

DECLASSIFIED

189

THIS DOCUMENT  
HAS BEEN  
SCANNED

PRIME MINISTER

From: Alastair Campbell  
Date: 19 December 2002  
S /02

Cc: Jonathan Powell  
David Manning  
Sally Morgan  
Matthew Rycroft  
PMOS

*Above with attachments*

P/S Jack Straw  
P/S Geoff Hoon  
John Williams  
Daniel Preece  
~~Des Bowen~~  
John Scarlett  
Asif Ahmad  
Martin Howard

*Above without attachments*

0104/02/01

Re: Iraq Communications

You asked me to develop the short note I did last week on Iraq. Two documents are attached to this note.

1. The 2 page objectives document that we will publish to the House in the New Year.
2. An agreed Iraq strategy document. You need only flick through this, but it shows a lot of work has been done, and we have the outlines of a good communication strategy.



ALASTAIR CAMPBELL

DECLASSIFIED

# DECLASSIFIED

## NO FURTHER COPIES TO BE MADE

Iraq is moving up a gear as an issue and as we enter the New Year we need to step up our communications efforts. We have in place the logistics necessary to implement a major communications strategy; weekly strategy meeting, daily reviews, daily US conference calls, CIC re-activated (though I'm being driven mad by systemic and ludicrous problems re staffing and funding), excellent output by the Islamic Media Unit, a small but effective presence in Amman (media route to Baghdad), good co-operation with the Agencies. We have an agreed Iraq strategy document, attached; and a good story development bank, (though the CIC staffing problem is making it difficult to implement that part)

Moving up a gear will require greater input on the public front from you, however, to support and build upon which Jack and Geoff have been doing, and to signal to other Ministers and Ambassadors the need to engage more in the public diplomacy effort across various audiences.

The long-term objectives, as agreed, are set out in the attached 2-page document headed 'Iraq Policy Objectives'. I recommend that we publish the document to Parliament on the first day back (Tuesday January 7<sup>th</sup>). Please make any amendments you wish in manuscript and send back to me. The plan, as discussed, is that publication would be accompanied by a Commons statement from you, alongside publicity generated by the Heads of Mission Conference at the FCO.

As well as updating on any developments over the holiday (be they related to Blix/inspection and a considered UK response to the declaration, UK military preparations; diplomatic traffic; MEPP) a statement will allow us to set out the strategic framework of the government's overall approach, combining overall objectives, and then the drawing together of the various planks of strategy, namely diplomatic (i.e. UN, inspections route, alliance building) political (i.e. MEPP, London Conference, Muslim outreach home and abroad) military (preparations continue because he has to understand we are serious) and "humanitarian" (there for the long term, post-Saddam commitment, understand the reality of Iraqi lives, etc.) as well as addressing issues of proliferation and terrorism.

As I said last week, I feel we need this for the same purpose we used the post September 11<sup>th</sup> document, namely to give us all the big picture to communicate, and give us a handle for the difficult questions as we go. It will also allow us to

DECLASSIFIED



change' message to a more subtle 'disarmament' message.) This will require serious input from here.

We have on the stocks a "Contract With The Iraqi People" and we need to decide when and how to deploy it. We also need to remind people of what we did in Kosovo and Afghanistan, and the better lives of people there now as part of our long-term commitment message.

So within all this there are various audiences, and we now have agreed scripts for UK domestic, UK Muslim, European, Arab and Iraqi audiences (and within that sections of audiences) which we are using as the basis for a series of articles, speeches, briefings. You can see these if you're interested.

In all this, we need a clear sense of a UK government position that is our own. It need not be at odds with the US but it should be understood to be our position, not merely an echo of theirs.

Both domestically, but also in Europe and in the region, we are hit by the sense that we are doing this for America, and to protect the US-UK relationships, rather than because we believe it to be the right thing for us. The Americans talk always about the threat to the US, we have to communicate better the threat and relevance to the UK.

This can lead to differences of emphasis that are not harmful to either of us.

E.g. the US body language at the moment is "UN inspections all fine and dandy, but basically we're set for war."

Ours should be that the issue of Iraq/WMD has to be addressed, we worked hard to get UN route as the way to deal with it, and we're working hard to make that route work. But Saddam has to understand this is his last chance, and in the meantime, we carry on military preparations.

On inspections/Blix for example, the US tone is dismissive rather than deliberative. The FCO have written up a detailed paper and graphic on the UK process of the UK analysis of the Iraq declaration, and how that will be used to feed into the Blix operation. We have to be deliberative.

We need to set out our own definition of material breach. The closest we have is Jack's statement that "material breach means something significant: some

behaviour or pattern of behaviour which is serious. Amongst such breaches could be action by the Government of Iraq seriously to obstruct or impede the inspectors, to intimidate witnesses, or a pattern of behaviour where any single action appears relatively minor but the actions as a whole add up to something deliberate and more significant: something which shows Iraq's intention not to comply." Getting lines straight with (and within) the US Administration is not easy. They are saying the Declaration itself is a material breach, when we are saying it's a process which ultimately require judgement. I also sense the media confuse material breach and trigger.

We need to rebut the 'poodle' charge by answering more clearly the questions – Why Iraq? Why now? And why us? We made some progress on this after the summer, but have fallen back a little. Why Iraq needs to be clearer: it is because he is unique. A pariah. Alone in using WMD against his people. Alone in that there is no way of entering into dialogue (cf North Korea, Syria, Libya, Iran.) Unrivalled in his barbarity.

Why now? Because the world has come together on this now and if we fail to implement the UN's will now, every rogue state and every dictator will be emboldened. Now because not to would be irresponsible.

Why our troops? What is it to do with us? If he uses WMD, it will engulf the world. We will not escape the consequences, we can't stay out. We'll do what we think is right. It's right to take out his WMD and if this is the only way, it's the right thing to do.

Additionally, there is a very important argument domestically and in Europe: We cannot allow Saddam to treat UN and UNSCRs with continued contempt. If we do – could be end of UN; which would be very bad for multilateralism.

These arguments need strengthening. I'd be interested in how you think we can best answer these questions.

We need to put over to the public too that there is UK military story here, that we are in charge of our military preparations, separate from what the US is doing, though obviously linked and co-operating closely.

we have agreed MoD should step up their military preparedness briefing.

SECRET - PERSONAL  
DECLASSIFIED

In addition, we need to bolster our defences against some of the negatives here and even more so, in the region where we have real problems.

We need to improve our rebuttal operation in the Arab media.

We are putting together for the New Year a team of Ministers across departments to do Arab TV and radio (far more influential than press), and you may need to instruct that this will become a priority.

We are working on a script rebutting the charge that the conflict is all about oil (particularly important if US military make oil fields early objective).

And we need to keep up the focus - for domestic and Iraq/regional opinion - on the nature of the regime, the human rights record, etc. (Most Iraqis have never heard of Halabja)

We need to make more of the issue of WMD more generally, and make the link (largely unbelieved here or in the US) with terrorism. It is a theoretical link, not yet an actual one, and the US, in continuing to make claims of an actual link, risk being counter productive on this.

We need better answers to the charge of double standards re Israel, which is the single biggest impediment to effective communication in the region.

We continue to get hit on sanctions, and NFZs and need better explanations.

So we have a big job of work to do, and will require a lot of input from you. In terms of the month ahead, this would look like:

- New Year: Holiday and MEPP (tbc)
- Jan 1/2: TB New Year message (confirmed)
- Jan 6: Around FCO heads of mission meeting, to which JS is speaking on the 6<sup>th</sup>, we brief context for
- Jan 7: TB Statement to the House and objectives document (tbc)
- Jan 8: Arab media (one - off i/v or briefing) (tbc)
- Jan 9: JS Speech on Islam and the West (confirmed) and visit to Indonesia
- W/c Jan13: PA conference (tbc)
- Jan 13: TB Press conference
- Jan 16: TB Muslim Community Event (Scotland) (tbc)

**DECLASSIFIED**

- Jan 21: TB Liaison Committee (confirmed)
- Jan 26: TB Frost interview (confirmed)
- Jan 27: Next UNSC (confirmed)
- Jan 28: GWB - State of the Union (confirmed)
- Jan 30: TB visit Brick Lane with Bangladeshi PM. (confirmed subject to travel)

Some of these will obviously be both international and domestic, and of course there is a GWB visit to fit in at the end of the month.

Are you happy for us to commit all this to the diary? Could you draft your own 'why now, why Iraq, why us' note. (We have the old lines, and the arguments are the same, but we'd welcome your input and current thinking.)

Are you happy with the content of the policy objectives document? If not, could you amend it and get back to me ASAP. Do you agree we should publish it on January 7<sup>th</sup> with a statement from you? Who do you want to draft the statement?

**DECLASSIFIED**