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OIG/INS - Team Memorandum

Date: 07/31/2003

Subject: Grenier, Robert - ADDO/PS and Iraq Mission Manager

Author: CIA Employee # 19 [REDACTED]

Category: Interview

Summary:

On 31 July, Robert Grenier ADDO/PS (Policy Support) and the DO Iraq Mission Manager, was interviewed by [CIA Employees # 20 and 19]. He became the Iraq Mission Manager in the fall 2002 when the DO was establishing the mission managers, and within weeks was the DCI Mission Manager for Iraq with [CIA Employee # 20]. He had a small staff [REDACTED]. He had no line authority, but was playing a coordination role with NE [REDACTED] CP/JTFI, OMA and the multiple other players - there were a lot of moving pieces in the Agency. His focus was on the community and policy aspects.

The first time he heard about or focused on the uranium reporting was in late May or early June 2003 when he received a series of insistent phone calls from Lewis "Scooter" Libby (Chief of Staff in the Office of the VP) and was ultimately called out of the DCI 1615 meeting on Iraq to connect with Libby. Libby said he had heard - from a journalist checking the story before going to print - that Joe Wilson was making public charges that a) how could the USG persist in error on Niger providing uranium to Iraq when he, JW, had gone and put that story to rest; and b) this position was being attributed to the OVP or VP himself. Wilson was charging that in his discussion with CIA before he travelled the reason for his trip was VP interest. Grenier said he made a number of quick calls, probably to CP, and pieced together for Libby was that after the report the OVP expressed interest, as had the Departments of State and Defense, in knowing more about the report. Via Libby CIA press spokesman Bill Harlow contacted the OVP press spokesman and it was agreed that Harlow would go on the record that "there was interest, but also from other community elements such as State and DoD." The next day the first press pieces about the VP came out and the story then took the turn of throwing the blame on the Agency.

Part of what the press was after was what JW had discussed with the Agency, and a) was it communicated directly back to the VP or OVP, and b) was it made clear that the source was Joe Wilson. He, Grenier, believes that the VP was not made aware of the report and that the reporting was viewed to be Embassy-like reporting, and the answer was to be expected. No definitiveness could be assigned to the report.

His involvement was quite minimal thereafter, with the DCI dealing directly with WINPAC and then with CP. His role was in effect taken over by the DCI and DDCI.

re the 1615 meeting: the DCI attends if possible, the DDCI is a regular attendee. The ExDir is there, as is the DDO (or sometimes the ADDO). Senior officer from WINPAC, [CIA Employees # 23 and 24]. Initially WINPAC would provide an update on WMD, and CP/JTFI an update [REDACTED] in

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the run-up to the war, CP would take the lead, it was very ops oriented, [REDACTED]. More recently WINPAC and CP/JTFI do a combined update. NESA would update on military, security and political matters. NE [REDACTED] would give the ops update [REDACTED]. If there was relevant information CTC could brief. The issues that would come up were aluminum tubes, yellowcake or uranium never came up, and was never an issue. The British dossier never came up either - that was too low-level and too strategic. The meetings were very tactical [REDACTED]. He has no specific recollection of El Baradei's charge of the forgeries in March 03 even being mentioned. Tubes was the issue that made a splash - it was controversial, there was a lot of attention given, and people had firm positions.

re the Powell speech: Grenier was not involved, he said it was primarily the DDCI and Walpole. He had, however, attended an initial meeting the DDCI had had to organize the work (the CASE work). He is not sure of the sequence but Walpole became the key figure very quickly.

re the NIE: he saw the NIE and may have seen a reference to uranium, but it did not really register.

Lessons learned: In response to the question about his views as DO field and Hqs manager about the reporting and the documents, even given his limited knowledge, Grenier noted that his impression is that given the importance of the overall issue, if it is true [REDACTED] more could/should have been done. We were caught up with the translated versions of the documents, rather than the documents. He has a sense that if we (DO) are vulnerable it is there - we should have done more.

Other people to speak with: DC/NE [REDACTED] CIA Employee # 25 [REDACTED] has some overview of the intelligence and reporting and may have some insights.

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