

David Albright's Cooperation with the IAEA Action Team

David Albright cooperated with the IAEA Action Team from 1992 until 1997. His focus was on analyzing Iraq's pre-1991 nuclear weapons program and its illicit procurement for its gas centrifuge program. In June 1996, he was the first non-governmental inspector of the Iraqi nuclear program.

Albright traveled to Vienna many times to review documents and other information. His point of contact and sponsor in his work was Maurizio Zifferero, the Leader of IAEA Action Team. He invited David to go to Iraq in 1996 as part of a small inspection mission he was leading. This visit was part of the process of evaluating Iraq's Draft Full, Final, Complete Declaration (FFCD) about its pre-1991 nuclear weapons program. Iraq had produced the first draft of this document in the late winter of 1996, and Zifferero provided Albright the complete document for review.

After that inspection, Albright continued to assess subsequent FFCDs through the fall of 1996 and the winter of 1997. Zifferero tragically died of cancer in 1997. Following his death ISIS provided one analyst to assess a set of non-sensitive Iraqi documents in Vienna. ISIS and Albright continued to support the Action Team and Zifferero's successor Garry Dillon.

EMIS

Albright reviewed documents seized by the IAEA Action Team in the summer of 1991 as translations became available with a focus on the extensive collection of documents regarding Iraq's electromagnetic isotope separation (EMIS) program. At the time, the Action Team employed only a handful of people, and they did not have time to review these documents. This staff shortage contributed to Zifferero giving Albright approval to review and assess these documents.

ISIS organized the translation of some of these EMIS documents, because the official translation process was slow and cumbersome. When Albright raised the problem with a senior Department of Energy official, steps were taken to apply more resources to this critical area.

Albright's analysis included reviewing Action Team internal EMIS inspection reports and interviews produced during the summer of 1991. The inspectors had assembled these reports quickly, and they contained minimal, sometimes conflicting or incomplete information regarding the EMIS program. The seized documents from Iraq allowed a more complete and accurate picture of this program, which produced Iraq's only indigenously produced HEU.

During the 1996 inspection, Albright interviewed the leadership of the EMIS team, including Jaffar Dhia Jaffar and his deputies. Although Iraq's draft FFCD contained considerable technical detail about the EMIS program, it contained omissions, with many aspects of the program unclear or missing. Albright was one team member with

comprehensive knowledge of the EMIS program and able to play a leading role in questioning the Iraqis, who provided significant new information and documents.

After the inspection, he continued reviewing subsequent FFCDs and producing assessments of the EMIS program. With Zifferero's approval, he published part of this analysis in a Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) book.

Centrifuge

Albright originally developed a close relationship with Zifferero as a result of interviewing Bruno Stemmler in Munich in 1991 and 1992. Stemmler, a German centrifuge expert, was a key supplier of classified centrifuge drawings and documents to the Iraqi gas centrifuge program. Despite hiding elements of his relationship with Iraq, Stemmler revealed new aspects of that program to Albright during a dozen interviews. At the time, Iraq was seeking to conceal parts of this program from UN inspectors, including its technology suppliers, the location of its key R&D facility, its progress, and the former head of the program, Mahdi Obeidi.

Robert Kelley, then Deputy of the Action Team, invited Albright to go on an inspection in 1993 to attempt to locate a secret centrifuge R&D facility located in Baghdad, which Stemmler had visited in 1988 (he could not remember its location as Iraqi officials at the time had driven him there in a car with curtains drawn). Stemmler did recall some details from the surroundings making one likely candidate the Rashdiya facility. Albright wanted to check Stemmler's descriptions of the surroundings against those of the Rashdiya site. The trip was vetoed by Zifferero at the time because Albright was from a NGO and there was no precedent for such participation. This changed a few years later as a result of action by UNSCOM to include select non-governmental inspectors. During the 1996 inspection, senior Iraqi centrifuge experts gave Albright a tour of the Rashdiya facility and briefed him on Stemmler's visit and other activities at the site.

During the 1996 inspection, Albright also participated in questioning the Iraqis about their centrifuge program, including an interview with Obeidi. This effort was part of reviewing the sections of the draft FFCD on gas centrifuges. After this inspection, Zifferero invited Albright to comment on subsequent FFCDs.

On related trips to IAEA headquarters in Vienna, Albright reviewed numerous centrifuge related documents, with a special focus on Iraq's procurement activities. He persuaded Zifferero to organize a meeting with Karl Heinz Schaap's lawyer in Augsburg Germany to inquire about visiting Schaap, then in hiding from German authorities. Schaap was also a key supplier to Iraq's gas centrifuge program. Results of this work are on the ISIS website, www.exportcontrols.org.