

EXPRESSING CONDOLENCES TO
THE SENATOR FROM NORTH
CAROLINA

Mr. DASCHLE. Madam President, over the last couple of days, the distinguished Presiding Officer lost her mother. I know I speak for all of us in the Senate, Republicans and Democrats alike, expressing our heartfelt sympathy. Our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family.

HUSSEIN'S WEAPONS OF MASS
DESTRUCTION

Mr. DASCHLE. Madam President, I wanted to say a couple of words today with regard to an article that appeared on the front page of the New York Times entitled "Ex-Inspector Says C.I.A. Missed Iraqi Arms Chaos."

I ask unanimous consent that the article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the New York Times, Jan. 25, 2004]

EX-INSPECTOR SAYS C.I.A. MISSED IRAQI
ARMS CHAOS

(By James Risen)

WASHINGTON, Jan. 25.—Americans intelligence agencies failed to detect that Iraq's unconventional weapons programs were in a state of disarray in recent years under the increasingly erratic leadership of Saddam Hussein, the C.I.A.'s former chief weapons inspector said in an interview late Saturday.

The inspector, David A. Kay, who led the government's efforts to find evidence of Iraq's illicit weapons programs until he resigned on Friday, said the C.I.A. and other intelligence agencies did not realize that Iraqi scientists had presented ambitious but fanciful weapons programs to Mr. Hussein and had then used the money for other purposes.

Dr. Kay also reported that Iraq attempted to revive its efforts to develop nuclear weapons in 2000 and 2001, but never got as far toward making a bomb as Iran and Libya did.

He said Baghdad was actively working to produce a biological weapon using the poison ricin until the American invasion last March. But in general, Dr. Kay said, the C.I.A. and other agencies failed to recognize that Iraq had all but abandoned its efforts to produce large quantities of chemical or biological weapons after the first Persian Gulf war, in 1991.

From interviews with Iraqi scientists and other sources, he said, his team learned that sometime around 1997 and 1998, Iraq plunged into what he called a "vortex of corruption," when government activities began to spin out of control because an increasingly isolated and fantasy-riven Saddam Hussein had insisted on personally authorizing major projects without input from others.

After the onset of this "dark ages," Dr. Kay said, Iraqi scientists realized they could go directly to Mr. Hussein and present fanciful plans for weapons programs, and receive approval and large amounts of money. Whatever was left of an effective weapons capability, he said, was largely subsumed into corrupt money-raising schemes by scientists skilled in the arts of lying and surviving in a fevered police state.

"The whole thing shifted from directed programs to a corrupted process," Dr. Kay said. "The regime was no longer in control; it was like a death spiral. Saddam was self-directing projects that were not vetted by

anyone else. The scientists were able to fake programs."

In interviews after he was captured, Tariq Aziz, the former deputy prime minister, told Dr. Kay that Mr. Hussein had become increasingly divorced from reality during the last two years of his rule. Mr. Hussein would send Mr. Aziz manuscripts of novels he was writing, even as the American-led coalition was gearing up for war, Dr. Kay said.

Dr. Kay said the fundamental errors in pre-war intelligence assessments were so grave that he would recommend that the Central Intelligence Agency and other organizations overhaul their intelligence collection and analytical efforts.

Dr. Kay said analysts had come to him, "almost in tears, saying they felt so badly that we weren't finding what they had thought we were going to find—I have had analysts apologizing for reaching the conclusions that they did."

In response to Dr. Kay's comments, an intelligence official said Sunday that while some prewar assessments may have been wrong, "it is premature to say that the intelligence community's judgments were completely wrong or largely wrong—there are still a lot of answers we need." The official added, however, that the C.I.A. had already begun an internal review to determine whether its analytical processes were sound.

Dr. Kay said that based on his team's interviews with Iraqi scientists, reviews of Iraqi documents and examinations of facilities and other materials, the administration was also almost certainly wrong in its prewar belief that Iraq had any significant stockpiles of illicit weapons.

"I'm personally convinced that there were not large stockpiles of newly produced weapons of mass destruction," Dr. Kay said. "We don't find the people, the documents or the physical plants that you would expect to find if the production was going on."

"I think they gradually reduced stockpiles throughout the 1990's. Somewhere in the mid-1990's, the large chemical overhang of existing stockpiles was eliminated."

While it is possible Iraq kept developing "test amounts" of chemical weapons and was working on improved methods of production, he said, the evidence is strong that "they did not produce large amounts of chemical weapons throughout the 1990's."

Regarding biological weapons, he said there was evidence that the Iraqis continued research and development "right up until the end" to improve their ability to produce ricin. "They were mostly researching better methods for weaponization," Dr. Kay said. "They were maintaining an infrastructure, but they didn't have large-scale production under way."

He added that Iraq did make an effort to restart its nuclear weapons program in 2000 and 2001, but that the evidence suggested that the program was rudimentary at best and would have taken years to rebuild, after being largely abandoned in the 1990's. "There was a restart of the nuclear program," he said. "But the surprising thing is that if you compare it to what we now know about Iran and Libya, the Iraqi program was never as advanced," Dr. Kay said.

Dr. Kay said Iraq had also maintained an active ballistic missile program that was receiving significant foreign assistance until the start of the American invasion. He said it appeared that money was put back into the nuclear weapons program to restart the effort in part because the Iraqi realized they needed some kind of payload for their new rockets.

While he urged that the hunt should continue in Iraq, he said continue in Iraq, he said he believed "85 percent of the significant things" have already been uncovered,

and cautioned that severe looting in Iraq after Mr. Hussein was toppled in April had led to the loss of many crucial documents and other materials. That means it will be virtually impossible to ever get a complete picture of what Iraq was up to before the war, he added.

"There is going to be an irreducible level of ambiguity because of all the looting," Dr. Kay said.

Dr. Kay said he believed that Iraq was a danger to the world, but not the same threat that the Bush administration detailed.

"We know that terrorists were passing through Iraq," he said. "And now we know that there was little control over Iraq's weapons capabilities. I think it shows that Iraq was a very dangerous place. The country had the technology, the ability to produce, and there were terrorist groups passing through the country—and no central control."

But Dr. Kay said the C.I.A. missed the significance of the chaos in the leadership and had no idea how badly that chaos had corrupted Iraq's weapons capabilities or the threat it raised of loose scientific knowledge being handed over to terrorists. "The system became so corrupt, and we missed that," he said.

C.I.A. MISSED SIGNS OF CHAOS

He said it now appeared that Iraq had abandoned the production of illicit weapons and largely eliminated its stockpiles in the 1990's in large part because of Baghdad's concerns about the United Nations weapons inspection process. He said Iraqi scientists and documents show that Baghdad was far more concerned about United Nations inspections than Washington had ever realized.

"The Iraqis say that they believed that Unscop was more effective, and they didn't want to get caught," Dr. Kay said, using an acronym for the inspection program, the United Nations Special Commission.

The Iraqis also feared the disclosures that would come from the 1995 defection of Hussein Kamel, Mr. Hussein's son-in-law, who had helped run the weapons programs. Dr. Kay said one Iraqi document that had been found showed the extent to which the Iraqis believed that Mr. Kamel's defection would hamper any efforts to continue weapons programs.

In addition, Dr. Kay said, it is now clear that an American bombing campaign against Iraq in 1998 destroyed much of the remaining infrastructure in chemical weapons programs.

Dr. Kay said his team had uncovered no evidence that Niger had tried to sell uranium to Iraq for its nuclear weapons program. In his State of the Union address in 2003, President Bush reported that British intelligence had determined that Iraq was trying to import uranium from an African nation, and Niger's name was later put forward.

"We found nothing on Niger," Dr. Kay said. He added that there was evidence that someone did approach the Iraqis claiming to be able to sell uranium and diamonds from another African country, but apparently nothing came of the approach. The original reports on Niger have been found to be based on forged documents, and the Bush administration has since backed away from its initial assertions.

Dr. Kay added that there was now a consensus within the United States intelligence community that mobile trailers found in Iraq and initially thought to be laboratories for biological weapons were actually designed to produce hydrogen for weather balloons, or perhaps to produce rocket fuel. While using the trailers for such purposes seems bizarre, Dr. Kay said, "Iraq was doing a lot of nonsensical things" under Mr. Hussein.