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cc David Manning
Michael Rycroft

IRAQ/FAC: ROBIN COOK

Robin Cook spoke to the Foreign Affairs Committee yesterday about his Intelligence Briefing received "from MI6". This must refer to the one to one briefing I gave him for 1 hour on 20 February at Carlton Gardens. SIS did not give him a separate briefing. My briefing formed part of a series of intelligence briefings offered to Cabinet Ministers at that time. The Home Secretary and the Chancellor as well as Robin Cook were offered one to ones. The Home Secretary and Mr Cook accepted.

I attach the briefing note which formed the basis for my discussion. As with other Ministers, I did not draw on every point. I also attach a copy of Mr Cook's resignation statement of 17 March. He has stated that this followed closely the intelligence briefing.

Robin Cook asked me a number of questions. He concentrated on:

- The current strength of Iraq's armed forces especially in comparison to 1991;
- The threat posed by battlefield CBW as opposed to missiles capable of hitting civilian targets (e.g. cities) in foreign countries;
- Iraqi weaponisation capabilities;
- The effectiveness of US air power; the prospects for the campaign; how long would it last? the effectiveness and likely duration of Iraqi resistance;
- Had containment worked? Had Iraq's WMD programmes developed since 1998?

I made clear that Iraq had a range of battlefield systems capable of delivering CBW. We assessed that Saddam was ready to use them, including against his civilian population. Iraq might not have succeeded in developing CBW capable warheads for the 150km "permitted" missiles. We assessed that Iraq could deliver CBW with the 650km missiles it retained; if only one of these hit home in favourable conditions on an Israeli city (I might have also mentioned Kuwait), civilian casualties would be large. I also made it clear that Iraq's programmes had not stood still since 1998 and had developed in all areas except perhaps the nuclear, where I reminded him of what was in the public assessment.


JOHN SCARLETT

18 June 2003

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*Chairman JIC's
speaking notes
February
2003.*

IRAQ - BRIEF FOR THE CABINET

IRAQ'S WMD CAPABILITIES

Background

- Prior to the Gulf war Iraq had comprehensive WMD programmes.
 - Declared to the UN the production of:
 - 2,850 tonnes of mustard gas, 210 tonnes of tabun, 795 tonnes of sarin and cyclosarin, and 3.9 tonnes of VX
 - 19,000 litres of botulinum toxin, 8,500 litres of anthrax, 2,200 litres of aflatoxin
 - Iraq was aiming to produce a nuclear warhead with a yield of 20 kilotons
 - Iraq had a well-developed ballistic missile industry, producing missiles with ranges of up to 650km. Iraq was developing missiles with ranges up to 1500km.
- UNSCOM/IAEA inspectors destroyed much of the pre-1991 programmes
- Intelligence indicates that planning to reconstitute some of its programmes began in 1995. WMD programmes were then given a further boost in 1998 with the withdrawal of UNSCOM/IAEA inspectors.

The Assessment of the British Government

- HMG published an assessment of Iraq's WMD in September 2002. The Assessment, which was based on intelligence, makes a number of judgements:
 - Iraq has a useable chemical and biological weapons capability, which included production in 2002 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.

Current assessment of Iraq's capabilities

- Very little significant new intelligence on WMD capabilities since the Assessment was released, although continue to see planning for its use.
- The focus on UN inspections since then may have limited activity in some areas, such as missile development.

Intelligence shows that they are now also beginning to disperse key equipment in preparation for possible airstrikes.

- We cannot rule out the possibility of ongoing production of CBW agents since this is easily concealed especially in the case of BW agents using transportable biological production facilities. JIC judged in March 2002 that Iraq's CBW production capability is designed to survive a military strike and UN inspections. But we judge that:
 - Intelligence indicates that Iraq has produced both chemical and biological agents since 1998 to add to stocks retained since the Gulf War. As late as September

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2002 Iraq was carrying out illegitimate work on anthrax that could be used as part of a weapons programme.

- Iraq is capable of producing the chemical agents mustard gas, tabun, sarin, cyclosarin and VX. Exact quantities of agent and munitions available are unknown but likely to be between 10 and 100 tonnes of agent. 3.5 tonnes of nerve agent would fill 1,000 artillery shells.
- Iraq is capable of producing biological agents, including anthrax, botulinum toxin, aflatoxin and ricin. Exact quantities of agent and munitions available are unknown.
- Current estimates of systems capable of delivering CBW are:
 - up to 20 al Hussein missiles (range up to 650km)
 - up to 400 Luna (FROG) surface-to-surface missiles (based on 40 launchers) (range usually 70km but may have extended a few to 130km)
 - at least 800 towed and self propelled artillery pieces (ranges between 20 and 40km)
 - artillery rockets (Iraq has at least 100 launchers) (ranges between 20 and 50km)
 - up to 200 combat aircraft, helicopters and UAVs
 - use of some type of "Special Forces" cannot be discounted, although there is no intelligence suggesting that they have been trained to deliver chemical and biological agents.
 - Intelligence suggests Iraq may not be able to deliver CBW efficiently using al Samoud and Ababil-100 missiles,
- Not all these systems will have CBW munitions or a CBW delivery role

RESPONSE TO 1441

Declaration

- Blix stated that Iraq had not taken the opportunity given to them in preparing their Declaration to address the issues outstanding from UNSCOM's report. It did not greatly add to our knowledge of Iraq's WMD programmes.
- Issues outstanding from UNSCOM's report to the UN Security Council in 1999 remain:
 - 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

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- 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.

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 in its ability to prevent inspectors finding any "smoking gun". By mid January, as UNMOVIC/IAEA inspections became more intrusive and finds of documents and warheads began, Iraq showed some signs of feeling the pressure.
- Iraq saw the **Blix report to UNSC** on 27 January as bad for them and worked to ensure that Blix provides a better report on 14 February.
- Iraq has a co-ordinated policy of concealment controlled by the Higher Committee for Monitoring the Inspection Teams. (Run by Qusai, includes VP Ramadan and General Saadi, who is inspectors primary POC)
- 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 and other sensitive sites.
- that WMD-related items may have been buried and others are being kept on the move using trucks and trains.

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 to

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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 and co-ordinate obstruction activities where necessary.
- [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. UNMOVIC/IAEA have only conducted a small number of interviews without minders, almost all taped at the request of the interviewee. One at least was assigned to the NMD. Inspectors have had no success in interviewing people they want.
- Iraq has recently supplied UNMOVIC with a list of CW personnel associated with their claimed unilateral destruction programme in 1991, and may follow this up with a similar list of BW personnel. Await to see what happens when they are requested for interview.
- 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 present. Scientists told that rooms where interviews to be held are bugged.

Missile programmes

- Iraq is permitted to develop missiles up to a range of 150km
- Intelligence shows that Iraq has for some time been seeking to increase the range of the al Samoud and Ababil-100's beyond 200km.
- Iraq has recently declared that it was developing a variant of the al Samoud known as the al Samoud 2. This version is wider than permitted by UNSCOM (760mm v 600mm)
- Iraq has also admitted testing both the al Samoud 2 and the Ababil 100 beyond the 150km permitted by the UN.
- If UNMOVIC declare the al Samoud 2 and Ababil 100 proscribed systems then all parts, designs and stocks, as well as supporting infrastructure would theoretically have to be destroyed. This would have significant impact on Iraq's missile programme, as well as the military industrial complex more widely
- All al Samoud variants use the Volga SA-2 engine. Iraq has also admitted illegally importing these engines

Destruction of infrastructure

- the leadership is concerned that UNMOVIC might try to destroy materials and infrastructure.

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- Blix reported to UNSC on 14 February that the al Samoud 2 was a proscribed system, along with any illegally imported engines configured for it. The status of the Ababil 100 is still being considered. This is a blow to Iraq. They Iraq made a particular effort to convince UNMOVIC not to declare these missiles illegal because any destruction of components and infrastructure related to these systems could impact on the whole missile programme. Destruction of parts of the programme could begin soon, and Iraq's reaction to it is not yet clear. Casting chambers for longer range missile motors have also been proscribed.

Finds by Inspectors

- The inspectors have clearly found some material that was not declared, such as empty CW warheads.
- inspectors are following up on a number of discrepancies between what has been declared and results of inspection of facilities and companies. These are not yet public knowledge, but may be important.

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. Fear is the predominant reason for officers to stay at their posts.
- But morale generally low.
- Regime propaganda has been 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.
- Indications that the civilian population has been told to prepare for war eg stockpiling of rations

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Exile for Saddam

- Saudis, Egyptians and Turks discussing the idea. But even those Arab governments which publicly support the idea privately doubt Saddam would accept such an offer. 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.
- 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 (SEE MAP) – 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).

Scenarios for CBW use

- We judge, that faced with military defeat and being removed from power, Saddam would be prepared to use chemical and biological weapons. It is unclear at what stage Saddam would conclude that his regime was in imminent danger.

Atropine and gas masks were issued to key elements within the military in January.

- But recent intelligence continues to suggest that Saddam is most likely to use these weapons when a ground invasion is underway (*He might also use them earlier in a conflict, including against coalition forces, neighbouring states and his own people*). If not employed previously, we continue to judge that Saddam would order the indiscriminate use of whatever CBW weapons remain available late in a ground campaign or as a final act of vengeance.
- As well as using chemical and biological weapons against Coalition forces, he might also deploy them against any internal uprising.
- Implementation of such orders would depend on the delivery means remaining intact, the survivability of the command chain and the willingness of commanders to obey. Intelligence suggests that Saddam has delegated authority to use CBW, in the event of his death, to senior regime figures including his son Qusai.
- Neighbouring states that have provided military support to the US and its allies could be among Saddam's targets for CBW attack.

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- We judge that Saddam would be prepared to order missile strikes against Israel, with CBW warheads, in order to widen the war once hostilities begin, possibly even during the initial air phase of any military campaign.
- Iraq's capability to deliver chemical and biological agents within the region could diminish rapidly once hostilities begin.

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.

INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

Background

- Iraq has a long history of support to international terrorist organisations. As well sponsorship of some small Palestinian groups (PLF, ALF) and notorious relationship with the Abu Nidal Organisation, Saddam provides basing, training and support for the anti-Iranian MeK, which is proscribed here in the UK. Saddam has tried to increase cooperation with the larger Palestinian groups, but they have been wary of his approaches.

Iraq and al Qaida

- 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 Iraq may have provided some CB training in 2000. But we have no evidence that Al

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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. Unable to comment in detail on recent detentions in the UK which are 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

- No evidence that al Zarqawi was directing planning for attacks in the UK.

Risk of terrorism in event of military action against Iraq

- Threat of Al Qaida attacks on UK interests already very high – regardless of possible military action. Do judge this will be heightened during any military campaign. AQ will want to exploit anti western sentiment and our diverted attention.
- Number of terrorist attacks worldwide increased significantly during Gulf War. Most were not directly related to Iraq. Reasonable to expect this could happen again.
- Acutely conscious of threat to UK interests in Gulf region – which is already high. Terrorists have planned attacks against UK interests there – and are doubtless still doing so. They may launch attacks against UK forces. Threat not only from Al Qaida networks, but also from individuals and groups sympathetic to their aims.
- Terrorists could use chemical or biological materials in attacks.
- DGI has a number of agents in the UK, focussed on Iraqi oppositionists. We have no intelligence to suggest that these agents would conduct attacks in the UK. But Iraqi agents unknown to us may be present here, using the cover of the sizeable Iraqi population (up to 250,000) and the regular inflow of refugees.

If asked: Risk of transfer of WMD materials to Al Qaida from Iraq?

- No intelligence of such plans. But possibility of this happening either deliberately or accidentally cannot be ruled out. The possibility of Al Qaida or any other terrorist

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group acquiring WMD materials, expertise or technology from state programmes, or individuals associated with them is a major concern.

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