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#### NOTE

It may be odd for a Labour Prime Minister and a Republican President to have a common political interest, but we do!

What's our problem? Iraq on the ground is tough. We lose our people to terrorist attacks. We haven't found enough on WMD. So two things happen. Our public wonders whether it was all worth it or even worse is persuaded we misled them. And in the international community there is a sense of Schadenfreude. Bush and Blair started it. It's their problem, let them sort it. Hence, the present situation in the UN. And Syria, Iran, North Korea and others sense we are weaker and so they can play around.

We need a coherent strategy to get us back on the high ground and get the public, at home and abroad, to focus on the big picture.

Because let us be very clear. If we lose this battle the world will be less safe. The ability of the US and its allies to influence the world will be diminished. And we will be in the crazy situation where those whose policy would have meant Saddam still in power, seem morally superior to those who removed him.

So what do we need?

- (1) Iraq. I still think our decision making is too slow. I don't mean only in Iraq. I mean between Washington, London and Baghdad. It has a feel to me of something too ad hoc, too lost in different bits of Government, not drawn together, and driven through.

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Also there are key issues that require our political input and judgement, that get left to the CPA and the Government departments.

We are making progress in Iraq. But we could do more if there was a better sense, between us, of the decisions which are vital, of the blockages and how we take the one and remove the other.

And our communication strategy – not simply in Iraq but with us – is still not as tough and clear as it could be.

- (2) UN. A new resolution helps us with donors at Madrid; with the politics, and in the wider world. So let us try to get one. But – unusually for me – I have reservations. I want a resolution only at the right price. The reason the UN is difficult is the reason I give above. Those that wanted us to fail in the war want us to fail in the peace. Until we do better in Iraq, they won't help much. I may be wrong, but I don't think so. And I am allergic to any notion that either (a) weakens the efficiency of our operation in Iraq or (b) has us asking others to "sort out our mess".

Iraq is now a battle for legitimacy. It will determine the spirit of the future world. It's why we have to win and on our terms.

- (3) WMD. This is all getting lost just in Iraq and WMD. But this was always about more than that. It was about a global threat. The starting place was Iraq because of the history. But the reason for action was never Iraq in

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isolation. It was Iraq as a test case of how determined we were, to confront the threat.

My worry now is that the world thinks: well, Iraq was a tough deal, so they won't try that again.

I think we have to be absolutely unapologetic. This is the security threat. We must deal with it. This means:

(a) the Libya deal is really important. That would hugely change the atmospherics. This is worth real time and energy to get it and our teams need to know that.

(b)

(c) A public disruption of the trade in WMD would be a tremendous reminder of what we're up against. Why not do a major thing on this? People need to know why we're worried. At present they don't.

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- (4) The wider agenda. As ever, the view of us on terrorism and WMD is contaminated by concerns on other issues. And these issues matter to us, in any event, substantially and politically.
- (a) We should be the ones reactivating the WTO – that would give us a lot of suasion everywhere.
- (b) Carry on with MEPP. I still think the weakness is the lack of an independent, credibly monitored, security plan – the ones in place at the moment have no credibility. If you constructed the plan, got the Quartet to back it and presented it on a pre-prepared basis to Israel and the Palestinians, it mightn't work but it would give us a chance and above all, it would force the world to confront the fact that the problem is terrorism. The Israelis may be intransigent but whilst the terrorism is not properly confronted, the intransigence is inevitable.
- (c) Climate change. You can't change on Kyoto. But you could say it's time to tackle this in a different way and you will make this an issue for you in 2004 at the G8 and us in 2005. Africa also.

Way Forward

- (1) A regular, even weekly stocktake on Iraq with an agenda agreed by Nigel and Condi, so we can remove any blockages and give direction.

- (2) A strategic plan to re-highlight the terrorism/WMD issue, including Libya, Iran and North Korea and the world trade in WMD.
- (3) Start work on a common agenda that is non-security but could be part of your November visit. So this becomes not about Iraq alone but a comprehensive world view.
- (4) Get our confidence in our story back. Iraq is better without Saddam. WMD/terror remains the 21<sup>st</sup> century threat. Our global agenda is the only way to a better future not just for us but for the world. We're not going soft on it. We're going to be utterly determined on it, because it's right.

I don't know about you. But my political position is very clear. I won't win re-election on Iraq alone. But if Iraq is wrong or people don't get the security threat, it will be a major problem. On the other hand, if Iraq comes right and people do get the threat, my opponents will have a lot of explaining to do.

And by this time next year, it better be going right, not wrong. For us and for the world!