit leaving only their eyes visible.

The next morning, I met with Ambassador. Owens Kirkpatrick at the embassy. For reasons that are understandable, the embassy staff has always kept a close eye on Niger's uranium business. I was not surprised, then, when the ambassador told me that she knew about the allegations of uranium sales to Iraq — and that she left she had already debunked frem in her reports to Washington. Nevertheless, she and I agreed that my time would be best spent interviewing people who had been in government when

the deal supposedly took place, which was before her arrival.

I spent the next eight days drinking sweet mint tea and meeting with dozens of peoples current government officials former government officials people associated with the country's uranum business. It did not take long to conclude that it was highly doubtful that any such transaction had ever

taken place.

Given the structure of the conspitums that operated the mines, it would be exceedingly difficulty for Nigers to transfer uranium to Iraq Niger's uranium business consists of two infless Somair and Cominak, which are rule by French, Spanish, Japanese, German and Nigerian interests? If the government wanted to remove uranium from a mine, it would have to notify the consortium, which in turn is strictly monitored by the International Atomic Energy Agency. Moreover, because the two mines are closely regulated, quasi-governmental entities, selling uranium would require the approval of the minister of mines, the prime minister and probably the president. In short, there's simply too much oversight over too small an industry for a sale to have transpired.

(As for the actual memorandum, I never saw it. But news accounts have pointed out that the documents had glaring errors—they were signed for example, by (officials who were no longer in government—, and were probably forged. And then there's the fact that Niger formally denied the charges.)

Before I left Niger, I briefed the ambassador on my findings, which were consistent with her own I also shared my conclusions with members of her staff. In early March, I arrived in Washington and promptly provided a detailed briefing to the C.I.A. I later shared my conclusions with the Standbeartment African Affairs Bureau. There was nothing secret or earth, shattering in my report, just as them was nothing secret about my trip.

Though I did not file a written rive

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sheet that mentioned the Niger case. Those are the facts surrounding my efforts. The vice president's office asked a serious mestion. I was asked to help for mulate the answer. I did so, and

I have every confidence that the answer [provided was:cfrculated to the appropriate officials within our gov-

in from agairican tion is the hands of saddam Hussein reduced a profousaged is sained international reduced a profousaged is sained international reduced in ternational reduced in the last citing the weapons of the charges about which were invited autopolical which were invited autopolical tions resolutions. He in the persolutions of the persolutions of the personal content of the person Mr. Hussen and his things if the run-up to the Pet sian Gulf wab of 1991. I was only too aware of the dargers he posed.

But we respice dangers the same ones the administrationated its about? We have to find our America's foreign policy depends one the sanctive of its information for this reason, questioning the selective use of intelligence to justify the war in Tray is heither idle striping 'nor' revisionist bistory," as Mr. Bush has suggested. The act of war is the last option of a democracy, taken is the last option of a democracy, taken when there is a grave threat to our national security. More than 200 American soldiers have lost their lives in Iraq already. We have a duty to ensure that their sacrifice came for the right reasons.

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Grand Jury Exhibit 54

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Martin, Catherine J.

From: Martin, Catherine J.

Sent: Monday, July 07, 2003 9:22 AM

To: Fleischer, Lawrence A.

Subject: points

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Response to Joe Wilson

- The Vice President's office did not request the mission to Niger.
- The Vice President's office was not informed of Joe Wilson's mission.
- The Vice President's office did not receive a briefing about Mr. Wilson's mission after he returned.
- The Vice President's office was not aware of Mr. Wilson's mission until recent press reports accounted for it.

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Grand Jury Exhibit 55



1 of 1 DOCUMENT

Copyright 2003 National Broadcasting Co. Inc. NBC News Transcripts

SHOW: NBC Nightly News (6:30 PM ET) - NBC

July 8, 2003 Tuesday

LENGTH: 531 words

HEADLINE: White House admits intelligence against Iraq possibly wrong

REPORTERS: ANDREA MITCHELL

BODY:

TOM BROKAW, anchor (Los Angeles):

President Bush is in Africa tonight, but there are new questions about his justification for war with Iraq. Well, the situation in Iraq remains chaotic. Today eight more Americans were wounded and another audiotape allegedly from Saddam Hussein has emerged in which he again urges resistance against the American occupation.

We'll begin, however, with an admission from the White House that a major claim against Iraq before the war may have been wrong. That involved Saddam, uranium and an attempt to build a nuclear bomb. So why did the president make the claim in the first place? Here's NBC's Andrea Mitchell.

ANDREA MITCHELL reporting:

With the president in Africa, the White House finally admitted that Saddam Hussein probably did not try to buy uranium from Niger to build nuclear weapons as the administration had charged before the war. But the admission came after the president left for Africa last night, after press spokesman Ari Fleischer had told reporters earlier in the day, quote, "There is zero, nada, nothing new here," and only after Former CIA envoy Joseph Wilson, who discovered the charge was bogus a year ago, went public, first on Sunday in the New York Times and on "Meet The Press."

(From "Meet The Press" clip) Was this the politicization of intelligence in order to justify a war?

Mr. JOSEPH WILSON (Former United States Ambassador to the Gabonese Republic): Either the administration has some information that it has not shared with the public, or yes, they were using the selective use of facts and intelligence to bolster a decision in the case that had already been made.

MITCHELL: Today the White House said, "We know now that documents alleging transactions between Iraq and Niger had been forged." So why did the president say this in his January State of the Union speech?

President GEORGE W. BUSH: The British government has learned that Saddam Hussein recently sought significant quantities of uranium from Africa.

MITCHELL: Wilson said today, others also questioned the intelligence.

Mr. WILSON: It was not just me but also others who had looked at this situation who provided the same assessment.

MITCHELL: The White House blamed an October CIA report for ignoring Wilson's information and not requesting the original documents on which the charge was based for more than a year. And today, before a House of Commons committee, Tony Blair defended his government's original intelligence.

Mr. TONY BLAIR (British Prime Minister): I believe we did the right thing. I stand 100 percent by it.

MITCHELL: Senate Democrats are investigating.

Senator JOHN ROCKEFELLER (Democrat, Vice Chairman, Select Intelligence Committee): I just have to believe that the president knew it, and that those around him knew it or if they didn't, they sure have some questions to answer.

MITCHELL: The president's own foreign intelligence advisory board and the CIA's inspector general are all also investigating. And tonight, at least two Democratic presidential candidates are asking, 'What else don't we know about the case against Iraq?' Andrea Mitchell, NBC News at the State Department.

LOAD-DATE: July 9, 2003

Grand Jury Exhibit 1

Page 1

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7/14/03 Chi. Sun-Times 31
2003 WL 9561587
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Chicago Sun-Times
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Monday, July 14, 2003

Editorials

[The mission to Niger]
Robert Novak

The mission to Niger The CIA's decision to send retired diplomat Joseph C. Wilson to Africa in February 2002 to investigate possible Iraqi purchases of uranium was made routinely without Director George Tenet's knowledge. Remarkably, this produced a political fire storm that has not yet subsided.

wilson's report that an Iraqi purchase of uranium yellowcake from Niger was highly unlikely was regarded by the CIA as less than definitive, and it is doubtful Tenet ever saw it. Certainly, President Bush did not, before his 2003 State of the Union address, when he attributed reports of attempted uranium purchases to the British government. That the British relied on forged documents made Wilson's mission, nearly a year earlier, the basis of furious Democratic accusations of burying intelligence though the report was forgotten by the time the president spoke.

Reluctance at the White House to admit a mistake has led Democrats ever closer to saying the president lied the country into war. Even after a belated admission of error last Monday, finger- pointing between Bush administration agencies continued.

Wilson's mission was created after an early 2002 report by the Italian intelligence service about attempted uranium purchases from Niger, derived from forged documents prepared by what the CIA calls a "con man." This misinformation spread through the U.S. government. The White House, State Department and Pentagon asked the CIA to look into it.

That's where Joe Wilson came in. His first public note had come in 1991 after 15 years as a Foreign Service officer when, as U.S. charge in Baghdad, he risked his life to shelter in the embassy 800 Americans from Saddam Hussein's wrath. My partner Rowland Evans reported from the Iraqi capital in our column that Wilson showed "the stuff of heroism." The next year, President George H.W. Bush named him ambassador to Gabon, and President Bill Clinton put him in charge of African affairs at the National Security Council until his retirement in 1998.

Wilson never worked for the CIA, but his wife, Valerie Plame, is an agency operative on weapons of mass destruction. Two senior administration officials told me his wife suggested sending Wilson to Niger to investigate the Italian report.

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The CIA says its counter- proliferation officials selected Wilson and asked his wife to contact him. "I will not answer any question about my wife," Wilson told

After eight days in the Niger capital, Wilson made an oral report in Langley that an Iragi uranium purchase was "highly unlikely," though he also mentioned in passing that a 1988 Traqi delegation tried to establish commercial contacts. CIA officials did not regard Wilson's intelligence as definitive, being based primarily on what the Niger officials told him and probably would have claimed under any circumstances. The CIA report based on Wilson's briefing remains classified. All this was forgotten until reporter Walter Pincus revealed in the Washington Post on June 12 that an unnamed retired diplomat had given the CIA a negative report. Not until Wilson went public on July 6, however, did his finding ignite the fire storm.

During the run-up to the invasion of Iraq, Wilson had taken a measured public position -- viewing weapons of mass destruction as a danger but considering military action as a last resort. He has seemed much more critical since revealing his role in Niger. In the Washington Post on July 6, he talked about the Bush team "misrepresenting the facts," asking: "What else are they lying about?"

After the White House admitted error, Wilson declined all television and radio interviews.

"The story was never me," he told me, "it was always the statement in {Bush's} speech."

The story, actually, is whether the administration deliberately ignored Wilson's advice, and that requires scrutinizing the CIA summary of what their envoy reported. The agency never before has declassified that kind of information, but the White House would like it to do just that now--in its and in the public's interest.

---- INDEX REFERENCES ----

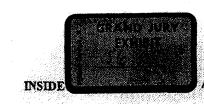
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OTHER INDEXING: COMMENTARY; TERRORISM; NATIONAL GOVERNMENT; CIA; intelligence;

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INSIDE REPORT

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