

Fitzgerald expanded scope of inquiry in 2004 to probe Niger forgeries

By [Jason Leopold](#)

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The special prosecutor investigating the outing of a covert CIA agent expanded his probe last year to include intelligence information used by the Bush administration claiming that Iraq tried to purchase yellow-cake uranium from Niger.

According to a court filing posted on the website of Patrick Fitzgerald, the special prosecutor investigating who leaked the name of undercover CIA agent to reporters, was interested in questioning New York Times reporter Judith Miller about the CIA agent or whether she discussed Iraq's alleged efforts to purchase uranium from Niger.

"On August 12 and August 20, 2004, grand jury subpoenas were issued to reporter Judith Miller and her employer, the New York Times, seeking documents and testimony related to "conversations between Miller and a specified government official occurring between on or about July 6, 2003 and on or about July 13, 2003, concerning Valerie Plame Wilson (whether referred to by name or by description) or concerning Iraqi efforts to obtain uranium." the filing made by Fitzgerald last year [states](#).

While many public officials and the media have long believed that Fitzgerald was not only looking into the identity of administration officials that leaked Plame's name to reporters, this is the first time there is information there is confirmation the investigation had expanded to investigate the Niger forgeries.

Sources close to the case said Fitzgerald will empanel a new grand jury and pursue broader conspiracy charges against senior officials inside the Bush administration as well as other people who worked at the State Department, and the National Security Council. Fitzgerald is expected to make an official announcement of his intentions going forward Friday.

NATO sources told United Press International Monday that Fitzgerald's team of investigators has sought and obtained documentation on the forgeries from the Italian government.

According to the [report](#), "Fitzgerald's team has been given the full, and as yet unpublished report of the Italian parliamentary inquiry into the affair, which started when an Italian journalist obtained documents that appeared to show officials of the government of Niger helping to supply the Iraqi regime of Saddam Hussein with Yellowcake uranium.

This claim, which made its way into President Bush's State of the Union address in January, 2003, was based on falsified documents from Niger and was later withdrawn by the White House.

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