

DECLASSIFIED

2323

1/6/03

SECRET

cc: [redacted]  
SP [redacted]  
na [redacted]

DAVID MANNING

## BW TRAILERS

1. I refer to our conversation this a.m.
2. Our experts continue to assess that the trailers almost certainly form part of the mobile BW production facilities identified in the intelligence. They cannot think of any other credible explanation for them. This is also the firm view of the [redacted] in the US. Indeed, the latter have now said so in detail on their websites.
3. Over the past week an Inter-Agency US team, with one UK representative, has been in Baghdad to investigate the trailers. The team contains a mix of non-Government, Government and Intelligence Agency experts. As of today, our readout from their deliberations is that they look like coming out with the same conclusion as the [redacted] However, there had earlier been a flurry when a preliminary draft from the team appeared at our DIS stating that, as presently configured, the trailers could not be used as a biological production system. It seems that this was an initial technical/engineering view from some consultants which should not have issued. It was quickly withdrawn following [redacted] It really does seem that it has no status. Confusing, nonetheless.
4. I will have a preliminary assessment of the trailers ready for you for your return on 3 June. We have a CIG lined up for the end of the week to cover this topic and, as far as possible, our assessment of the Iraqi BW programme/capabilities. But we can/should only issue a formal assessment when we feel confident that we have enough data. Until then we have to continue to caveat public comment.

JOHN SCARLETT

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED

1<sup>st</sup> June 2003