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PRIME MINISTER

@ 14.15
14/2

From: Matthew Rycroft
Date: 14 February 2003

cc: Jonathan Powell
David Manning
Alastair Campbell
Sally Morgan
Danny Pruce

IRAQ: SCOTLAND SPEECH

Attached are FCO and Cabinet Office answers to your questions from this morning. In terms of your speech I think you could say:

- (a) Iraqi children. [There are some disparities in the figures we have been working from. I am trying to resolve this, and will send you a figure later today.]
- (b) Political prisoners. "There are tens of thousands of political prisoners detained in Iraq at any time."
- (c) Northern Iraq administration. "It needn't be like this. In Northern Iraq, free from the shackles of the Baghdad government, hospitals and schools have been built and improved. Access to drinking water has improved, so that 90% now have it. And minefields have been cleared and returned to the Iraqi people."
- (d) Defection and (e) early inspections. "To illustrate Iraq's concealment tactics, it is worth remembering what happened in the early 1990s. Before Saddam's son in law defected, the inspectors were on the brink of accepting Iraq's declarations that all Iraq's WMD had been destroyed. The defection of Kamel Hassain showed the inspectors that they had been completely misled over Iraq's biological weapons programme, and over aspects of its other programmes. The regime's response? Stretching belief, that the programmes were nothing to do with the regime and were the personal initiative of Kamel Hassain. Incidentally, Saddam's regime announced an amnesty for Kamel Hassain a few months later, so he returned to Iraq, and he was then executed."

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- (e) Shia and Kurd uprisings. "After the Gulf War, the Shia in the South and the Kurds in the north rose up against Saddam. Both uprisings were brutally put down. Saddam's regime deployed Republican guards and helicopter gunships, against his fellow Iraqis.
- (f) Iraq's standard of living. "In 1965, Iraq's standard of living was not much behind that of Malaysia or Portugal. Today the standard of living in Malaysia is three times better than Iraq, and that of Portugal eight times better."

11/1/01
MATTHEW RYCROFT

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