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~~TOP SECRET~~
15/01

Analyzing the Iraq-Niger controversy
involving the State of the Union

THE VICE PRESIDENT
HAS SEEN

SUMMARY

Key documents written by the Intelligence Community in late 2002 and early 2003 show that the White House would have been reasonable in believing prior to the State of the Union Address that Iraq had sought uranium from Africa. In fact, these documents show that, only days before the speech, the Intelligence Community stood behind its judgment that, "Iraq began to vigorously attempt to procure uranium" from Africa.

These documents include relevant sections of the Intelligence Community's October 2002 NIE and a CIA submission to the White House on January 24, 2003. Both contain the flat assertion that Iraq was vigorously attempting to procure uranium, and cite examples from Africa. In addition, the report of Amb. Joe Wilson has been distorted by the press and Mr. Wilson.

None of these documents have been declassified and presented fairly to the public. But less probative oral discussions and inferences have been readily thrown about. This should be corrected

The Problem. Recent leaks, Director Tenet's July 11 public statement, Amb. Joe Wilson's claims and the media have left the public with the misimpression that the Intelligence Community was expressing widespread doubts about the Iraq-African uranium connection before the State of the Union. From this, some assert that the President or Vice President knew or should have known about these doubts before the President delivered the speech.

The Truth. The complete record -- including especially the written record -- shows that the CIA was communicating directly to the President, Vice President, and other Senior White House officials that the Intelligence Community credited the reports of the Iraq-African connection.

1. THE OCTOBER 2002 NIE FLATLY ASSERTS THAT IRAQ WAS VIGOROUSLY TRYING TO OBTAIN URANIUM. The 1 October 2002 NIE

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OVP Staff Secretary Received

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