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Contact: Press Office
Phone: 202.228.3685

Levin and Reed Compare Bush Administration Statements with Intelligence Community Statements on Pre-War Iraq Intelligence

WASHINGTON – Senators Carl Levin (D-MI) and Jack Reed (D-R.I.) said today that the Bush Administration’s pattern of misleading statements about pre-war Iraq intelligence continues, and released a collection of statements made by Administration officials before the war regarding Iraq, contrasted with what the Intelligence Community believed to be true at the time.

Levin said: “The Bush Administration’s current mantra is that it followed, as National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley said recently, ‘the best collective judgment of the Intelligence Community.’ That statement is not true relative to the key allegations of the Administration regarding:

- a cooperative relationship between Iraq and al-Qaeda, and
- Iraq’s nuclear weapons program.”

Before the war, the classified Intelligence Community position did not support Bush Administration statements that there was a cooperative relationship between Saddam Hussein and al-Qaeda. The Administration made that allegation so frequently before the war that 53 percent of the American people came to believe that Saddam Hussein was “personally involved” in the 9/11 attacks. The Administration’s argument was based on two assertions:

- that Iraq had provided training to al-Qaeda in chemical and biological weapons, and
- that the lead 9/11 hijacker, Mohammed Atta, met with an Iraqi intelligence officer in Prague in April, 2001.

However, the Intelligence Community did not support either of those assertions. It either disagreed or at best was divided.

Before the war, the classified Intelligence Community position also did not support or was divided on Bush Administration statements relative to key aspects of Iraq’s nuclear weapons program, including:

- whether Iraq sought aluminum tubes to enrich uranium for nuclear weapons, and
- whether Saddam Hussein was trying to obtain uranium from Africa.

“President Bush and Vice President Cheney have recently accused members of Congress

of 'rewriting history.' This is just the latest in a long chain of deceptive statements about pre-war intelligence," Levin said.

The following charts, which compare Bush Administration statements before the war with declassified, pre-war Intelligence Community views, show the real history of how the Administration made misleading statements prior to the war to make its case for attacking Iraq.

Issue: Iraq Ties to al-Qaeda

<u>Administration</u> Statements Before the War	What the <u>Intelligence Community</u> Said Before the War (now declassified)
<p>President Bush: "[Y]ou can't distinguish between al Qaeda and Saddam when you talk about the war on terror." - <i>September 25, 2002, Photo Opportunity with President Uribe of Colombia</i></p> <p>President Bush: "Saddam Hussein would like nothing more than to use a terrorist network to attack and to kill and leave no fingerprints behind . " - <i>January 31, 2003, Remarks with Prime Minister Tony Blair</i></p> <p>(On the aircraft carrier <i>USS Abraham Lincoln</i> , where the banner said "Mission Accomplished," on May 1, 2003, President Bush said "We've removed an ally of al Qaeda .")</p>	<p>"Saddam's regime is intensely secular and is wary of Islamic revolutionary movements. Moreover, Baghdad is unlikely to provide assistance to a group it cannot control." (emphasis added) – <i>February 2002, Defense Intelligence Agency, Defense Intelligence Terrorism Summary</i></p> <p>"This paper's conclusions – especially regarding the difficult and elusive question of the exact nature of Iraq's relations with al-Qaida – are based on currently available information that is at times contradictory and derived from sources of varying degrees of reliability " (emphasis added) – <i>CIA report "Iraqi Support for Terrorism," January 2003</i></p> <p>"Iraq probably would attempt clandestine attacks against the US Homeland if Baghdad feared an attack that threatened the survival of the regime were imminent or unavoidable , or possibly for revenge.... Saddam, if sufficiently desperate , might decide that only an organization such as al-Qa'ida ... could perpetrate the type of terrorist attack that he would hope to conduct. In such circumstances, he might decide that the extreme step of assisting the Islamist terrorists in conducting a CBW attack against the United states would be his last chance to exact vengeance by</p>

	<p>taking a large number of victims with him.” (emphasis added) - <i>October 1, 2002, National Intelligence Estimate on Iraq's Continuing Programs for Weapons of Mass Destruction</i></p>
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Issue: Iraq Training al-Qaeda in Chemical and Biological Weapons

<u>Administration</u> Statements Before the War	What the <u>Intelligence Community</u> Said Before the War (now declassified)
<p>President Bush: “Iraq has also provided al Qaeda with chemical and biological weapons training.” – <i>February 6, 2003, Statement in the Roosevelt Room</i></p> <p>National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice: “We know from a detainee that--the head of training for al-Qaida, that they sought help in developing chemical and biological weapons because they weren't doing very well on their own. They sought it in Iraq. They received the help .” – <i>March 9, 2003, Face the Nation</i></p> <p>Secretary of State Colin Powell: “Every statement I make today is backed up by sources, solid sources. These are not assertions. What we are giving you are facts and conclusions based on solid intelligence. ... I can trace the story of a senior terrorist operative [Ibn al-Shaykh al-Libi] telling how Iraq provided training in these weapons to al-Qaida. ... The support that this detainee describes included Iraq offering chemical or biological weapons training for two al-Qaida associates beginning in December 2000. He says that a militant known as Abdallah al-Iraqi had</p>	<p>"This is the first report from Ibn al-Shaykh in which he claims Iraq assisted al-Qaida's CBRN efforts. However, he lacks specific details on the Iraqis involved, the CBRN materials associated with the assistance, and the location where training occurred. It is possible he does not know any further details; <i>it is more likely this individual is intentionally misleading the debriefers</i> . Ibn al-Shaykh has been undergoing debriefs for several weeks and may be describing scenarios to the debriefers that he knows will retain their interest.” (emphasis added) – <i>Defense Intelligence Agency, Defense Intelligence Terrorism Summary, February 2002</i></p> <p>“In January 2003, the CIA produced an updated version of the report ‘Iraqi Support for Terrorism.’ That report cited the (al-Libi) claims that al-Qa'ida sent operatives to Iraq to acquire chemical and biological weapons and related training but <i>noted the detainee was not in a position to know if any training had taken place.</i> ” (emphasis added) – <i>CIA statement describing January 2003 CIA Report "Iraqi Support for Terrorism," declassified October 2005</i></p>

been sent to Iraq several times between 1997 and 2000 for help in acquiring poisons and gasses. Abdallah al-Iraqi characterized the relationship he forged with Iraqi officials as successful.” – *February 5, 2003, Address to the United Nations Security Council*

Issue: Alleged Atta Meeting in Prague with Iraqi Intelligence

<u>Administration</u> Statements Before the War	What the <u>Intelligence Community</u> Said Before the War (now declassified)
<p>Vice President Cheney: “It's been pretty well confirmed that he [Mohammed Atta] did go to Prague and he did meet with a senior official of the Iraqi intelligence service in Czechoslovakia last April, several months before the attack.” - <i>December 9, 2001, NBC Meet the Press</i></p>	<p>“Reporting is contradictory on hijacker Mohammed Atta's alleged trip to Prague and meeting with an Iraqi intelligence officer, and we have not verified his travels .” (emphasis added) - <i>June 21, 2002, CIA Report "Iraq and al Qaida: Interpreting a Murky Relationship"</i></p>
<p>Vice President Cheney: “Mohammed Atta, who was the lead hijacker, did apparently travel to Prague on a number of occasions. And on at least one occasion, we have reporting that places him in Prague with a senior Iraqi intelligence official a few months before the attack on the World Trade Center .”... Tim Russert: “What does the CIA say about that? Is it credible?” Vice President Cheney: “ It's credible .” - <i>September 8, 2002, NBC Meet the Press</i></p>	<p>“Some information asserts that Atta met with IIS chief... al-Ani, but the most reliable reporting to date casts doubt on this possibility A CIA and FBI review of intelligence and open-source reporting leads us to question the information [deleted] claimed that Atta met al-Ani.” (emphasis added) - <i>January 29, 2003, CIA Report "Iraqi Support for Terrorism"</i></p>
<p>(In January 2004, Vice President Cheney said: “We did have reporting that was public, that came out shortly after the 9/11 attack, provided by the Czech government, suggesting that there had been a meeting in Prague between Mohammed Atta, the lead hijacker, and a man named al-Ani, who</p>	

was an Iraqi intelligence official in Prague, at the embassy there, in April of '01, prior to the 9/11 attacks... That's the one that possibly tied the two together to 9/11 ." - *interview with the Rocky Mountain News, January 9, 2004)*

Issue: Aluminum Tubes

<u>Administration</u> Statements Before the War	What the <u>Intelligence Community</u> Said Before the War (now declassified)
<p>Vice President Cheney: "Specifically aluminum tubes. ... We do know, with absolute certainty , that he is using his procurement system to acquire the equipment he needs in order to enrich uranium to build a nuclear weapon." - <i>September 8, 2002, Meet the Press</i></p> <p>National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice: "We do know that there have been shipments going ... into Iraq, for instance, of aluminum tubes ... that are only really suited for nuclear weapons programs, centrifuge programs ." -<i>September 8, 2002, CNN Late Edition</i></p> <p>Vice President Cheney: "We now have irrefutable evidence that he has once again set up and reconstituted his program to take uranium, to enrich it to sufficiently high grade, so that it will function as the base material as a nuclear weapon." - <i>September 20, 2002, Associated Press</i></p>	<p>"In INR 's [State Department Bureau of Intelligence and Research] view Iraq's efforts to acquire aluminum tubes is central to the argument that Baghdad is reconstituting its nuclear weapons program, but INR is not persuaded that the tubes in question are intended for use as centrifuge rotors . INR accepts the judgment of technical experts at the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) who have concluded that the tubes Iraq seeks to acquire are poorly suited for use in gas centrifuges to be used for uranium enrichment and finds unpersuasive the arguments advanced by others to make the case that they are intended for that purpose. INR considers it far more likely that the tubes are intended for another purpose , most likely the production of artillery rockets. The very large quantities being sought, the way the tubes were tested by the Iraqis, and the atypical lack of attention to operational security in the procurement efforts are among the factors, in addition to the DOE assessment, that lead INR to conclude that the tubes are not intended for use in Iraq's nuclear weapon program ." (emphasis added) - <i>October 1, 2002, National Intelligence Estimate on "Iraq's Continuing</i></p>

Issue: Uranium from Niger

Administration Statements Before the War	What the <u>Intelligence Community</u> Said Before the War (now declassified)
<p>President Bush: “The British government has learned that Saddam Hussein recently sought significant quantities of uranium from Africa.” - <i>January 28, 2003, State of the Union address</i></p>	<p>“[T]he claims of Iraqi pursuit of natural uranium in Africa are, in INR's assessment, highly dubious.” - <i>October 1, 2002, National Intelligence Estimate on "Iraq's Continuing Programs for Weapons of Mass Destruction"</i></p>
<p>Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld: “[Saddam's] regime ... recently was discovered seeking significant quantities of uranium from Africa.” - <i>January 29, 2003</i></p>	<p>(On July 11, 2003, Director of Central Intelligence George Tenet said: “There was fragmentary intelligence gathered in late 2001 and early 2002 on the allegations of Saddam's efforts to obtain additional raw uranium from Africa... [I]n the fall of 2002, our British colleagues told us they were planning to publish an unclassified dossier that mentioned reports of Iraqi attempts to obtain uranium in Africa. Because we viewed the reporting on such acquisition attempts to be inconclusive , we expressed our reservations about its inclusion ... In September and October 2002 ... senior intelligence officials ... told members of Congress that we differed with the British dossier on the reliability of the uranium reporting [CIA] officials who were reviewing the draft [State of the Union] remarks on uranium raised several concerns about the fragmentary nature of the intelligence with [NSC] colleagues.”) (emphasis added)</p>
<p>State Department: “The [Iraqi] Declaration ignores efforts to procure uranium from Niger.” - <i>December 19, 2002, Fact Sheet</i></p>	
<p>National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice: “The [Iraqi] declaration fails to account for or explain Iraq's efforts to get uranium from abroad.” - <i>January 23, 2003, New York Times</i></p>	
<p>[The Iraqi declaration] “ignores efforts to procure uranium from abroad.” - <i>January 23, 2003, White House report "What Does Disarmament Look Like?"</i></p>	