

THE INCREDIBLE STORY OF MAHDI OBEIDI, CONCLUSION

Summary: In this series of posts, I examine somefunkiness regarding the story of Mahdi Obeidi, the Iraqi nuclearscientist who claimed to have buried a nuclear centrifuge under hisrose plant. In part one, I lay out a timeline for his story. Parts two and three examine some problems with the materials he turned over. Part four questions the stories Obeidi and Pitzer told about their meeting. Part five looks the WaPo articlethat is a central prop in Obeidi's story. Part six examines some of the tensions within the intelligenceagencies dealing with Obeidi. This post summarizes the evidence presented in the other posts, then speculates on what may have actually happened.

Finally! My much-delayed conclusion to my series on Mahdi Obeidi. In this post, I'll review everything I've presented before (note, I'm not putting links for stuff covered earlier—if you want a particular link, ask me for it in the comments), then provide two different speculative scenarios for what might really have happened. As I've been saying throughout this series, I don't think I've disproven the story of Mahdi Obeidi. I think his story—as told—is possible. But I do think it *improbable*.

I speculate below that one of two things happened with the Obeidi story. I think it possible that Obeidi had something less spectacular to turn over, and that the CIA simply fluffed up the story to serve their needs. But I also think it possible that the the CIA contacted Obeidi during the war, encouraged him to defect, had him contact Pitzer as his first intelligence contact, then made up the centrifuge and blueprint story out of thin air. If either scenario were true, it would suggest one of the Bush Administration's biggest pieces of proof of Saddam's ongoing intent was

completely made up. But before I flesh out these scenarios, let me lay out the evidence I've given so far.