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Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

25 April 2001

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Dear Peter,

IRAQI WMD: PUBLIC MESSAGES

We looked recently at the (limited) options for deploying our intelligence on Iranian WMD. Can I now enlist your help on Iraq?

There is a growing frustration over here that, while we continue publicly to emphasise our concerns about the rebuilding of Iraqi WMD capabilities (and indeed, the current UK/US review of policy looks like putting even more emphasis on this angle), the lines we have to deploy are based entirely on pre-Desert Fox material and are showing signs of too much recycling. Requests earlier this year from the Foreign Secretary and the FCO Policy Advisory Board for more up-to-date material received no response. Amanda Wedge therefore persuaded the DIS to review all existing intelligence and advise on what might be usable. I enclose the somewhat disappointing results.

I understand the difficulties; it may be that there really is no more we can say and that we will have to rely on clever re-packaging. But our material compares unfavourably with fuller and fresher briefings - which seems particularly odd when we are often drawing on the same intelligence base. I wonder whether it might be worth a meeting to go over the possibilities, on the lines of the exercise the Cabinet Office coordinated just before Desert Fox, which produced an "unclassified JIC paper" and a note for MPs, journalists etc? Before taking that idea further, I'd welcome your views.

Yours,

Tim

Tim Dowse
Non-Proliferation Department

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**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE, Room ,
Old War Office Building, Whitehall, LONDON SW1A 2EU**

Telephone (Direct Dialling)
(Switchboard)
(Facsimile)

Dr Amanda Wedge,
FCO/NPD

Your reference

Our reference DI GI AC R 2/1/1/ H

Date 29 March 2001

**IRAQ: RELEASE OF INTELLIGENCE ON WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION
DEVELOPMENTS TO THE PRESS**

Reference:

A. Discussion: FCO/NPD (Wedge)/DIS-DIACR (Warburton) 22 Mar 01

1. We spoke about the recent press reporting on Iraq's past and current WMD work and aspirations and you asked if the DIS could make any of the intelligence or our assessments available for the Secretary of State to release in public statements. I said that I would look into this. (R)
2. The DIS has critically examined our current intelligence on Iraq's WMD activities with a view to allowing its release to the Public. Unfortunately, we have determined that the intelligence is too sensitive to release at the moment. In addition, much of the intelligence originated from allies and we are not in a position to even consider its release without their concurrence. (UK C)
3. One area where we considered that there might be some mileage in basing a media campaign is in Iraq's abuse of the "Oil For Food" area. However, I understand that FCO/UND is already leading on this by preparing a monthly bulletin explaining why items are on hold etc. (R)
4. I am sorry we cannot be more helpful, but be assured that we will provide Secretary of State with classified briefs on aspects of Iraq's WMD capabilities and aspirations whenever appropriate or called for. (R)

SIO
DIACR

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MINISTRY OF DEFENCE, Room
Old War Office Building, Whitehall, LONDON SW1A 2EU

Telephone (Direct Dialling)
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Dr Amanda Wedge,
FCO/NPD

Your reference

Our reference DIGI ACR 2/1/1/H

Date 11 April 2001

IRAQ: RELEASE OF INFORMATION CONCERNING IRAQI REGENERATION OF BOMBED FACILITIES TO THE PRESS

Reference:

A. DIGI ACR 2/1/1 H dated 29 Mar 01

1. As a result of Reference A you asked me to see if we could provide information for release to the Press about Iraq's regeneration of the WMD-associated facilities that were damaged during Operation Desert Fox. (U)
2. I am please to say we feel that the information can be released, and I attach a brief which gives some examples of the facilities that were attacked and what they were/are associated with. However, we cannot state exactly how we are aware of the re-building – it must just be the usual "Intelligence sources reveal that..." and of course, "We are not prepared to state what these sources are..." etc. (R)

SIO
DI ACR

Att:

1. Paper: Operation Desert Fox – Restoration Of Damaged Facilities dtd 11 Apr 01

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OPERATION DESERT FOX – RESTORATION OF DAMAGED FACILITIES

Background – Chemical/Biological Warfare

1. Some of Iraq's facilities could be converted fairly quickly to production of chemical warfare agents. Following Operation Desert Fox, the Iraqi Regime instituted a rapid reconstruction effort on those facilities to include former dual-use chemical warfare-associated production facilities, destroyed by UK and US bombing. In 1999, Iraq may have begun installing or repairing dual-use equipment at these and other chemical war-fare-related facilities. Previously, Iraq is known to have produced and stockpiled mustard, tabun, sarin, and VX, some of which likely remain hidden. It is likely that an additional quantity of various precursor chemicals also remains hidden. One of the facilities rebuilt is:

Habbaniyah I/Fallujah 3 – 50 miles Northwest of Baghdad - 3332N 04337E

One of three facilities built just prior to the Gulf war and associated with Iraq's Chemical Warfare effort. The Castor Oil plant here was destroyed because it was associated with the production of the Biological Warfare agent Ricin. This has since been rebuilt.

Background – Ballistic Missiles

2. While Iraq's missile production infrastructure was damaged during the December 1998 strikes, Iraq retains domestic expertise and sufficient infrastructure to support most missile component production, with the exception of a few critical sub-elements. During 1999, Iraq continued to work on the two short-range ballistic missile systems that comply with the 150-kilometer range restriction imposed by the UN: the liquid-propellant Al Samoud and the solid-propellant Ababil-100. The Al-Samoud is essentially a scaled-down SCUD, and work on it allows Iraq to develop technological capabilities that could be applied to a longer-range missiles. The Al Samoud missile, as designed by Iraq, may have an inherent potential to exceed the 150-kilometers range restriction imposed under UNSCR 687 and, in the absence of international inspectors, prohibited work could be underway to extend its range without being detected. Iraqi personnel involved with the pre-Gulf War BADR-2000 long-range ballistic missile design (part of the 1980s multinational CONDOR-2 programme), are working on the Ababil-100 SRBM. Three facilities that have been rebuilt are:

Ibn al-Haitham Missile Research & Development Centre – Northwest Baghdad – 3124N 04605E

A dedicated missile research and design centre, known as the Ibn Al Haytham Missile Research and Design Centre, was established by Iraq on 4 April 1992 as the main centre for research and design activity in Iraq involving ballistic missiles not prohibited by resolution 687 (1991). The Centre is involved not only in the maintenance of existing permitted missile systems, but also in the design of new missile systems, including the Ababil-100 with a range close to 150 kilometers. The Centre employed many of the scientists and technicians who were involved in the proscribed ballistic missile programmes prior to the Gulf War and adoption of resolution 687 (1991). Prior to Operation Desert Fox it had been expanded. The facility was badly damaged in Operation Desert Fox but the buildings have now been repaired. The Centre has the technical capability and personnel to enable it to work on missiles with a range of up to 150km and probably proscribed missiles.

Mosul Military Research & Development Centre (Al-Kindi) – 250 miles North of Baghdad near Mosul - 36-24N 043-08E

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A purpose-built Missile Research and Development Facility near Mosul. It was re-built after the Gulf War and was one of Iraq's main centres of excellence for missile development work. It was again attacked in Operation Desert Fox, but the facilities have again been rebuilt.

Shahiyat Liquid Engine R&D Facility – 45miles Southwest of Baghdad - 33-07N 043-48E

Developed as an engine Research and Development facility for liquid-fuelled ballistic missiles. The main workshop was badly damaged in Operation Desert Fox, but this has now been repaired.

Background – Biological Warfare

3. Although Baghdad had an active, offensive Biological Warfare research and development, production and weaponisation effort, it only acknowledged this in 1995, over 4 years after the end of the Gulf War. In conducting this effort it had constructed purpose-built facilities, conducted research in houses and at Universities; taken over a legitimate agriculture and water resources research centre and Iraq's foot and mouth disease vaccine production centre, which it then adapted, to research and produce biological agents for aerial munitions and ballistic missiles. The United Nations Special Commission destroyed the purpose-built facilities and much of the equipment that Iraq said had been used to produce biological warfare agent. However, Iraq still retains the capability to regenerate this activity in any small laboratory, though it would undoubtedly prefer to conduct such work in large purpose-built facilities.

United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC)

4. Without on-site monitoring and inspection by UNMOVIC of Iraq's WMD-capable facilities, we, and Iraq's neighbours, cannot be sure that Iraq has not regenerated its long-range missile programmes and its biological and chemical effort.

11 April 2001

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