

AFTER THE WAR;

Canada Admits Errors in Giving Speedy Entry to Ex-Hussein Aide

The New York Times

May 15, 1991, Wednesday, Late Edition - Final

Copyright 1991 The New York Times Company

Distribution: Foreign Desk

Section: Section A;; Section A; Page 16; Column 5; Foreign Desk; Column 5;

Length: 509 words

Byline: By CLYDE H. FARNSWORTH,

By CLYDE H. FARNSWORTH, Special to The New York Times

Dateline: OTTAWA, May 14

Body

The Canadian Government has acknowledged a series of mistakes that **gave** fast-track immigration privileges to one of the chief apologists of Iraq's President, Saddam Hussein.

The refuge obtained here by Mohammed al-Mashat, Iraq's former Ambassador to Washington and one of the senior members of Iraq's ruling Baath Party, has stirred sharp controversy over the country's immigration procedures.

It has also raised suspicions that the Conservative Government may have speeded Mr. Mashat's **entry** to obtain intelligence to share with the Central Intelligence Agency. Unlike most North Atlantic Treaty Organization countries, **Canada** has no foreign intelligence-gathering bureau and traditionally prides itself on keeping a good distance from the C.I.A.

The suspicions and rumors, combined with a number of critical editorials in Canadian newspapers, have led the Government into making what it says are "embarrassing" disclosures about the breakdown of communications inside two departments that it says allowed Mr. Mashat into the country without notification to anyone in the Cabinet.

'No Espionage Capers'

"Officials failed to insure that ministers were consulted or even informed," said a joint statement by Minister of External Affairs Barbara McDougall and Immigration Minister Bernard Valcourt.

On the question of intelligence sharing, the two ministers insisted that there had been "no espionage capers and no conspiracies by any individual or governmental agency -- either Canadian or foreign -- involved in this case."

John C. Thompson, director of the MacKenzie Institute of Toronto, a research group that studies terrorism, said he was "at a loss to understand" why Mr. Mashat was **given** a visa unless he provided intelligence. He noted that the 60-year-old Iraqi diplomat, who had also served as Ambassador to London, Paris and Vienna, could have been a source of important information about the procurement of foreign military technology by Iraq and its harassment of Iraqi dissidents abroad.

AFTER THE WAR;Canada Admits Errors in Giving Speedy Entry to Ex-Hussein Aide

Mr. Mashat took a month to obtain for himself, his wife and son so-called landed emigrant status, entitling him to work and live in Canada and eventually obtain citizenship. Normally the process takes several years.

In the Vancouver Area

Mr. Mashat is reported to be in the Vancouver area.

According to a Government report published today, the Iraqi diplomat put out feelers about defecting to the Canadians while in Vienna in late February. But an inter-departmental Canadian Government committee rejected defector status for him, based in part on an assessment by the Canadian Security Intelligence Service that he was "not considered a valuable source of intelligence." The intelligence service is a domestic security agency similar to the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Today's report went on to say that his subsequent request for landed emigrant status was expedited because of concern about his safety in Vienna expressed by the Associate Under Secretary of State for External Affairs, Raymond Chretien.

Classification

Language: ENGLISH

Subject: IMMIGRATION (90%); INTELLIGENCE SERVICES (90%); ESPIONAGE (90%); EMBASSIES & CONSULATES (89%); EMIGRATION (89%); INVESTIGATIONS (86%); CITIZENSHIP (78%); IMMIGRATION LAW (78%); STATE DEPARTMENTS & FOREIGN SERVICES (77%); NATIONAL SECURITY (75%); SPECIAL INVESTIGATIVE FORCES (73%); RESEARCH INSTITUTES (64%); LAW ENFORCEMENT (60%); EDITORIALS & OPINIONS (50%); TERRORISM (50%)

Company: CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY (83%); CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY (83%); NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION (57%); NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION (57%)

Organization: CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY (83%); CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY (83%); NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION (57%); NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION (57%); CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY (83%); CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY (83%); NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION (57%); NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION (57%)

Person: SADDAM HUSSEIN (72%)

Geographic: VANCOUVER, BC, CANADA (88%); LONDON, ENGLAND (79%); PARIS, FRANCE (79%); TORONTO, ON, CANADA (58%); BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA (73%); ONTARIO, CANADA (73%); CANADA (97%); IRAQ (95%); UNITED STATES (79%)

Load-Date: May 15, 1991