

**STATEMENT OF GEORGE J. TENET
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April 1, 2005**

I learned for the first time from the Silberman-Robb Commission the account of a conversation that allegedly occurred in late September or October of 2002 between a CIA Directorate of Operations Division Chief and the representative of a foreign service regarding a CIA request to secure direct access to Curveball.

The representative of the foreign service, it is now reported, responded to CIA's division chief responsible for relations with the foreign service with words to the effect of "You do not want to see him (Curveball) because he's crazy. Speaking to him would be "a waste of time." The representative reportedly went on to say that his service was not sure whether Curveball was telling the truth; that he had serious doubts about Curveball's mental stability and reliability; and that Curveball had had a nervous breakdown. Further the representative of the foreign service is said to have worried that Curveball was "a fabricator". The representative reportedly cautioned the CIA division chief that the foreign service would publicly and officially deny these views if pressed, because they did not wish to be embarrassed.

It is both stunning and deeply disturbing that this information, if true, was never brought forward to me by anyone in the course of the following events.

1. The coordination and publication of a classified National Intelligence Estimate
2. The declassification and publication of the NIE's key judgments and findings
3. The production and publication of an unclassified White Paper on Iraq's WMD capabilities
4. The preparation of testimonies both closed and open before the Senate Intelligence, Foreign Relations and Armed Services Committees
5. The briefings provided to members of Congress in which Curveball's information regarding Iraq's mobile BW production capability was cited
6. The preparation of Secretary Powell's speech to the United Nations
7. The White Paper CIA and DIA issued in May of 2003 regarding the trailer found in Iraq
8. CIA's internal inquiry into Iraq WMD directed by the Deputy Director of Intelligence
9. My speech at Georgetown University in February of 2004 and subsequent appearance before the Senate Intelligence Committee in closed session on March 4, 2004

In all of these formal presentations, Iraq's ability to produce biological weapons in the trailers cited by Curveball was cited in one way or another. At no time did anyone in the

analytic or operational chain of command come forward to tell me of the specific information imparted by the representative of a foreign service to the CIA division chief in late September or October of 2002.

The most important systemic point to make is that the information reportedly received in late September or October of 2002 should have been immediately and formally disseminated as a matter of record in a report which would have alerted intelligence and policy officials to the potential problem with Curveball.

In addition, a second corresponding formal report should have been immediately disseminated across the intelligence and policy communities to analysts and policy makers who had received previous Curveball reporting alerting them to the fact that Curveball's reliability had been called into question by a credible source—in this case a representative of the intelligence service handling curveball who expressed at least the worry that Curveball was a "fabricator".

In combination, the dissemination of these two reports would have immediately alerted experts doing the work on Iraq WMD issues across the intelligence community to a problem requiring further resolution.

These reports would have focused senior leadership attention on dealing with the foreign government in question in a timely manner. No such reports were disseminated, nor do I recall the issue being brought to my attention.

The reports – which were not issued - are how our system is supposed to work. If it had worked in this standard manner, we would not today be relying on the recollection of individuals as to what may or may have not been said or what did or did not happen.

Because formal reports were apparently not disseminated, the gravity of the information communicated to CIA in late September or October of 2002 was never communicated effectively and formally to the broadest range of officials needing to know. The information provided by the representative of the foreign service, was certainly never communicated to me.

In preparation for Secretary Powell's speech before the United Nations, a team of Intelligence Community professionals, including members of Secretary Powell's team spent three days and nights at CIA Headquarters reviewing virtually every line of the speech and taking out many assertions in the draft which we did not believe rested on a solid foundation of intelligence.

Every intelligence community agency was represented as well as the relevant components of CIA. CIA's Associate Deputy Director for Intelligence/Strategic Programs (ADDI/SP) ran the process of vetting every assertion made in the draft speech through all of the community's relevant collection and analytic components.

During the three days at CIA headquarters, nobody involved in the coordination of the speech or at CIA raised concerns to me, the Secretary of State, or the ADDI/SP regarding the language or the graphics intended to be used by Secretary Powell based on Curveball's reporting.

Everyone participating in this process understood that if there were any questions at all regarding the basis for any of the statements in the speech, they were to be immediately removed from the speech. Our intent was reflected by the actions taken to excise numerous portions of the speech to ensure that Secretary Powell was absolutely on solid ground.

Finally, before we left CIA headquarters for New York, we sought to ensure that foreign governments formally cleared on any data derived from their sources prior to the inclusion of their data in the speech. The responsible foreign government – the same government which allegedly said four months earlier that Curveball might be a fabricator -- formally cleared our use of the Curveball information.

Notwithstanding the importance of this formal clearance, nobody came forward to tell me, or to the best of my knowledge, anybody else, that even though the responsible foreign government had formally cleared on the text of Secretary Powell's speech, that in fact the same foreign government had serious concerns about Curveball's reliability, worried that he was a "fabricator" but would in fact publicly and officially deny these concerns for fear of being embarrassed.

This was an important contradiction that should have been surfaced immediately at CIA headquarters. It never happened. Given the careful attention we were giving the speech, we would have never allowed the Curveball data to be used by Secretary Powell with the full knowledge of what the foreign service representative allegedly told a CIA representative in September or October of 2002.

The Phone Call

My strong recollection is that I did not speak to the CIA division chief between 12 and 1 am in the early morning, as the report suggests, before Secretary Powell's speech. From approximately 11pm until 2am, I was at my command post in my hotel in New York with a senior analyst from the DCI's Counterterrorist Center reviewing the final text of Secretary Powell's speech regarding Iraq and terrorism. We initiated numerous phone calls to CIA's Operations Center in Langley Virginia seeking to contact Mr. Larry Wilkerson, Secretary Powell's Chief of Staff, who was staying at another hotel in New York. We were seeking to get a final version of the terrorism section for final review.

Earlier in the day, mid to late afternoon, while reviewing the Powell speech at USUN, I do recall being told that a different foreign government had not yet provided clearance for Secretary Powell to use some of its most important intelligence reporting. This reporting had nothing to do with the Iraqi mobile BW story.

I initiated a call to the CIA division chief in question in the late afternoon or early evening and well before Secretary Powell adjourned for the evening (around 8 pm) asking the division chief to have the senior representative of that foreign service in Washington call me immediately to provide the required clearance.

The representative returned my call promptly with the necessary clearance.

The phone call to the CIA division chief had nothing to do with the Iraqi mobile BW issue. I have absolutely no recollection of the division chief saying anything to me with regard to problems with the foreign reporting. In any case, that was not the context of my call.

Post Speech Events

It is equally important to review what happened after the Powell speech. At no time subsequent to Secretary Powell's presentation did anyone come forward in the analytic or operational chain of command to tell me that there serious problems regarding what Secretary Powell had to say regarding Iraq's mobile BW capability based on Curveball's reporting. The stunning information allegedly in our possession since late September or October of 2002 was never surfaced to me in the days, weeks, and months subsequent to Secretary Powell speech.

There could have been no doubt in anyone's mind regarding the weight attached to Curveball's reporting in Secretary Powell's speech to the world and yet nobody came forward to say there is a serious problem with Curveball or that we have been told by the foreign representative of the service handling him that there are worries that he is a "fabricator".

May 2003 White Paper

In April of 2003, U.S. forces found a mobile trailer that appeared initially to closely resemble the trailer Curveball told us he had worked on. The CIA and DIA put out a declassified White Paper on our judgments regarding the trailer on May 28, 2003 entitled "Iraqi Mobile Biological Warfare Production Plants" which received extensive media coverage.

The paper in its overview section said that "coalition forces have uncovered the strongest evidence to date that Iraq was hiding a biological warfare program". It went on to say: "Our analysis of the mobile production plant found in April indicates the layout and equipment provided by the chemical engineer who has direct knowledge of Iraq's mobile BW program. The source recognized pictures of this trailer among photographs of unrelated equipment, as a mobile BW production plant similar to the one he managed, even pointing out specific pieces of equipment that were installed on his unit".

The production of this White Paper received enormous scrutiny inside the CIA and the Intelligence Community both in Washington and in Iraq.

We went to the foreign government in question to put pictures in front of Curveball. Yet, nobody came forward to say to me, or to the best of my knowledge to the team drafting the White Paper, to say that it would be a feckless exercise to do so because we have been told by the foreign representative of that government, as early as late September or October of 2002 of the concern that Curveball was a fabricator. Likewise, nobody came forward to say it would be a mistake to publish a paper that was based on the corroboration of a possible fabricator.

Soon after the invasion of Iraq, I began to chair meetings three times a week on the current progress of the military campaign and intelligence operations inside Iraq. Present at most meetings were senior agency officials representing all of our components, (DDI, DDO, and DDS&T) in addition to the ADCI for collection and the ADCI for Military support.

Once the ISG had been transferred to DCI control under the leadership of David Kay, Iraqi WMD issues were formally added to the agenda of these meeting. I recall that by the summer or fall of 2003, we began to learn about discrepancies in Curveball's reporting. I can recall no point during the discussion of these discrepancies where anybody said that what were learning corroborated what we had been told by the foreign service representative in late September or October of 2002.

Once discrepancies in Curveball's reporting began to accumulate, in the fall or later in 2003, I personally initiated a call to my counterpart, the chief of the foreign service in question requesting direct access to Curveball. At no point in preparation for this called was I apprised of what we supposedly had learned from the foreign service representative in late September or October of 2002.

I delivered a major speech at Georgetown University in February of 2004 entitled "Iraq and Weapons of Mass Destruction". The speech received extensive coverage in the media. I talked about the trailers that had been discovered in Iraq the previous summer and the fact that we had initially concluded that they resembled trailers described by human source for mobile biological agent. I talked about discrepancies in some claims made by human sources about mobile biological weapons production before the war and the fact that we lacked direct access to the most important source on the question. Yet at no point during extensive preparation and coordination of the speech within CIA and the National Intelligence Council was I told of the information that we now hear resided within CIA as early as late September or October of 2002, particularly the worry of the foreign service in question that Curveball was a fabricator.

I recall of learning, for the first time either in preparation of the Georgetown speech or soon thereafter of emails expressing concern by a detailee who met with Curveball. This occurred in the context of being briefed by a senior analyst and the team conducting an

internal review of all our production on Iraq and WMD at the direction of the Deputy Director of Intelligence. In the course of spending many hours being personally briefed by the team, at no time was the information provided to CIA in late September or October of 2002 ever surfaced. Indeed, I have no knowledge that this information was ever shared with the review team.

Finally, on March 2, 2004, I testified before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence in the context of their ongoing investigation into Iraq's WMD programs. I included a lengthy discussion about Curveball. Again during the extensive coordination and preparation of a very important piece of testimony, nobody informed me that beyond the discrepancies we began discovering during the summer of 2003 with regard to Curveball, that there were far more fundamental concerns residing within CIA coming from the relevant foreign intelligence service dating back to late September or October of 2002.

Conclusion

It is deeply troubling to me that there was information apparently available within CIA as of late September or October of 2002 indicating that Curveball may have been a fabricator. There is nothing more serious or galvanizing in the intelligence business than associating the word fabricator with a human source. The assignment of the term "fabricator" to a human source by an official of the foreign service handling Curveball should have immediately prompted formal reporting up the chain of command to the DDO, DDCI and DCI.

It should have prompted the immediate formal dissemination of reports across the intelligence community and to policy officials, to all who would immediately understand the importance of the information provided by the foreign service official—and to all the recipients of Curveball's previous reporting to alert them to the potential problems with Curveball's bona fides.

What is even more troubling is that given the extensive coordination involved in this very same time period, in the publication of an important National Intelligence Estimate, White Paper, testimony to Congressional Committees and briefings to Members of Congress that nobody came forward with information that would have allowed us to either eliminate, modify, or more carefully caveat our judgments based on the information that Curveball provided.

Certainly the clearance provided by the foreign government in question, allowing the use of Curveball's material in Secretary Powell's speech should have immediately surfaced the obvious contradiction of the clearance when juxtaposed with what we had learned from the same government's representative in late September or October of 2002. Certainly, the drafting and coordination of a prominent White Paper in May of 2003 on the mobile trailer we found in Iraq should have prompted the disclosure of the contradictory information we already had in our possession.

My recollection of both the context and substance of the conversation with the Division chief is far different from the one he recollects. It is simply wrong for anyone to intimate that I was at any point in time put on notice that Curveball was probably a fabricator.

This is not simply a case about a snapshot in time that focuses only on Secretary Powell's speech. From October 2002 through the Powell speech and beyond, I was never given information that would have allowed me to act urgently to: modify the national intelligence estimate as it was being produced, or to direct the preparation of a Memorandum to the recipients of the NIE after its production thereby altering our judgments because of the suspect nature of Curveball's information, modify our White Paper, notify the President and Members of Congress. I would have certainly done all of these things.

My Deputy, John McLaughlin, is a man known throughout his 32 year career for his professional discipline and meticulous care in evaluating the most difficult of issues. I am absolutely confident that if he had been briefed on the concerns regarding Curveball, he would have done whatever was necessary to ensure that unreliable information was not included in important products such as the Secretary of State's speech.