

The Inquiry has asked me to provide evidence in response a number of questions on which it requires further information relating to the purpose of the dossier of 24 September 2002 on the Government's assessment of Iraq's WMD capability and on the judgement that production of chemical and biological agents was continuing.

My reply to these questions is set out below in the format requested. I have sought to provide as accurate an account as possible, bearing in mind that almost nine years have elapsed since the events in question. I have been assisted by the fact that three major inquiries have examined the drafting and content of the dossier, including the management of a particularly sensitive intelligence report on the production of chemical and biological agent. In addition to the Hutton Report and the Butler Report, mentioned in the questionnaire, the Intelligence and Security Committee produced in September 2003 a report on Iraqi WMD – Intelligence and Assessments (Cm 5972). Lord Butler's Report also dealt with the purpose of the dossier. The Government accepted its conclusions on its publication and gave details in March 2005 of their implementation, including the handling of particularly sensitive intelligence (Cm 6492).

**Q1: What did you understand the purpose of the dossier to be and how did you gain that understanding?**

**A1:** My understanding of the purpose of the dossier was that it would contribute to the public debate on UK policy towards Iraq by providing an overview of Iraq's WMD capabilities by means of an account of its past programmes and an assessment of its current capabilities. It would also refer to the history of UN inspections and provide a picture of Saddam's Iraq. The core of the document would be an intelligence-led assessment of Iraq's current capabilities. My understanding of its purpose was reinforced by the fact that the preparation of the dossier was supervised by the Chairman of the JIC and drafting was in the hands of the Assessments Staff.

**Q2: What did you say to members of your senior team about the purpose of the dossier?**

**A2:** A briefing document on the WMD capabilities of a number of nations had been in gestation for some time. By Spring 2002 it was focusing on Iraq and by early September 2002 it had begun to take the form in which it was published on 24 September 2002. Throughout, the aim of the dossier was to provide an assessment of Iraq's WMD programmes, in which the focus of the DIS's contribution was to be the intelligence-led assessment of Iraq's current capabilities. I do not recall feeling it necessary specifically to tell members of my senior team that this was its purpose, since it was well known and was clear from the thrust of the various drafts over the period of its preparation.

**Q3: What were you briefed about this report and its source?**

**A3:** The consolidated written response to the draft of the dossier of 16 September 2002 submitted to the Assessments Staff included comments that the judgements concerning the production of CW and BW agent were too strong and should be qualified. Following a meeting held by Julian Miller on 17 September to review the

text of the draft dossier, I was informed by the DIS attendees (see A4 below) that the SIS participant had informed them that particularly sensitive intelligence on the production of chemical and biological agent had very recently been received which supported the formulation in the draft. The DIS representatives reported that Julian Miller had concurred with this and that the SIS representative had informed them that the distribution of this intelligence would be strictly limited ('compartmented'). He had added that SIS would be in touch later in the day to confirm this (see A12).

NOTE: classification procedures include provision for the Agencies to compartment particularly sensitive intelligence to safeguard its content or for source protection purposes by strictly limiting access to it.

**Q4: By whom was this brief provided?**

**A4:** The brief was provided orally by the DIS representatives immediately on their return from the meeting. They were the Head of the Proliferation Studies branch and the Head of the WMD Production branch of the Global Issues Directorate which was co-ordinating DIS responses to the drafts of the dossier. I interrupted a meeting which I was holding with John Cunningham (Director of Global Issues) and Paul Roper (Director of Scientific and Technical Intelligence) on arrangements for the DIS's contribution to the handling of questions following the publication of the dossier in order for us to hear their account.

**Q5: Did you see the report itself?**

**A5:** No. I was not included in the readership.

**Q6: What briefing did you provide on the report to CDI, ACM Sir Joe French?**

**A6:** Sir Joe French was absent from the office on 17 September (and subsequently) when I became aware of the existence of the report. Not having seen it, I was not in a position to brief him on it.

**Q7: What advice did you receive on the report from DIST, Paul Roper?**

**A7:** Dr Roper had not received a copy of the report and so was not able to offer me advice on it.

**Q8: What discussions did you have with either of these individuals or anybody else about the contents of the report and its implications?**

**A8:** I had no discussions at the time with them or anybody else about the report because I had not received it or had any knowledge of its contents or source.

**Q9: Was it discussed in the JIC?**

**A9:** As a result of the various official inquiries into the dossier, I have learned that the report was issued on 11 September 2002. I attended the JIC on 18 September 2002, its last meeting before the publication of the dossier on 24 September 2002. It

was not discussed at this meeting. I did not attend the JIC on 11 September because I was absent from the office but I have no reason to think that the report was discussed.

**Q10: Having heard about and/or seen the report, did you ask for it to be made available to the relevant experts within DIS for their assessment?**

**A10:** I did not see the report and access to it was limited to a very small circle of senior readers. I was therefore not in a position to arrange for it to be circulated more widely.

**Q11: What was the reason for that?**

**A11:** This was due to the particularly sensitive nature of the report (see A3). I was, however, conscious that the JIC assessment of 9 September 2002 stated that recent intelligence indicated that production of chemical and biological weapons was taking place. From the little I knew of the new report, it seemed to be reinforcing this judgement.

**Q12: Did you discuss the distribution with either CDI or DIST?**

**A12:** I recall that at the meeting mentioned in A4 I had a brief discussion with the Directors of Global Intelligence and Scientific and Technical Intelligence about the compartmenting of the report and concluded that we would have to rely on the judgement of those who had seen it that it justified the form of words used in the draft dossier, bearing in mind the JIC assessment of 9 September (see A11 above). I also asked Dr Roper to inform Dr Jones (Head of the Nuclear, Biological and Chemical branch in the Scientific and Technical Intelligence Directorate) of the strict compartmenting of the report at the earliest opportunity. I believe that he did so shortly afterwards and that he had also received a telephone call from SIS confirming that the circulation of the report would be strictly limited because of its extreme sensitivity. In CDI's absence on an overseas visit, I was not in a position to discuss the limited distribution of the report with him.

**Q13: What discussions did you have with either CDI or DIST about the concerns that had been raised by DIS staff?**

**A13:** As indicated in A12, I had a brief discussion with Dr Roper on 17 September about the comments on the draft of 16 September. Dr Jones subsequently sent me a copy of his minute of 19 September to Paul Roper commenting on the text of the draft of 19 September, in which he stated that he and his staff considered that in their judgement Iraq was probably producing chemical and biological agents but they had not seen the intelligence to 'show' this. He also reported that they were even more convinced that Iraq had continued to produce biological agent but that they would not go so far as to say that they 'know' this. I did not discuss this minute with Dr Jones or Dr Roper because I read it after the working day and saw it as reiterating that neither he nor his staff had seen the compartmented intelligence to support the formulation in the draft, while at the same time confirming that the judgement of the dossier on this issue was probably right. On his return to the office on 20 September, CDI took a view on Dr Jones's minute. I was absent from the office at that time and did not return until 25 September.

**Q14: What discussions did you have with either the JIC Chairman, Sir John Scarlett, the Chief of the Assessments Staff, Julian Miller, or any other member of the Assessments Staff about these concerns?**

**A14:** I did not raise the matter with John Scarlett, Julian Miller or the Assessments Staff because it was well known to the drafters of the dossier that the DIS's scientific staff had not seen the recent compartmented intelligence on the current production of chemical and biological agents.

**Q15: What was the basis on which you took the decision to give formal DIS endorsement to the judgements in the dossier, given the advice of some members of the DIS that the final draft was, in some respects, stronger than the intelligence indicated?**

**A15:** Responsibility for the formal DIS endorsement of the judgements in the dossier rested with CDI. The final draft was circulated in my absence on 20 September. Dr Jones's expert on chemical defence, in commenting on it to Dr Roper, confirmed that he had not seen the intelligence to support the formulation on chemical weapons. I was a copy addressee but did not see his minute because I was absent from the office. I myself was satisfied with the draft of 19 September, which was substantially the same as that of 20 September. I took the view that the judgement in the dossier on the current production of chemical and biological agents in the Executive Summary and the formulation in the main text was justified by the available intelligence on production, including in the JIC assessment of 9 September and my awareness that the compartmented intelligence was seen as reliable. It was also consistent with our overall assessment of Iraqi WMD capabilities.



A J CRAGG

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