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FROM RASHIDAK #112 24

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FILE NO. 1063
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2003 JUN -9 PM 1:19

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| SITE |
| CIA |
| MESSAGE NUMBER |
| 317 |

MONDAY
6-9-2003

TIME TRANSMITTED 1318 TIME RECEIVED

FROM: [Redacted] Office/Desk: DT/ops/PASS. Phone: [Redacted]

SUBJECT: IRAQ - NIGER URANIUM

DELIVERY INSTRUCTIONS: Pages 3 (including cover)

NOTE: FURNISH AFTER-DUTY HOURS CONTACT TELEPHONE NUMBER FOR EACH ADDRESSEE REQUIRING AFTER DUTY HOURS DELIVERY.

IMMEDIATE/URGENT * SIT ROOM CALL *
 HOLD FOR NORMAL DUTY HOURS

TRANSMITTED TO Call 6900 FOR PICKUP

| AGENCY | RECIPIENT | OFFICE/ROOM NUMBER | PHONE NUMBER SECURE FAX |
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| WJH | JENNY MAYFIELD | V.P.'s OFFICE | |
| | (VIA SIT ROOM) | Room 276 | |
| | PLEASE PASS TO | | |
| | MR. HANNAH | | |
| | + MR. LIBBY | | |
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ASHFAX COVER SHEET

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03/11/2003
SPWR031103-04

Iraq: Iraq's Reported Interest in Buying Uranium From Niger and Whether Associated Documents are Authentic

We do not dispute the IAEA Director General's conclusion—last Friday before the UN Security Council—that documents on Iraq's agreement to buy uranium from Niger are not authentic. The IAEA has promised to follow-up on any other evidence regarding Baghdad's efforts to import nuclear materials but has shared little of its information on this issue with the US.

The US last month provided the documents to the IAEA in response to its request for information on Iraqi attempts to buy foreign uranium but expressed concern about their veracity.

Handwritten note:
I do not know if the SDG has

documents suggesting that Niger as of early 2001 had planned to send Iraq several tons of "pure uranium." The IAEA compared these documents with official correspondence from the Government of Niger, concluding that the documents we provided were not authentic.

— Washington since last fall also has provided the IAEA with detailed information on the reported Iraqi-Nigerien agreement based on sensitive reporting. Sensitive reporting indicates a delegation of Iraqis around 1999 visited Niger and suggests they were seeking access to uranium yellowcake. The IAEA says Baghdad admits one of its officials in February 1999 visited Niger and several other African countries, but the IAEA has not shared further details with the US.

CIA on several occasions has cautioned that available information on this issue was fragmentary and unconfirmed and early last month told them, "We could not confirm these reports and have questions regarding some specific claims. Nonetheless, we are concerned that these reports may indicate Baghdad has attempted to secure an unreported source of uranium yellowcake for a nuclear weapons program."

— A centerpiece of the British white paper last fall was UK concern over Iraqi interest in foreign uranium. Given the fragmentary nature of the reporting, CIA had recommended that the UK not use this information in their paper.

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FROM WASHFAX SITE 3B

(NOV) 6, P. 03 13:26/CT. 13:25/NO. 3760285291, P. 3

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DECLASSIFIED02/14/2002
SPVWR021402-05**Iraq-Niger: Possible Sale of Uranium From Niger to Iraq and its Implications for Baghdad's Nuclear Program**

Information on the alleged uranium contract between Iraq and Niger comes exclusively from a foreign government service report that lacks crucial details, and we are working to clarify the information and to determine whether it can be corroborated. The report claims Niger in July 2000 signed a contract to supply Iraq annually with 500 tons of uranium—most likely yellowcake—that would be a significant percentage of the reported 4,000 tons of uranium mined annually in Niger. Iraq is not allowed to import most radioactive material, including raw uranium and yellowcake, under the current UN sanctions regime.

Some of the information in the report contradicts reporting from the US Embassy in Niamey. US diplomats say the French Government-led consortium that operates Niger's two uranium mines maintains complete control over uranium mining and yellowcake production. The Embassy says the consortium—which includes Spanish and Japanese firms—purchases Niger's entire annual production of 3,000 tons, as opposed to the 4,000 tons cited in the report.

If converted to feed material and enriched, 500 tons of yellowcake could be used to produce enough weapons-grade material for some 50 nuclear devices. Iraq's nuclear weapons program probably could produce enough fissile material for a nuclear weapon by mid-decade if it obtains significant foreign assistance or has clandestinely built the necessary fuel cycle facilities.

— The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) says Iraq already has some 550 tons of yellowcake—200 tons of which were purchased in 1978 from Niger—but the material remains in sealed containers subject to annual IAEA inspection.

— The IAEA conducted its most recent inspection last month and has officially verified that the container seals were intact.

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