

## Memorandum to Interested Persons

From: Ken Gude

Date: July 17, 2003

Re: Inaccurate Statements on Weapons of Mass Destruction

Below are a series of statements by President George W. Bush on weapons of mass destruction in Iraq and on the alleged relationship between Iraq and Al Qaeda. Each statement from the president is followed by evidence that either refutes or contradicts those assertions. Following the statements from the president is a selection of statements from other senior members of the administration.

### President Bush Outlines Iraqi Threat, October 7, 2002, Cincinnati, Ohio

- “The evidence indicates that Iraq is reconstituting its nuclear weapons program.”

\*\*\*In fact, as revealed below, each piece of evidence that the president relied upon to make this assertion has been discredited.\*\*\*

“Mr. President, to conclude, we have to date found no evidence that Iraq has revived its nuclear weapon program since the elimination of the program in the 1990s.” (International Atomic Energy Agency Director Mohammed ElBaradei, presentation to the UN Security Council, January 27, 2003)

- “Satellite photographs reveal that Iraq is rebuilding facilities at sites that have been part of its nuclear program in the past.”

“First, we have been inspected all of those buildings and facilities that were identified through satellite imagery as having been modified or constructed over the past four years. The IAEA inspectors have been able to gain ready access and to clarify the nature of the activities currently being conducted in these facilities. No prohibited nuclear activities have been identified during these inspections.” (IAEA Director Mohammed ElBaradei, presentation to the UN Security Council, January 27, 2003)

- “Iraq has attempted to purchase high-strength aluminum tubes and other equipment needed for gas centrifuges, which are used to enrich uranium for nuclear weapons.”

“A particular issue of focus has been the attempted procurement by Iraq of high-strength aluminum tubes, and the question of whether these tubes, if acquired, could be used for the manufacture of nuclear centrifuge. Iraqi authorities have indicated that their unsuccessful attempts to procure the aluminum tubes related to a

program to reverse-engineer conventional rockets. To verify this information, the IAEA inspectors have inspected the relevant rocket production and storage sites, taken tube samples, interviewed relevant Iraqi personnel, and reviewed procurement contracts and related documents. From our analysis to date, it appears that the aluminum tubes would be consistent with the purposes stated by Iraq and, unless modified, would not be suitable for manufacturing centrifuges.” (IAEA Director Mohammed ElBaradei, presentation to the UN Security Council, January 27, 2003)

“The bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR) in the State Department disputed claims made by the Central Intelligence Agency and the Pentagon that the tubes were intended for a nuclear weapons programme. The bureau was not convinced that they could be used as centrifuges to enrich uranium, according to US officials privy to its findings. The Department of Energy backed up the INR, an official familiar with the intelligence and the dispute between the agencies said. The State Department's contradictory conclusions were entered as a footnote to the National Intelligence Estimate of Iraqi Weapons of Mass Destruction drawn up last October. The classified document, compiled by the CIA, concluded that most intelligence experts believed the tubes were for use as centrifuges.” (Guy Dinmore, “Focus on Tubes Sought by Saddam,” *Financial Times*, July 10, 2003.)

- “We know that Iraq and the al Qaeda terrorist network share a common enemy -- the United States of America. We know that Iraq and al Qaeda have had high-level contacts that go back a decade. Some al Qaeda leaders who fled Afghanistan went to Iraq. These include one very senior al Qaeda leader who received medical treatment in Baghdad this year, and who has been associated with planning for chemical and biological attacks. We've learned that Iraq has trained al Qaeda members in bomb-making and poisons and deadly gases.”

“On another controversial Iraq intelligence issue, the preliminary report (report by former CIA analysts of pre-war intelligence) indicates that although al Qaeda and Hussein had a common enemy in the United States, and there were some ties among individuals in the two camps, "it was not at all clear there was any coordination or joint activities," said one individual inside the CIA who is familiar with the report. There were people talking to each other," in Iraq and other countries, the source said, "but that was how Saddam kept track of what was going on" in al Qaeda.” (Walter Pincus, “Basis for Arms Claims Affirmed,” *Washington Post*, July 4, 2003)

*The State of the Union Address, January 28, 2003*

- “The British government has learned that Saddam Hussein recently sought significant quantities of uranium from Africa.”

“These 16 words should never have been included in the text written for the President.” (Statement of CIA Director George Tenet, July 11, 2003)

- “Our intelligence sources tell us that he has attempted to purchase high-strength aluminum tubes suitable for nuclear weapons production.”

As described earlier, however, it is important to note that National Intelligence Estimate that did indicate that there was some dispute among US intelligence agencies regarding the tubes was produced between these two references by the president. Just a week later Secretary of State Powell during his presentation to the UN Security Council on February 5 admitted that US intelligence agencies disagreed about the tubes.

*Weekly Radio Address, February 8, 2003*

- “We have sources that tell us that Saddam Hussein recently authorized Iraqi field commanders to use chemical weapons -- the very weapons the dictator tells us he does not have.”

Obviously, no weapons were used. This statement is similar to the allegation made by the British that the Iraqis could be deployed only 45 minutes after the order was given to use them. The British House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee recently concluded “(the British Government) also claimed that the Iraq military would be able to deploy warheads containing biological and chemical weapons within 45 minutes of receiving an order to do so. It is known that the claim rested on a single source and that there was no corroborating evidence. Although Mr. Straw (Foreign Minister) said later that the 45-minute claim was not regarded as being significant, this answer begs the question why the 45 minutes was highlighted by the prime minister when he presented the dossier to the house.”

*Address to the Nation, March 17, 2003*

- “Intelligence gathered by this and other governments leaves no doubt that the Iraq regime continues to possess and conceal some of the most lethal weapons ever devised.”

“‘Why are we doing any planned targets?’ Army Chief Warrant Officer Richard L. Gonzales, leader of Mobile Exploitation Team Alpha, said in disgust to a colleague during last Sunday's nightly report of weapons sites and survey results. ‘Answer me that. We know they're empty.’ Survey teams have combed laboratories and munitions plants, bunkers and distilleries, bakeries and vaccine factories, file cabinets and holes in the ground where tipsters advised them to dig. Most of the assignments came with classified ‘target folders’ describing U.S. intelligence leads. Others, known as the ‘ad hocs,’ came to the task force's attention by way of plausible human sources on the ground. (Barton Gelman, ‘Frustrated, US Arms Teams to Leave Iraq,’ *Washington Post*, May 11, 2003)

*Interview with Polish Television, May 30, 2003*

- “You remember when Colin Powell stood up in front of the world, and he said Iraq has got laboratories, mobile labs to build biological weapons. They’re illegal. They’re against the United Nations resolutions, and we’ve so far discovered two. And we’ll find more weapons as time goes on. But for those who way we haven’t found the banned manufacturing devices or banned weapons, they’re wrong. We found them.”

“The State Department's intelligence division is disputing the Central Intelligence Agency's conclusion that mysterious trailers found in Iraq were for making biological weapons, United States government officials said today. In a classified June 2 memorandum, the officials said, the department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research said it was premature to conclude that the trailers were evidence of an Iraqi biological weapons program, as President Bush has done.” (Douglas Jehl, ‘Agency Disputes CIA View on Trailers as Weapons Labs,’ *New York Times*, June 26, 2003)

“An official British investigation into two trailers found in northern Iraq has concluded they are not mobile germ warfare labs, as was claimed by Tony Blair and President George Bush, but were for the production of hydrogen to fill artillery balloons, as the Iraqis have continued to insist.... The revelation that the mobile labs were to produce hydrogen for artillery balloons will also cause discomfort for the British authorities because the Iraqi army’s original system was sold to it by the British company, Marconi Command and Control.” (Peter Beaumont, ‘Iraqi Mobile Labs Nothing to do with Germ Warfare,’ *The Observer*, Jun 15, 2003)

Media Availability with Pres. Bush and UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, July 14, 2003

- “Subsequent to the speech (The State of the Union) the CIA had some doubts (about the uranium purchase). But when I gave the -- when they talked about the speech, when they looked at the speech it was cleared.”

“CIA Director George J. Tenet successfully intervened with White House officials to have a reference to Iraq seeking uranium from Niger removed from a presidential speech in October, three months before a less specific reference to the same intelligence appeared in the State of the Union address, according to senior administration officials.” (Walter Pincus and Mike Allen, “CIA Got Uranium Reference Cut in October,” Washington Post, July 13, 2003)

- “The larger point is and the fundamental question is, did Saddam Hussein have a weapons program? And the answer is absolutely. And we gave him a chance to allow the inspectors in, and he wouldn't let them in. And, therefore, after a reasonable request, we decided to remove him from power, along with other nations, so as to make sure he was not a threat to the United States and our friends and allies in the region.”

This statement needs no documentation to refute it.

Vice President Dick Cheney

- “But we now know that Saddam has resumed his efforts to acquire nuclear weapons... Many of us are convinced that Saddam will acquire nuclear weapons fairly soon... Simply stated, there is no doubt that Saddam Hussein now has weapons of mass destruction. There is no doubt he is amassing them to use against our friends, against our allies, and against us.” (Speech to VFW National Convention, Aug. 26, 2002)
- “Now, the more recent developments have to do with our now being able to conclude, based on intelligence that's becoming available, some of it has been made public, more of it hopefully will be, that he has indeed stepped up his capacity to produce and deliver biological weapons, that he has reconstituted his nuclear program to develop a nuclear weapon, that there are efforts under way inside Iraq to significantly expand his capability... we have been able to intercept and prevent him from acquiring through this particular channel, the kinds of tubes that are necessary to build a centrifuge. And the centrifuge is required to take low-grade uranium and enhance it into highly enriched uranium, which is what you have to have in order to build a bomb... But 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.” (NBC's Meet the Press, September 8, 2002)

- “And we believe he has, in fact, reconstituted nuclear weapons.” (NBC’s Meet the Press, March 16, 2003)

#### Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld

- "We know where they are. They're in the area around Tikrit and Baghdad and east, west, south and north somewhat." (ABC Interview, March 30, 2003)
- "We never believed that we'd just tumble over weapons of mass destruction in that country." (Fox News Interview, May 4, 2003)

#### National Security Advisor Condoleeza Rice

- “We do know that he is actively pursuing a nuclear weapon. We do know that there have been shipments going into Iran, for instance -- into Iraq, for instance, of aluminum tubes that really are only suited to -- high-quality aluminum tools that are only really suited for nuclear weapons programs, centrifuge programs.” (CNN’s Late Edition, September 8, 2002)
- “[S]omebody down may have known. But I will tell you that when this issue was raised, uh, with the intelligence community, because, uh, we actually do go through the process of asking, uh, the intelligence community, can you say this? Can you say that? Can you say this? The intelligence community did not know at that time (of the State of the Union) or at levels that got to us that this, that there was serious questions about this report (uranium purchases).” (ABC’s This Week, June 8, 2003)