

The Uranium Coup

A US Congressional delegation happened to be in Niger at the time of the military coup

By [Michael Carmichael](#)

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In yet another odd coincidence, Alan Grayson led a Congressional delegation that just happened to be in Niger at the time of the recent military coup last Thursday that deposed the legitimate elected government of the Uranium-rich nation.

The official story is that the members of Congress were focused on science, technology and humanitarian relief – at the very same time that the military coup was unfolding on the streets of the capital, Niamey.

This intriguing “coincidence” raises the question: Was this Congressional presence during a military coup another instance of a massive intelligence failure or something entirely different?

Niger is a landlocked African country with a population of 15 million mostly Islamic citizens. Niger has a relatively small military that consumes a mere 1.6% of its annual budget.

When the Grayson delegation reached Niamey, the military staged a coup d’etat to displace the elected government of President Tandja Mamadou who had raised some concerns by moves to introduce reforms and revise the constitution as well as to extend his term in office.



Niger is rich in Uranium holding at least 6% of global reserves – a figure that is twice as large as US Uranium deposits. The radioactive mineral constitutes 72% of national exports.

In recent years, foreign corporations have invested billions into the Uranium-driven economy of Niger.

The military coup was allegedly led by a relatively low-level Platoon Commander Salou Djibo who held an official briefing during which he maintained silence about any future return to Niger's constitutional democracy.

Djibo is the now the leader of a 'Supreme Council' of army officials that currently constitutes the military junta governing the Uranium-rich nation.

Following Djibo's coup, the UN promptly condemned the military takeover, and the African Union immediately expelled Niger. France, Niger's former colonial overlord, condemned the coup, but the official American reaction [struck a distinctly different chord](#) when US State Department Spokesman, P. J. Crowley, briefed reporters that President Tandja may have triggered the coup himself by, "trying to extend his mandate."

The simultaneous presence of a US Congressional delegation in a uranium-rich Muslim nation at the time of a right-wing military coup is bound to arouse international scrutiny — especially when official spokesmen in Washington are the sole sources to rationalize — if not defend — the military action against the elected government of Niger.

Grayson is a member of the Science and Technology Committee that has jurisdiction over non-defense (ie. non-military) federal scientific research and development including NASA, FEMA and the Department of Energy. Grayson is a progressive on domestic issues, but he performs disappointingly on foreign policy where Max Blumenthal [has pointed out that he follows the AIPAC line](#) on Israel and the Middle East – because he supported Israel's Operation Cast Lead and a pro-Israel position vis a vis Iran, an Islamic nation currently developing nuclear energy.

At this point in time, no other names of the members of the "Congressional delegation" led by Alan Grayson have been released raising deeper questions about the Uranium Coup.

[Michael Carmichael](#) is the founder of Planetary.

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