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## Rove And That Memo: True Irony

by Michael in New York on [7/21/2005 01:35:00 PM](#)

Rove is back on the front page of the Washington Post today, as John posted below. The story focuses on the fact that investigators believe this memo is the source of knowledge used to smear Joseph Wilson and expose his covert operative wife. The telling detail is that anyone who looked at it would have KNOWN the info was classified and not to be revealed.

But the irony I love is that anyone actually READING the memo would know Bush lied in the State of the Union address.

Almost all of the memo is devoted to describing why State Department intelligence experts did not believe claims that Saddam Hussein had in the recent past sought to purchase uranium from Niger. Only two sentences in the seven-sentence paragraph mention Wilson's wife....

The material in the memo about Wilson's wife was based on **notes taken by an INR analyst who attended a Feb. 19, 2002, meeting at the CIA** where Wilson's intelligence-gathering trip to Niger was discussed.

The memo was drafted June 10, 2003, for Undersecretary of State Marc Grossman, who asked to be brought up to date on INR's opposition to the White House view that Hussein was trying to buy uranium in Africa.

The description of Wilson's wife and her role in the Feb. 19, 2002, meeting at the CIA was considered "a footnote" in a background paragraph in the memo, according to an official who was aware of the process.

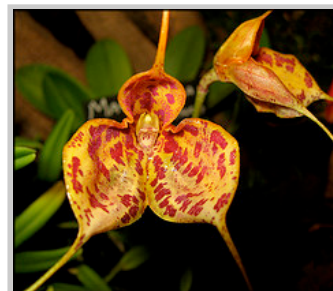
It records that the INR analyst at the meeting **opposed Wilson's trip to Niger because the State Department, through other inquiries, already had disproved the allegation that Iraq was seeking uranium from Niger.**

Attached to the INR memo were the notes taken by the senior INR analyst who attended the 2002 meeting at the CIA.

So even before the first of THREE separate investigations were launched by the Bush administration, the State Dept. had already dismissed the rumour that Hussein had tried to buy uranium in Niger as without merit. Think about that. A rumour -- based on poorly forged documents that the Hardy Boys could have exposed in five minutes -- pops up overseas. The State Dept. investigates and realizes there is absolutely no evidence to back it up -- it ain't even worth investigating. Bush is desperate for "proof" so he can justify going to war and sends the esteemed Joseph Wilson (praised by Bush's father as a "hero" and eminently qualified for the task) to check it out anyway. Wilson comes back and says it isn't true. They launch a second investigation -- still no evidence. They launch a THIRD investigation. Nope -- nothing, nada to back up a shaky rumour the State Dept. had already dismissed as meaningless.

Bush tries to insert it into a speech anyway -- this inflammatory claim that a foreign power is trying to obtain nuclear weapons-grade material that he HAS ABSOLUTELY NO EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT. The CIA strenuously objects and gets the claim removed. But then Bush goes ahead and makes the claim anyway in his State of the Union address and the American people believe he speaks the truth. Meanwhile, the Downing Street Memo -- minutes of a meeting with

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