Chronicle of a Leak

When Vice President Dick Cheney asked the C.I.A. in February 2002 for more information on reports of sales of African uranium to Iraq, he inadvertently set up a chain of events that would lead to controversy over a reference in President Bush’s 2003 State of the Union speech, start a criminal investigation of a leak and lead to the current scrutiny of the role of Karl Rove, the White House political adviser.

**FEB. 2002** Former Ambassador Joseph C. Wilson IV travels to Niger at the request of the C.I.A., where his wife, Valerie, works.

**JAN. 28, 2003** President Bush, in the State of the Union speech, declares: “The British government has learned that Saddam Hussein recently sought significant quantities of uranium from Africa.”


**JULY 8, 2003** Mr. Rove discusses Mr. Wilson’s trip and the role of Mr. Wilson’s wife with the columnist Robert D. Novak.

**JULY 11, 2003** Mr. Rove discusses the Wilsons with Time magazine writer Matthew Cooper.

**JULY 14, 2003** Mr. Novak’s column reveals that Mr. Wilson’s wife works for the C.I.A. as “an agency operative on weapons of mass destruction,” citing “two senior administration officials.”

**SEPT. 29, 2003** Scott McClellan, the White House press secretary, says it is “simply not true” that Mr. Rove was involved in the leak and that any official who leaked classified information “would no longer be in this administration.”