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**DAVID MANNING**

cc Jonathan Powell  
Matthew Rycroft  
C  
Director, GCHQ  
DGSS  
CDI  
Sir David Omand  
William Ehrman  
Simon Webb

*Am 8*  
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**S12**

**BRIEFING OF BRUCE GEORGE MP,  
CHAIRMAN OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE**

1. I should record that, as agreed, I met Bruce George this morning to brief him on the assessed intelligence on Iraq.
2. I told George that I was intending to bring him up to date using our previous meeting at the time of the September Dossier as my baseline. I then covered the following subjects:

- The Iraqi December 2002 Declaration
- The Iraqi response to inspections
- The work of the inspectors
- General political/military issues

I followed the briefing contained in the attachment. This had been previously agreed with the Agencies. I should note that I only touched lightly on the first four headings under political/military issues.

3. George showed most interest in Iraqi concealment policy. He also asked about possible links to Al Qa'ida. Generally, he made a point of stressing his support for the Prime Minister and the Government's position. He was clear that the evidence on WMD holdings and concealment was "sufficiently compelling" to justify "military operations". He claimed that other members of the Committee were also supportive. I made no comment.

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4. With reference to Simon Webb's letter of 27 January, George asked no questions about British military operations or dispositions. The subject simply did not come up.

5. George had one request. At very short notice the Defence Committee planned to visit Washington for two days at the beginning of next week. At the moment no intelligence briefing was planned. On previous visits they had enjoyed very full and informative briefing from CIA. In spite of the short notice, it would be very helpful to receive an up to date briefing from the US with particular attention to:

- The evidence of Iraqi WMD holdings
- Iraqi non-compliance and concealment

I pointed out that much of this had been covered by Colin Powell on 5 February but I would transmit the request straightaway.

Comment to JICRep, Washington. If this could be arranged, it would be warmly appreciated by the Committee.



**JOHN SCARLETT**

6 February 2003



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## IRAQ - BRIEF FOR FAC/HCDC

### UNMOVIC/WMD RELATED ISSUES

#### DOSSIER

- HMG published an assessment of Iraq's WMD in September 2002. The Dossier, which was based on intelligence, makes a number of judgements:
  - Iraq has a useable chemical and biological weapons capability, which included recent production of chemical and biological agents, and military plans to use them;
  - Iraq continues to work on developing nuclear weapons;
  - Iraq possesses up to 20 650km range al Hussein missiles, is developing longer-range ballistic missiles, and is extending the ranges of al Samoud and Ababil-100 systems beyond the UN permitted range of 150km.
- Very little new intelligence on WMD capabilities or plans to use them since the Dossier was released.
- The focus on UN inspections since then may have limited activity in some areas, such as missile development. But our coverage of CBW agent production is limited eg transportable biological production facilities

#### DECLARATION

- The Declaration failed to address the issues outstanding from UNSCOM's report to the UN Security Council in 1999, which included:
  - up to 360 tonnes of bulk chemical warfare agent, including 1.5 tonnes of VX nerve agent;
  - up to 3,000 tonnes of precursor chemicals, including approximately 300 tonnes which, in the Iraqi CW programme, were unique to the production of VX;
  - growth media procured for biological agent production (enough to produce over three times the 8,500 litres of anthrax spores Iraq admits to having manufactured);
  - over 30,000 special munitions for delivery of chemical and biological agents.
- Iraq maintained that it currently has no proscribed WMD programmes.
- The majority of information in the Declaration has already been passed to the UN in some form.
- Key omissions included:

#### Ballistic Missiles

- The understatement in the Declaration regarding the purchase of the Volga engines.
- The lack of any reference to the new test stand at Al Rafah.

#### Cruise Missiles and UAVs

- The failure to address concerns outstanding from UNSCOM inspections, and the misrepresentation of the status and performance of the L 29 programme.

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## CW

- The failure to account fully for the destruction and use of shells and bombs available prior to 1991, and other chemical weapons.
- The failure to account for VX production.
- The failure to provide documentation to enable the verification of the CW material balance.

## BW

- The failure to provide a comprehensive and accurate account of the pre-1991 programme or any information on BW activity post 1991.
- The failure to account for the material balance for anthrax, botulinum toxin and growth media.
- The failure to provide any reference to transportable BW production facilities.
- The failure to provide a full account of sites and personalities involved in the BW programme.

## Nuclear

- The failure to provide a verifiable account of the alleged ending of the nuclear programme.
- The failure to provide full documentation on either the disposal of the material associated with, or the design of, the Iraqi gas centrifuge.

## RESPONSE TO INSPECTIONS

- Iraq was confident that inspections would not find any "smoking gun". Iraqis were content by end of 2002 with the way inspections were being conducted.
- But by mid January, as UNMOVIC/IAEA inspections became more intrusive and finds of documents and warheads began, Iraq showed signs of feeling the pressures. Began questioning U-2 flights, helicopter flights into NFZs and objecting to interviews and searches of private residences. Some of these issues have been resolved, but not all.
- Iraq saw the **Blix report to UNSC** on 27 January as bad for them.
- Iraq has a co-ordinated policy of concealment. It is controlled by the Higher Committee for Monitoring the Inspection Teams. There is also a committee that studies the questions asked by the inspectors, with a view to noting errors, making sure that these do not recur, and attempting to draw lessons for future inspections.
- Some of the techniques used include:

### Concealment of sensitive materials and documents

- Sensitive materials and documents have been sent to the homes of employees, and to hospitals, farms, agricultural storage sites and schools. Documents that could be related to a nuclear programme have been discovered at the home of a scientist by the IAEA.
- that WMD-related items may have been buried and other are being kept on the move using trucks

### Facilities have been 'cleaned'

- Factories have been 'cleaned' so as to give the impression that only legitimate goods are produced. Companies have falsified documents to remove reference

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to sensitive relationships with foreign governments and companies. In addition, compromising information held on computers has been wiped.

## **Monitoring of inspections**

- The National Monitoring Directorate (NMD) continues to shadow the movements of the inspectors.
- [Reporting indicates that tracking of UNMOVIC convoys enables the Iraqis to give advance warning of inspections.]

- **Iraq has two main concerns about the inspection process**, aside from a discovery of WMD. These are interviews and the destruction of infrastructure.

## **Interviews**

- The Iraqi leadership is clearly concerned about interviews. Despite its professed willingness to encourage interviewees to attend without minders this has not yet happened.
- Iraq is monitoring key scientists and coaching them in advance of interviews. Interviewees and their families have been intimidated and threatened with execution if they deviate from the line given. Some scientists have been moved to avoid inspectors. Stooges may also be used.
- Experts have been ordered not to agree to questioning by UNMOVIC outside of Iraq.
- Iraqi organisations have been examining ways of monitoring interviews even if minders are not allowed to be present.

## **Destruction of infrastructure**

- the leadership is concerned that UNMOVIC might try to destroy weapons, materials and infrastructure derived from illicit procurement activities, even when programmes are technically legal.
- They are making particular effort to convince UNMOVIC not to declare parts of its missile programme illegal, particularly the al Samoud 2, because any destruction of components and infrastructure related to this system could impact on the whole al Samoud programme. UNMOVIC have yet to take a firm decision but are likely to before Blix reports to UNSC on 14 February.
- This may be an Iraqi red line

## **UNMOVIC/IAEA DISCOVERIES**

- Despite Iraq's effort to conceal material and equipment related to their WMD and ballistic missile programmes, UNMOVIC and the IAEA have made a number of discoveries.
  - Nuclear-related documents have been discovered in the residence of a scientist.
  - A large casting chamber were seen at the al Mamoun Solid Propellant Plant. Ababil-100 production does not require equipment of this size.
  - A total of 223 missile engines, probably intended for al Samoud 2 missiles, have been discovered. Iraq has admitted to flight testing the al Samoud 2 beyond the permitted range of 150km.

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- 11 empty, 122mm, CW rocket warheads were discovered at the Ukaider Ammunition and Missile Storage area. Another warhead contained liquid which is currently being analysed.

## UK INTELLIGENCE SUPPORT TO UNMOVIC

- UK is providing material derived from intelligence material to UNMOVIC and Blix has expressed satisfaction with the service provided by the UK. (Databases and individual reports)

## POLITICAL/MILITARY ISSUES

### Regime strategy

- Continue ostensible co-operation with inspectors to avert war, while relying on concealment to avoid loss of WMD.
- Diplomatic/propaganda line emphasising Iraq has no WMD, is co-operating with inspectors. Also propaganda about 'excessive' intrusiveness of inspectors. And continuing propaganda about Iraq's suffering under sanctions and the double standards of the West on Israel and Iraq.
- Wait for another international event, e.g. another significant terrorist attack/N Korea/Israel-Palestine crisis, to distract US.

### Saddam's understanding of the international situation

- Unclear whether he understands US resolve. US military build-up probably a significant new factor, but he may yet place too much reliance on old delaying games with the UN and on his friends at the UN to protect him.
- His friends and allies, Arab and Russian, are urging him to co-operate and telling him that the US means business: not clear he is listening. Focus still on concealment and denial (only initial signs of a debate on declaring more WMD).

### Regime cohesion

- No cracks yet. Overriding importance of fear keeping officers at their posts.
- But morale generally low.
- Regime propaganda aimed at persuading people that there will not be a coalition attack, and if there is, it will be focused on disarming Iraq, not toppling the regime.
- Also carrot and stick: additional incentives for military, threats to tribes/Kurds not to rebel or act in concert with the US.

### Exile for Saddam

- Saudis, Egyptians and Turks discussing the idea. Even Arabs don't seem to think much chance of Saddam accepting. But this is part of a wider search for legitimacy if it comes to war: to show their own populations that every avenue has been pursued to avoid war and that Saddam is ultimately responsible.

### Military options

- Republican Guard digging defensive positions about 20km outside Baghdad.

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- No sign of large scale preparations for 'fortress Baghdad' or other fortification within cities. Nor of large scale flooding to restrict mobility in southern Iraq.
- Steady preparations with some large trenches dug in north and west. Some new earth barriers in south adding to many already in existence from previous wars.
- Some redeployment of units south – imagery now indicates that most of one infantry division, elements of another have moved. Infantry and artillery forces on the al-Faw peninsula have increased, but most forces still held further north.
- Many revetments (protected positions) for dispersal of military equipment (to maximise the amount of equipment that survives air strikes)
- Some minor redeployment in the north has lessened our warning time for any Iraqi move against the Kurds. Iraq could overrun the KAZ in a few days with little warning (a few days).
- Intelligence still lacking detail on how Iraq might use WMD. Previous intelligence suggested might use on Israel and regional states supporting the US, plus coalition forces. No intelligence on any Iraqi consideration of pre-emptive use of WMD. No intelligence on Iraqi stocks e.g. of CBW ready-to-use.
- Atropine and gas masks were issued to key elements within the military in January.

## Regional attitudes

- Turkey: government wants clear legitimacy – UN resolution plus regional diplomatic backing and/or NATO support. Military more positive about basing US forces. But risk that Turkey will 'miss the boat' as US planning continues.
- Iran: expects war; concern about being excluded in post-Saddam scenarios, some lingering concern about being 'next' to be attacked by US.

## Human rights

- No sign Saddam is a reformed character.
- Little intelligence on why Saddam went ahead with the prisoner 'amnesty' release. Probably a mix of wanting to win internal support, external praise and to show he feared nothing from internal opposition. Some hints that the move back fired, with increasing crime since.
- Threats to scientists and their families if they give information to UN inspectors.

## AL QAEDA AND IEAQ

- Reporting on Al Qaida's connections to Iraq is limited – and sometimes contradictory.
- We know there have been some links between the Regime and Al Qaida over the past decade. Colin Powell detailed the key intelligence in his presentation to the Security Council.
- In 1992 a senior Iraqi official was in contact with Bin Laden associates in Sudan. In the mid-1990s Iraq provided bomb making expertise to Al Qaida in Sudan. In 1995, Iraq's Intelligence Director met Bin Laden. In 1998, Iraqi intelligence met Al Qaida. The substance and motivation for these contacts is not known. But probably mutual benefit rather than strategic alliance.
- discussion between AQ and Iraq on co-operation on chemical/biological training may have taken place between 1998 and 2000, and that

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- Iraq may have provided some CB training in 2000. But we have no evidence that Al Qaida received CBW material from Iraq, or developed sophisticated production capabilities.
- Al Qaida has had a limited presence in Baghdad at least over the past eight months. We do not know why, or exactly what they have been doing. But we believe it likely the regime is aware – we know they have been told of the presence of senior Al Qaida associate, Abu Musab al Zarqawi.
  - Al Zarqawi was in Iraq twice last year. The Iraqis were aware but claimed to be unable to locate him. We cannot be certain why al Zarqawi was in Baghdad, but there are indications that he may have intended to make contact with the Iraqi authorities. We do not know whether he did so.
  - the activities of Al Qaida associated terrorists in the Kurdish Autonomous Zone of Northern Iraq who have been producing chemicals and toxins for use in terrorist attacks.
  - Al Zarqawi is closely connected to the network of extremists involved in the production of chemicals and toxins in Northern Iraq and a number of other locations. Cannot comment in detail on recent detentions in the UK. This is a matter for the Security Service and the police. More importantly the subject of ongoing investigations and criminal proceedings.
  - A US diplomat, Laurence Foley, was assassinated in Jordan on 28 October. The leader of the cell who carried out the attack has claimed he was operating under instructions from al Zarqawi.

If asked : Iraq/Foley

- No evidence he was acting with the support of the Iraqi regime.

If asked : al Zarqawi/UK

If asked : No evidence that al Zarqawi was directing planning for attacks in the UK.

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