loses her sex appeal, unlike a Czech woman, who is under constant pressure. She has to be successful at work, take care of the household, and she's supposed to look like a model. When I debated this with a Czech girl, she argued that our women are forced to bear more children. It's true that a woman's value grows with the number of children she has. However, it's naturally a woman's desire to have children, and women want to have as many children as possible. Usually, it's the wife who tries to convince her husband to have a family.

This patriarchal lifestyle seems hard to understand now, but it was widespread in Europe only a few decades ago. I'm hardly preaching the virtues of the patriarchal family model, since I don't practice it myself. Yet the fact remains that one day in the not-so-distant future, today's young childless-by-choice men and women will be old men and women living in underfunded communities for the elderly, without children or grandchildren to visit and advocate for them. The fortunate will have formed family-like relationships with younger, non-family friends, but others will be left on their own.

Maybe modern Islamic civilization has more in common with the traditional Western world than we generally think. In terms of family life, the main difference is only about half a century. Adriana is no sworn enemy of democracy. Rather, she possesses a set of values and preferences that differs from what is considered normal and around which policy is made in today's Europe. But are we so sure that modern Europe and its social policies are indeed normal? ■

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Forging the Case for War

Who was behind the Niger uranium documents?

By Philip Giraldi

FROM THE BEGINNING, there has been little doubt in the intelligence community that the outing of CIA officer Valerie Plame was part of a bigger story. That she was exposed in an attempt to discredit her husband, former ambassador Joseph Wilson, is clear, but the drive to demonize Wilson cannot reasonably be attributed only to revenge. Rather, her identification likely grew out of an attempt to cover up the forging of documents alleging that Iraq attempted to buy yellowcake uranium from Niger.

What took place and why will not be known with any certainty until the details of the Fitzgerald investigation are revealed. (As we go to press, Fitzgerald has made no public statement.) But recent revelations in the Italian press, most notably in the pages of *La Repubblica*, along with information already on the public record, suggest a plausible scenario for the evolution of Plamegate.

Information developed by Italian investigators indicates that the documents were produced in Italy with the connivance of the Italian intelligence service. It also reveals that the introduction of the documents into the American intelligence stream was facilitated by Undersecretary of Defense Doug Feith's Office of Special Plans (OSP), a parallel intelligence center set up in the Pentagon to develop alternative sources of information in support of war against Iraq.

The first suggestion that Iraq was seeking yellowcake uranium to construct a nuclear weapon came on Oct. 15, 2001, shortly after 9/11, when Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi and his newly appointed chief of the *Servizio per le Informazioni e la Sicurezza Militare* (SISMI), Nicolo Pollari, made an official visit to Washington. Berlusconi was eager to make a good impression and signaled his willingness to support the American effort to implicate Saddam Hussein in 9/11. Pollari, in his position for less than three weeks, was likewise keen to establish himself with his American counterparts and was under pressure from Berlusconi to present the U.S. with information that would be vital to the rapidly accelerating War on Terror. Well aware of the Bush administration's obsession with Iraq, Pollari used his meeting with top CIA officials to provide a SISMI dossier indicating that Iraq had sought to buy uranium in Niger. The same intelligence was passed simultaneously to Britain's MI-6.

But the Italian information was inconclusive and old, some of it dating from the 1980s. The British, the CIA, and the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research analyzed the intelligence and declared that it was "lacking in detail" and "very limited" in scope.

In February 2002, Pollari and Berlusconi resubmitted their report to Washington with some embellishments, resulting in Joe Wilson's trip to Niger. Wilson visited Niamey in February 2002 and subsequently reported to the CIA that the information could not be confirmed.

Enter Michael Ledeen, the Office of Special Plans' man in Rome. Ledeen was paid $30,000 by the Italian Ministry of the Interior in 1978 for a report on terrorism and was well known to senior SISMI officials. Italian sources indicate that Pollari was eager to engage with the

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Pentagon hardliners, knowing they were at odds with the CIA and the State Department officials who had slighted him. He turned to Ledeen, who quickly established himself as the liaison between SISMI and Feith's OSP, where he was a consultant. Ledeen, who had personal access to the National Security Council's Condoleezza Rice and Stephen Hadley and was also a confidant of Vice President Cheney, was well placed to circumvent the obstruction coming from the CIA and State.

The timing, August 2002, was also propitious as the administration was intensifying its efforts to make the case for war. In the same month, the White House Iraq Group (WHIG) was set up to market the war by providing information to friends in the media. It has subsequently been alleged that false information generated by Ahmad Chalabi's Iraqi National Congress was given to Judith Miller and other journalists through WHIG.

On Sept. 9, 2002, Ledeen set up a secret meeting between Pollari and Deputy National Security Adviser Hadley. Two weeks before the meeting, a group of documents had been offered to journalist Elisabetta Burba of the Italian magazine *Panorama* for $10,000, but the demand for money was soon dropped and the papers were handed over. The man offering the documents was Rocco Martino, a former SISMI officer who delivered the first WMD dossier to London in October 2002. That Martino quickly dropped his request for money suggests that the approach was a set-up primarily intended to surface the documents.

Panorama, perhaps not coincidentally, is owned by Prime Minister Berlusconi. On Oct. 9, the documents were taken from the magazine to the U.S. Embassy, where they were apparently expected. Instead of going to the CIA Station, which would have been the normal procedure, they were sent straight to Washington where they bypassed the agency's analysts and went directly to the NSC and the Vice President's Office.

On Jan. 28, 2003, over the objections of the CIA and State, the famous 16 words about Niger's uranium were used in President Bush's State of the Union address justifying an attack on Iraq: "The British government has learned that Saddam Hussein recently sought significant quantities of uranium from Africa." Both the British and American governments had actually obtained the report from the Italians, who had asked that they not be identified as the source. The UN's International Atomic Energy Agency also looked at the documents shortly after Bush spoke and pronounced them crude forgeries.

President Bush soon stopped referring to the Niger uranium, but Vice President Cheney continued to insist that Iraq was seeking nuclear weapons.

The question remains: who forged the documents? The available evidence suggests that two candidates had access and motive: SISMI and the Pentagon's Office of Special Plans.

In January 2001, there was a break-in at the Niger Embassy in Rome. Documents were stolen but no valuables. The break-in was subsequently connected to, among others, Rocco Martino, who later provided the dossier to *Panorama*. Italian investigators now believe that Martino, with SISMI acquiescence, originally created a Niger dossier in an attempt to sell it to the French, who were managing the uranium concession in Niger and were concerned about unauthorized mining. Martino has since admitted to the *Financial Times* that both the Italian and American governments were behind the eventual forgery of the full Niger dossier as part of a disinformation operation. The authentic documents that were stolen were bunched with the Niger uranium forgeries, using authentic letterhead and Niger Embassy stamps. By mixing the papers, the stolen documents were intended to establish the authenticity of the forgeries.

At this point, any American connection to the actual forgeries remains unsubstantiated, though the OSP at a minimum connived to circumvent established procedures to present the information directly to receptive policy makers in the White House. But if the OSP is more deeply involved, Michael Ledeen, who denies any connection with the Niger documents, would have been a logical intermediary in co-ordinating the falsification of the documents and their surfacing, as he was both a Pentagon contractor and was frequently in Italy. He could have easily been assisted by ex-CIA friends from Iran-Contra days, including a former Chief of Station from Rome, who, like Ledeen, was also a consultant for the Pentagon and the Iraqi National Congress.

It would have been extremely convenient for the administration, struggling to explain why Iraq was a threat, to be able to produce information from an unimpeachable "foreign intelligence source" to confirm the Iraqi worst-case.

The possible forgery of the information by Defense Department employees would explain the viciousness of the attack on Valerie Plame and her husband. Wilson, when he denounced the forgeries in the *New York Times* in July 2003, turned an issue in which there was little public interest into something much bigger. The investigation continues, but the campaign against this lone detractor suggests that the administration was concerned about something far weightier than his critical op-ed. ■

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The Weekly Standard's War

Murdoch's mag stands athwart history yelling, "Attack!"

By Scott McConnell

AS THE *Weekly Standard* celebrates its 10th birthday, it may be time to ask whether America has ever seen a more successful political magazine. Many have been more widely read, profitable, amusing, or brilliant. But in terms of actually changing the world and shaping the course of history, what contemporary magazine rivals the *Standard*? Even if you believe that the change has been much for the worse, the *Standard*'s record of success in its own terms is formidable.

At the time of the *Standard*'s founding in 1995, there was considerable speculation among neoconservatives over whether the movement had run its course. In "Neoconservatism: A Eulogy," Norman Podhoretz argued that neoconservatism had effectively put itself out of business by winning on its two major battle fronts: over communism and the residue of the 1960s counterculture. In the process, it had injected itself into the main body of American conservatism to such a degree that it was no longer particularly distinct from it. The eulogy was not a lamentation, more an appreciation of a job well done.

But while there was something to the Podhoretz argument, the American Right in 1995 did not have a neoconnish feel. Newt Gingrich and the new Congress were the center of gravity; Rush Limbaugh was a far more important figure than Bill Kristol; the issues that most agitated the Right, gays in the military and Whitewater, were either the province of religious and social conservatives or committed Republican partisans.

On other national issues, neocons were either uncertain or not on the cutting edge. Charles Murray's 1994 bestseller *The Bell Curve*, which argued that IQ was hereditarily based and was increasingly and ineluctably correlated with career success and life outcomes, was the most discussed and controversial book on the Right, but neocons were split over whether to distance themselves from it or quietly embrace at least some of its analyses. Immigration, already an issue of intense popular concern in California, was a key cause for *National Review*, the oldest and most popular magazine on the Right. But most neoconservatives deplored the immigration-reform impulse, with many claiming to see in it an echo of the restrictionists of the 1920s, whose legislation had the (obviously unintended) result of closing America's door to Jewish refugees a decade later.

Foreign policy, which had been a prime unifier of the Right during the Cold War, was on the back burner. Norman Podhoretz's *Commentary* had been waging a lonely battle against the Oslo peace process (a track leading to a Palestinian state in Gaza and the West Bank), but its position was very much in the minority among both foreign-affairs experts and American Jews. In the quarterlies, foreign-policy specialists debated America's role in the post-Cold War world, but it was hard for most newspaper readers to keep up with obscure struggles on the Balkans or complicated debate about NATO expansion. America, it seemed, had no real enemies. Thus in 1995, it could be rightly claimed that the original neoconservative movement had spawned a successor generation, even two. But it was not clear what that generation's role would be, if any.

Enter the *Weekly Standard*—edited principally by William Kristol, a genial and sharp son of an eminent neoconservative family—which arrived on the scene thanks to a $3 million annual subsidy from Rupert Murdoch. It is not always understood beyond the world of journalism that political opinion magazines almost invariably lose money—sometimes a lot of it. The deficits are usually made up by their owners and subscribers' contributions, some quite substantial. *Commentary* was supported for most of its life by the American Jewish Committee and now has a publication committee of formidably wealthy people. William F. Buckley's *National Review* always had angels; Buckley once answered a query about when his magazine would be profitable by saying, "You don't expect the Church to make a profit, do you?" The venerable *Nation*, at the time of the *Standard*'s founding, had an annual deficit of roughly $500,000, made up by owner Arthur Carter. The prestigious *Atlantic Monthly* reportedly loses between $4 and $8 million a year.

That said, while the *Standard*'s reported subsidy was gigantic for a small ideological niche magazine, if Rupert Murdoch's purpose was to make things happen in Washington and in the world, he could not have leveraged it

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