

**MINORITY VIEWS OF VICE CHAIRMAN BOND
JOINED BY
SENATORS HATCH AND BURR**

While not directly related to the subject of the report released today, it is appropriate here to discuss some additional information that has come to light about an earlier prewar inquiry report by the Committee in July 2004 called “Phase I” that deals with the Iraq-Niger uranium intelligence. This section of the Committee report remains one of the most thoroughly investigated and detailed descriptions of the events and intelligence surrounding the Iraq-Niger uranium issue. The Committee devoted nearly 50 pages of the report to this section alone, in order to provide all of the details of the Intelligence Community’s handling of this issue – from October 2001 when the Intelligence Community produced the first intelligence report on the Iraq-Niger uranium deal to July 2003 when the CIA finally produced an assessment that said, “we no longer believe that there is sufficient other reporting to conclude that Iraq pursued uranium from abroad.”¹

The vast majority of the Committee’s findings were declassified and released in the July 2004 *Report of the Select Committee on Intelligence on the U.S. Intelligence Community’s Prewar Intelligence Assessments on Iraq*. It is important to note that while the Committee’s report was over 500 pages and covered many issues, the content was reviewed by all members of the Committee in great detail and was voted out unanimously. Nonetheless, nearly three years after the report’s release it is apparent that some “experts” and commentators still seem to misunderstand, or choose to ignore, the basic facts surrounding this case. Additional information that became public during the Special Prosecutor’s investigation of the Valerie Wilson leak case, some of which had not been provided to the Committee during its investigation, has only reinforced the Committee’s findings.

Part of the continuing public and media misunderstanding of this case stems, we believe, from a letter sent to the Committee by former Ambassador Joseph Wilson in July 2004 and subsequently released publicly,

¹ There are two areas of the Iraq-Niger uranium story which were not covered in the Committee’s inquiry. The first area was the source of the forged Iraq-Niger uranium deal documents passed to the US government in October 2002. This issue was being investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation at the request of then-Vice Chairman Rockefeller. The second area was the exposure of Valerie Wilson’s affiliation with the CIA, which was investigated by a special prosecutor.

and from public comments and testimony from Ambassador Wilson and his wife, Valerie Wilson, asserting that the Committee's report contained errors and distortions. We take these charges seriously and believe it is important to outline information, new and old, that explains some of the key issues and supports the Committee's findings.

In July 2004, Ambassador Wilson sent a letter to the Committee in which he declared "not true" a conclusion in additional views of the Chairman and Senators Bond and Hatch that:

The plan to send the former ambassador to Niger was suggested by the former ambassador's wife, a CIA employee.

In his letter to the Committee, Ambassador Wilson took issue with this conclusion although similar text was included in the body of the Committee's unanimous report. (p. 39.) Ambassador Wilson asserted that the Committee's finding appeared to be based on a quoted portion of a memo sent from his wife to her superior that says "My husband has good relations with the PM [prime minister] and the former Minister of Mines (not to mention lots of French contacts), both of whom could possibly shed light on this sort of activity" (p. 39 of the Committee's report.) Ambassador Wilson claims in his letter that this memo shows no suggestion that he be sent on the trip and is "little more than a recitation of his contacts and bona fides." This is not true. The Committee did not release the full text of the document, thinking it was unnecessary in light of the other evidence we provided in the report, but considering the controversy surrounding this document, making the full text available now seems prudent.

SECRET

12 February 2002

MEMORANDUM FOR: [Redacted]
FROM: [Valerie Wilson]
OFFICE: DO/CP/[office 1]
SUBJECT: Iraq-related Nuclear Report Makes a
Splash
REFERENCE:

The report forwarded below has prompted me to send this on to you and request your comments and opinion. Briefly, it seems that Niger has signed a contract with Iraq to sell them uranium. The IC is getting spun up about this for obvious reasons. The Embassy in Niamey has taken the position that this report can't be true – they have such cozy relations with the GON that they would know if something like this transpired.

So, where do I fit in? As you may recall [redacted] of CP/[office 2] recently [2001] approached my husband to possibly use his contacts in Niger to investigate [redacted] [a separate Niger matter]. After many fits and starts, [redacted] finally advised that the Station wished to pursue this with liaison. My husband is willing to help if it makes sense, but no problem if not. End of story.

Now, with this report, it is clear that the IC is still wondering what is going on... my husband has good relationships with both the PM and the former Minister of Mines (not to mention lots of French contacts), both of whom could possibly shed light on this sort of activity. To be frank with you, I was somewhat embarrassed by the Agency's sloppy work last go round and I am hesitant to suggest anything again. However, [my husband] may be in a position to assist. Therefore, request your thoughts on what, if anything to pursue here. Thank you for your time on this.

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(end memo)

The report mentioned in the opening sentence was a February 5, 2002 CIA Directorate of Operations (DO) intelligence report describing “verbatim text” of a reported Iraq-Niger uranium agreement. The report was forwarded in an e-mail from a CIA reports officer to Mrs. Wilson and a number of other recipients which said that the DO had received a number of calls from the Intelligence Community about the Iraq-Niger uranium report, citing the Department of State’s Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR), the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), and SOCOM, specifically. This likely prompted Mrs. Wilson’s comment that “the IC is getting spun up about this for obvious reasons.” There was no mention in either the reports officer’s e-mail or in Ms. Wilson’s memo (also sent via e-mail) of a request from the Vice President about this matter.

This is significant because the CIA originally told the Committee, and Ambassador and Mrs. Wilson have stated publicly, that it was a question from the Vice President that prompted CIA’s Counterproliferation Division (CIA/CPD) to discuss ways to obtain additional information about the reporting. However, the Committee now knows, based on information released during the Scooter Libby trial, that the Vice President had not even asked about the Iraq-Niger uranium deal until the following day.

Evidence from the Libby trial, numbered exhibit DX66.2, includes a tasking from the Vice President to his CIA briefer which indicates that after being shown a DIA assessment about the February 5, 2002 DO report, the Vice President asked for CIA’s assessment (nb: not an investigation) of the matter. The date of the briefing is noted as February 13, 2002, the day after Mrs. Wilson’s memo to her superiors.

While it may be possible that the Vice President’s query is what led to the ultimate decision to use Ambassador Wilson to attempt to uncover additional information about the alleged Iraq-Niger uranium deal, it is clear from the dates of these two documents that CIA/CPD was discussing ways to seek additional information, including the possibility of using Ambassador Wilson to look into the deal, before the Vice President asked about the reporting.

Additional information also supports the Committee's finding that Mrs. Wilson is the one who originally suggested Ambassador Wilson to look into the Iraq-Niger uranium matter. Page 39 of the Committee's Phase I report noted that a CIA/CPD reports officer told the Committee staff that Mrs. Wilson "offered up" her husband's name. In Ambassador Wilson's letter to the Committee he claims that "the reports officer has a different conclusion about Valerie's role than the one offered in the "additional views." In recent public testimony before the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Mrs. Wilson has also claimed that a memorandum from the reports officer written after he read the Committee's report "absolutely" contradicts the report, that he sought to be reinterviewed by the Committee, and that his words has been "twisted and distorted" by the Committee. None of these claims are true.

Committee staff had the opportunity to review the reports officers' "memorandum" (actually a letter addressed to Mrs. Wilson but apparently never sent) which says only that the reports officer's remarks about Ambassador Wilson's trip were "truncated" in the Committee's report. He cited two specific issues that the Committee did not include: his comments that he believed Mrs. Wilson had acted appropriately and that the reports officer "pushed for the trip" himself. The reports officer's letter does not say that the Committee twisted or distorted his words, does not contradict the Committee's finding that Mrs. Wilson is the one who suggested her husband, does not retract his comments to the Committee that she "offered up" her husband's name, and does not state that he would like to be re-interviewed by the Committee. Based on information and documents made available to the Committee, we have no reason to believe that the reports officer sought to be re-interviewed or that CIA prevented him from being re-interviewed.

The Committee interviewed nearly 300 people for the Phase I report and most interviews averaged between one to two hours. The Committee staff interviewed this reports officer for nearly an hour and a half. Obviously not all of his remarks, nor the entirety of the remarks of the other several hundred interviewees, could or needed to be included in the report. The Committee believed, as we still do, that the comment quoted in the report in response to a question about any substantive role Mrs. Wilson played in her husband's trip to Niger in 2002 accurately summarized his remarks. The reports officer's full remarks about the issue were:

Let me speak to what I know of where she is substantively involved. She offered up his name as a possibility, because we were – we didn't have much in the way of other resources to try and get at this problem, to the best of my knowledge. And so whenever she offered up his name it seemed like a logical thing to do. I didn't make the decision to send him, but I certainly agreed with it, I recommended that he should go.

He later added:

I'd like to state emphatically that, from what I've seen, Val Wilson has been the consummate professional through all this. From the very start, whenever she mentioned to me and some others that her husband had experience and was willing to travel but that she would have to step away from the operation because she couldn't be involved in the decisionmaking to send him, in [his] debriefing, [in] dissem[inating] the report and those kinds of things, because it could appear as a conflict of interest.

The Committee report never stated or implied that Mrs. Wilson's suggestion to her colleagues that her husband may be able to look into the Iraq-Niger uranium matter was inappropriate in any way, obviating the need to include the reports officer's comments that her role was "professional." In fact, a conclusion on page 25 of the Phase I report noted that "the Committee does not fault the CIA for exploiting the access enjoyed by the spouse of a CIA employee traveling to Niger. The Committee believes, however, that it is unfortunate, considering the significant resources available to the CIA, that this was the only option available."

In addition, the Committee report noted that it was a CIA/CPD decision ultimately to send Ambassador Wilson to Niger. The Committee report never claimed that Mrs. Wilson made the decision to send him, only that she suggested him.

In addition to the memo and reports officer's testimony described above, the Committee considered Mrs. Wilson's testimony to the CIA Inspector General. The Inspector General testified before our Committee that Mrs. Wilson "made the suggestion" that Ambassador Wilson could look into the Iraq-Niger uranium matter. Additional information recently made

available to the Committee indicates that this information came from Mrs. Wilson's own testimony to the CIA Inspector General.

Yet, Mrs. Wilson testified before the House Committee on Government Oversight and Reform on March 16, 2007 that, "I did not recommend him. I did not suggest him." Mrs. Wilson told the House Committee that a young junior officer in CIA/CPD received a phone call from someone in the Office of the Vice President asking about the alleged sale of uranium from Niger to Iraq. Mrs. Wilson testified that while she was talking to the junior officer, another officer heard this and suggested, "well, why don't we send Joe?"

This testimony was of great interest to us because during a nearly hour long interview with Mrs. Wilson in which Committee staff asked specifically what led CIA/CPD to think about sending someone to Niger and how it was that her husband's name came up, Mrs. Wilson never provided the story she provided to the House Committee. Rather, Mrs. Wilson told the Committee staff, "I honestly do not recall if I suggested it or my boss, who knew my husband and what he had done for us previously, my boss at the time being the head of the whole task force, during a brainstorming session suggested well, what about your husband, Ambassador Wilson, would he be willing to consider this." When asked specifically if she remembered whether she suggested her husband's name, she said "I honestly do not."

Mrs. Wilson told the CIA Inspector General that she suggested her husband for the trip, she told our Committee staff that she could not remember whether she did or her boss did, and told the House Committee, emphatically, that she did not suggest him.

Mrs. Wilson's role in her husband's trip was not limited merely to suggesting him. Notes from a State INR analyst, who participated in a February 19, 2002 meeting to discuss CIA/CPD's proposal to send Wilson to Niger, state that the meeting was "apparently convened by Valerie Wilson, a CIA WMD managerial type and the wife of Amb. Joe Wilson, with the idea that the agency and the larger USG could dispatch Joe to Niger." While Mrs. Wilson stayed at the meeting only long enough to introduce her husband, a CIA operations cable confirms the INR notes that she did convene the meeting. The cable, inviting Intelligence Community participants to the meeting, says that the "meeting was facilitated by [Mrs.

Wilson.]” According to her testimony before the House Committee, she did not tell the analysts who attended the meeting that she was under cover stating that she “believed they would have assumed as such.” Apparently they did not “assume” she was under cover because the INR notes did not mark her name with a (C) as would be required to indicate that her association with the CIA was classified.

In addition, Mrs. Wilson drafted a cable that was sent overseas requesting concurrence with Ambassador Wilson’s travel to Niger. While Ambassador Wilson suggested in his letter to the Committee and in his book that the question of him traveling to Niger was first broached during the February 19, 2002 meeting, the cable drafted by Mrs. Wilson was sent nearly a week earlier, on February 13, only one day after Mrs. Wilson’s memo suggesting that her husband might be willing to look into the Niger matter. Interestingly the cable states that “both State and DOD have requested additional clarification [of the Niger-Iraq uranium report] and indeed, the Vice President’s office just asked for background information” The cable was dated and time stamped 132142Z Feb 02, which is February 13, 2002 at 3:42 pm DC time. If the Vice President’s office “just asked” it could not have been before Mrs. Wilson’s e-mailed memo to her superior suggesting her husband for the Niger inquiry which was sent February 12, 2002.

Ambassador Wilson’s implicit claim that the question of him traveling to Niger arose first at the February 19, 2002 meeting is also refuted by an intelligence memorandum provided to the Vice President on February 14, 2002 that stated that CIA had tasked a clandestine source with ties to the Nigerien government to seek additional information on the contract. Unless the CIA provided false information to the Vice President, CIA had already tasked Ambassador Wilson, the only source the CIA had other than the foreign liaison service, by the morning of February 14, 2002. In addition, Mrs. Wilson’s own testimony to the Committee states that she went home and asked her husband if he would be consider looking into the Niger reporting. Contrary to Ambassador Wilson’s allegations, the idea of sending him to Niger had been discussed in and among CIA officers for nearly a week before the February 19, 2002 meeting.

Ambassador Wilson’s letter to the Committee stated that it is unfortunate that the Committee failed to include the CIA’s position on this matter, citing press comments from “a senior CIA official” and “a senior

intelligence officer” who support Wilson’s account that his wife did not propose him for the trip. We have been on this Committee long enough to know that leaks from CIA sources and unnamed senior officials do not represent CIA’s official position and are certainly not the definitive word from the CIA. Furthermore, our Committee did seek an official response from the CIA. The response after conferring with CIA/CPD was “we do not recall specifically who surfaced [Ambassador Wilson’s] name.” Our Committee wisely chose to use the findings of the CIA Inspector General, our own interviews, and a thorough review of documents for our fact base to determine what CIA/CPD could not.

Ambassador Wilson’s letter also took issue with the conclusion in the additional views of Chairman Roberts and Senators Hatch and Bond which said:

Rather than speaking publicly about his actual experiences during his inquiry of the Niger issue, the former ambassador seems to have included information he learned from press accounts and from his beliefs about how the Intelligence Community would have or should have handled the information he provided.

The Committee report included several examples including his comments in a June 12, 2003 Washington Post story² by Walter Pincus which said, “among the envoy’s conclusions was that the documents may have been forged because ‘the dates were wrong and the names were wrong;’” his comments asserting that the Vice President had been briefed on his findings; and press stories, for which he appeared to be an anonymous source, that claimed his findings “debunked” the Niger-Iraq uranium story.

In his letter to the Committee, Ambassador Wilson took issue with this conclusion and asserted that his first “public statement” was in his *New York Times* op-ed on July 6, 2003.³ He says that in this and his other public comments, he stated clearly that he never saw the documents, that he claimed “only that the transaction described in the documents that turned out to be forgeries could not have occurred and did not occur,” and that he

² Pincus, Walter, “CIA Did Not Share Doubt on Iraq Data; Bush Used Report of Uranium Bid,” *The Washington Post*, June 12, 2003.

³ Wilson, Joseph, “What I Didn’t Find In Africa,” *The New York Times*, July 6, 2003.

“never claimed to have ‘debunked’ the allegation that Iraq was seeking uranium from Africa.”

Yet, Ambassador Wilson acknowledged to our Committee staff that he was the source of the June 12, 2003 *Washington Post* story in which he also claimed that the documents may have been forged and that the names and dates were wrong. In addition, a May 6, 2003 *New York Times* opinion piece by Nicolas Kristoff, in which Ambassador Wilson appears to be the source, says that the “envoy reported to the CIA and State Department that the information was unequivocally wrong and that the documents had been forged.”⁴ Kristoff added that the “envoy’s debunking of the forgery was passed around the administration.” Perhaps Mr. Kristoff and Mr. Pincus misunderstood the Ambassador’s comments, or perhaps Ambassador Wilson is making a distinction between speaking out under his own name and speaking out as an anonymous source to the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times* with circulations of several million readers.

As for Ambassador Wilson’s claim that he stated clearly in his *New York Times* op-ed that he did not have access to the actual memorandum that discussed the Niger-Iraq uranium deal, this is true, but not surprising. This admission came only *after* our Committee staff interviewed him and confronted him about the inconsistencies in his previous comments to reporters. It was during this interview with Committee staff that Ambassador Wilson asserted that he may have been confused about his own recollections after the International Atomic Energy Agency reported in March 2003 that the names and dates on the documents on the documents were wrong. We agree that Ambassador Wilson is confused.

Ambassador Wilson’s letter also comments on two reports disseminated in the Intelligence Community by then-Ambassador to Niger Barbro Owens-Kirkpatrick. One report was based on her own meeting with Nigerien officials and another based on a meeting between General Carlton Fulford, who was accompanied by the Ambassador, and the Nigerien president. Ambassador Wilson has claimed in his book and in numerous public appearances that these reports indicated that there was nothing to the Niger-Iraq uranium story. Mrs. Wilson also said this in her testimony to the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. This too is untrue.

⁴ Kristoff, Nicholas, “Missing in Action: Truth,” *New York Times*, May 6, 2003.

Contrary to these claims, then-Ambassador to Niger Barbro Owens-Kirkpatrick wrote a cable to State Department headquarters which said that the CIA report of a Niger-Iraq uranium deal “provides sufficient details to warrant another hard look at Niger’s uranium sales.” The cable reported that the Ambassador sought an unequivocal assurance from the Nigerien government that Niger would not sell uranium to rogue states. The cable noted that in September 2001 the Nigerien Prime Minister told embassy officials that “there were buyers like Iraq who would pay more for Niger’s uranium than France,” but added “of course Niger cannot sell to them.” The Ambassador told the prime minister that such a sale would be wrong and disastrous for Niger’s relations with the US. The cable said in a meeting on the 19th, Nigerien officials did not raise the issue or provide the requested assurances. The cable concluded by noting that despite past assurances from the Nigerien president that no uranium would be sold to rogue nations, “we should not dismiss out of hand the possibility that some scheme could be, or has been, underway to supply Iraq with yellowcake from here” (p. 40). The cable said that while “it would seem politically suicidal for [the Prime Minister] to embark on a risky venture like uranium sales to Iraq” and “would seem out of character” for the Nigerien president, “we must make sure.”

General Fulford did not undertake an inquiry into the Iraq-Niger uranium matter at all. He was encouraged by Ambassador Owens-Kirkpatrick to use a previously scheduled refueling stop to raise the general issue of ensuring the peaceful use of Niger’s uranium with the Nigerien President. The embassy reported on February 24, 2002, that at a meeting the same day, the Nigerien President told the Ambassador and General Fulford that Niger’s goal was to keep its uranium in safe hands. General Fulford extended an offer on behalf of the US government to work with Niger to ensure its uranium was used for peaceful purposes only and did not fall into the wrong hands. The Nigerien President told General Fulford that “Niger’s uranium is secure for the moment” and asked for unspecified US help to ensure its safety.

Neither of these reports resolved the question of whether Iraq was seeking uranium from Niger and neither discounted the reporting. In fact, Ambassador Owens-Kirkpatrick’s first cable raises, more than discounts, concern about the potential deal noting that “we should not dismiss out of hand the possibility that some scheme could be, or has been, underway” and

providing the Prime Minister's comment that "buyers like Iraq" would pay more for Niger's uranium. The second cable did not address the alleged Iraq deal at all.

When Ambassador Wilson returned from Niger, the information he reported also did nothing to resolve the question of whether Iraq was seeking uranium from Niger, despite his claims to the contrary. The Committee interviewed every analyst involved in the analysis of this issue. These analysts told the Committee that the information from his report, if anything, merely reinforced their existing views, whatever those views were. The analysts consistently told Committee staff that they did not think the report outlining Ambassador Wilson's findings clarified the story or added a great deal of new information. For most analysts, the report lent more credibility, not less, to the reporter Niger-Iraq uranium deal. These analysts said that they were not surprised to read that Nigerien officials denied discussing uranium sales with Iraq because they had no expectation that they would admit to such discussions. These analysts did find it interesting that the former Nigerien Prime Minister acknowledged that an Iraqi delegation has visited Niger for what he believed was to discuss uranium sales, according to the Committee's report.

In addition to these comments from analysts, a CIA memorandum released during the Scooter Libby trial supports the Committee's findings, noting that "no definitiveness could be assigned to the [Wilson] report."

The Committee stated on page 46 of our report that because CIA analysts did not believe that the report added any new information to clarify the issue, they did not use the report to produce any further analytical products or highlight the report for policymakers. For the same reason, the Vice President's CIA briefer did not brief the Vice President about the report. The CIA Inspector General confirmed this account in testimony before the Committee in which he stated:

His [the Vice President's] briefer has told us that what was learned on this subject simply didn't rise to a level where it met the threshold that they would go back and give him an account even of what little was known. There being no news, they didn't take his time with it.

In his letter to the Committee, Ambassador Wilson cited several examples from the Committee's report which he said contradict a conclusion on the additional views that, for most intelligence analysts, his findings lent more credibility, not less, to the original Niger-Iraq uranium reporting. While nearly all of the citations in his letter are correctly noted as instances in which the CIA did not use the uranium reporting or said the reporting was not key to Iraq's nuclear ambitions, Ambassador Wilson is wrong in two respects. First, the conclusion that his findings lent more credibility to the Niger-Iraq uranium reporting was a unanimous conclusion of the entire Committee, not just in Republican additional views. Second, he is mistaken in ascribing a correlation between these instances and his own findings. In fact, none of these instances had anything to do with Ambassador Wilson's findings in Niger. The INR analysts he cited believed the Niger-Iraq uranium reporting was unlikely to be true before Ambassador Wilson went on this trip. The CIA NESAs were not the CIA's primary Iraq WMD analysts and knew very little about the Niger reporting at all. Their assessments did not discount the reporting, they simply did not include it. Most of the other instances Ambassador Wilson cited, including CIA testimony to Congress and the DCI's caution against the President using the information in the Cincinnati speech, were based on a misunderstanding within the CIA. This misunderstanding was explained in the Committee's unanimous conclusions.

Ambassador Wilson also neglected to mention in his letter that the Intelligence Community used or cleared the Niger-Iraq uranium intelligence *fifteen* times before the President's State of the Union address and four times *after*, saying in several papers that Iraq was "vigorously pursuing uranium from Africa." As late as March 2003, even after the IAEA found that the documents themselves were "not authentic," and while noting that the CIA had questions about some specific claims in the original intelligence reporting, the CIA still reported that, "we are concerned that these reports may indicate Baghdad has attempted to secure an unreported source of uranium yellowcake for a nuclear weapons program."

It was not until April 5, 2003 that the National Intelligence Council issued an Intelligence Community assessment finally saying, "we judge it highly unlikely that Niamey has sold uranium yellowcake to Baghdad in recent years."⁵ It was not until June 17, 2003 that the CIA produced an

⁵ Several press stories have claimed that similar language appeared in a National Intelligence Council (NIC) assessment, from the Africa National Intelligence Officer (NIO) in January 2003 prior to the State of

internal memorandum for the DCI which said, “since learning that the Iraq-Niger uranium deal was based on false documents earlier this spring, we no longer believe that there is sufficient other reporting to conclude that Iraq pursued uranium from abroad.” That was June 2003, not March 2002 as Ambassador Wilson would have you believe.

We consider most aspects of the Niger-Iraq uranium matter closed – Mrs. Wilson clearly suggested her husband for the trip to Niger, neither Ambassador Wilson’s report, nor the reports from Ambassador Owens-Kirkpatrick resolved the Niger-Iraq uranium reporting, the Vice President was never briefed on Ambassador Wilson’s findings because CIA believed the findings did not clarify the issue, and the Niger-Iraq uranium reporting was cleared, by the CIA, for use in the President’s State of the Union address.

One area of inquiry which now seems to be unresolved is why Mrs. Wilson provided different testimony to the CIA Inspector General, our Committee staff, and the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. The account of a discussion among three colleagues about a phone call from the Vice President is new to us, and apparently new to the CIA which has been unable to find the alleged participants. Still, it is a story worth exploring. For that reason, Senator Bond has written to the CIA seeking interviews with the individuals involved, including a re-interview with Mrs. Wilson. We hope that these witnesses will enable us to tie up these loose ends once and for all.

In the meantime, because so much confusion remains about these issues and because most of the Committee’s conclusions in its July 2004 report, including several conclusions that may alleviate some of this confusion, were never fully declassified, we believe it is important to submit some of those conclusions for declassification now. The three conclusions, unanimously adopted by the full Committee, which explain: the lack of impact that Ambassador Wilson’s findings had on Intelligence Community judgments; the fact that the CIA never informed the Vice President about Ambassador Wilson’s findings; and the misunderstanding within the CIA that led the DCI to suggesting striking the Niger-Iraq uranium information from the President’s Cincinnati speech, are reprinted below. We intend to

the Union. This is not correct. The April 2003 paper cited here is the only one prepared by the Africa NIO, according to the CIA. The only other NIC products disseminated prior to April 2003 said Iraq was “vigorously pursuing uranium from Africa.”

seek declassification of the remaining Niger conclusions and the rest of the conclusions from the Committee's Phase I report separately.

Conclusion 13. The report on the former ambassador's trip to Niger, disseminated in March 2002, did not change any analysts' assessments of the Iraq-Niger uranium deal. For most analysts, the information in the report lent more credibility to the original Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) reports on the uranium deal, but State Department Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR) analysts believed that the report supported their assessment that Niger was unlikely to be willing or able to sell uranium to Iraq.

The report on the former ambassador's trip to Niger did not change any analysts' assessments of the Iraq-Niger uranium deal. Those who assessed the Iraq-Niger uranium deal was credible prior to the former ambassador's report, continued to believe it was credible. Analysts who assessed the deal was unlikely, continued to believe it was unlikely. While INR analysts believed that the report corroborated their position that Niger was unlikely to be willing or able to sell uranium to Iraq, most analysts thought the information in the report lent more credibility to the original intelligence reports on the alleged uranium deal. In particular, analysts highlighted a meeting request by a Nigerien-Algerian businessman on behalf of an Iraqi delegation. The businessman told a former Nigerien Prime Minister that the Iraqi delegation wished to discuss "expanding commercial relations" with Niger. The former Prime Minister interpreted this request to mean that the delegation was interested in purchasing uranium. The report noted that "although the meeting took place, the [Prime Minister] let the matter drop due to the United Nations (UN) sanctions on Iraq." Although the report lacked important details, such as who participated in the meeting and what was actually discussed at the meeting, the report added to most Intelligence Community analysts' concerns about Iraqi interest in uranium from Niger. These analysts told Committee staff that they did not expect the former Nigerien officials to admit to entering into a uranium deal with rogue nations so they were not surprised that the report said the former Nigerien officials were unaware of any uranium contracts that had been signed with rogue nations.

After the report on the former ambassador's trip was disseminated, Intelligence Community agencies wrote intelligence products or cleared language indicating that Iraq was attempting to acquire uranium from Niger

or Africa fifteen times prior to the President's State of the Union speech and four more times following the speech.

Conclusion 14. The Central Intelligence Agency should have told the Vice President and other senior policymakers that it had sent someone to Niger to look into the alleged Iraq-Niger uranium deal and should have briefed the Vice President on the former ambassador's findings.

In February 2002, after the Vice President and officials in the Departments of State and Defense raised questions about Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) reports of alleged Iraqi efforts to purchase uranium from Niger, the CIA's Directorate of Operations (DO) made an effort to respond by sending a former ambassador to Niger to look into the issue. The agency did not tell these senior policymakers that the former ambassador had been sent. Following the trip, the DO notified analysts within the CIA's Directorate of Intelligence (DI) of the former ambassador's findings. Although the Vice President had asked his CIA morning briefer twice for additional information about this issue prior to the trip, and the CIA had noted in its assessment to the Vice President and others that the agency was working to clarify and corroborate information on the issue, the CIA never briefed the Vice President on the former ambassador's findings or told the Vice President that such a trip had been undertaken. Because of the level of policymaker interest in this issue, such information should have been passed along, regardless of the DI analysts' assessments of the substance or utility of the information.

Conclusion 20. The Central Intelligence Agency's (CIA) comments and assessments about the Iraq-Niger uranium reporting were inconsistent and, at times contradictory. These inconsistencies were based in part on a misunderstanding of a CIA Weapons Intelligence, Nonproliferation, and Arms Control Center (WINPAC) Iraq analyst's assessment of the reporting. The CIA should have had a mechanism in place to ensure that agency assessments and information passed to policymakers were consistent.

At a video teleconference (VTC) with the British, the CIA WINPAC Iraq analyst suggested that the British not use the information on Iraqi attempts to procure uranium from Africa in their white paper because he believed there were better examples of Iraq's efforts to reconstitute its nuclear program and because the reports were unconfirmed. Following the

VTC, another analyst from the CIA's Office of Near East and South Asia (NESA) prepared consolidated agency comments on the white paper to send to the British. Based on his understanding of the WINPAC analyst's comments, the NESA analyst wrote "recommend deleting sentence on 'compelling evidence that Iraq has sought the supply of uranium from Africa'. . . we don't view this reporting as credible." The WINPAC analyst told Committee staff, however, that these were never his comments. Documentation also shows that immediately after these comments were passed to the British, the WINPAC analyst denied saying that the Iraq-Niger reporting was not credible. The analyst said he suggested that the British not include the reporting on the Niger deal because it was unconfirmed and was not the strongest evidence of reconstitution.

The Committee believes that in attempting to summarize the WINPAC analyst's comments, the NESA analyst said the reporting was not viewed as credible, but that this was a misinterpretation of the WINPAC analyst's comments. Neither this analyst nor any other CIA Iraq analysts who had analyzed the Niger uranium reporting told Committee staff that at the time they coordinated the British white paper they viewed the reporting as not credible. In fact, each of these analysts told Committee staff that until at least March 2003 they believed that Iraq was seeking uranium from Africa.

The misinterpretation of the WINPAC analyst's comments led to inconsistencies in the CIA's message to policymakers on the Iraq-Niger uranium issue throughout the fall of 2002 and into early 2003. Intelligence Community officials who were provided with information from the NESA analyst told policymakers that the reporting was not credible. For example, at a Senate Select Committee on Intelligence hearing on October 2, 2002 the Deputy Director of Central Intelligence testified that "the one thing where I think [the British] stretched a little bit beyond where we would stretch is on the points about Iraq seeking uranium from various African locations. We've looked at those reports and we don't think they are very credible." The NESA analyst who misinterpreted the WINPAC analyst's comments prepared the DDCI for the hearing. The CIA told the Committee that this analyst believes he was also the analyst who raised concerns about the Iraq-Niger uranium reporting being used in the President's Cincinnati speech and that it was his comments that led the DCI to call the National Security Council (NSC) and suggest that the uranium reference be removed. This analyst had not performed an analysis of the Iraq-Niger uranium reporting

himself and was simply passing along what he believed was his WINPAC colleague's analysis of the reporting.

Throughout this time, CIA's WINPAC analysts continued to use the Iraq-Niger uranium reporting in intelligence assessments and approve the use of similar language for Administration speeches and publications. From the time the NESA analyst's comments were sent to the British until the President's State of the Union speech, the CIA and National Intelligence Council (NIC) staff had coordinated on the National Intelligence Estimate, cleared language in six policy speeches or documents for the White House and Department of State, and used language in four of CIA's own publications that all noted Iraq's attempts to acquire uranium from Africa or abroad.

The Committee believes that it was the initial misinterpretation of the WINPAC analyst's comments during coordination of the British white paper that led to mixed and inconsistent messages being passed to senior policymakers. While clearly this was an unintentional error, there should have been some mechanism in place within the CIA to ensure that different CIA analysts were not providing different assessments, to policymakers and that assessments in finished intelligence products provided a consistent message.

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