

## DOCUMENT 7

- Minute (TO7934) from Desmond Bowen to John Scarlett copied to Alastair Campbell, Jonathan Powell and David Manning titled 'The Iraq Dossier' dated 11 September 2002

Thank you for a sight of the revised draft of the Dossier. I thought you might find it helpful to have a few comments on the draft as it stands now, accepting that you have more work to do on it.

I take it as read that the foreword is a political piece, signed by the Prime Minister or another Minister. In that text it would be useful to make the point that what follows is the work of officials, drawing on sensitive intelligence material. The foreword can be as loaded as we like in terms of the political message (provided it is consistent with the dossier itself), whereas the text itself should be the judgement of the experts.

As regards the wickedness of Saddam and his regime, I wonder if there are documents or statements which we can cite that clearly indicate his ambitions regionally and his intentions internally. The bit of the jigsaw that doesn't quite hang together is what Saddam intends to do with the WMD he has been so intent on acquiring. It is one thing to ask the rhetorical question: what could they be used for except making mischief regionally; it is another to be able to point to stated objectives either from intelligence or public documents. It is, of course, the case that you point to the facts of Saddam's aggression and repression and use of WMD; perhaps we can make more of this and his unpredictability.

In looking at the WMD sections, you clearly want to be as firm and authoritative as you can be. You will need to judge the extent to which you need to hedge your judgements with, for example, "it is almost certain" and similar caveats. I appreciate that this can increase the authenticity of the document in terms of it being a proper assessment, but that needs to be weighed against the use that will be made by the opponents of action who will add up the number of judgements on which we do not have absolute clarity.

In the current stage of the draft there are two key sections on pages 30 and 36 which will need to be given proper prominence, probably at the end of that section. The sub-sections are entitled: Why Are We Concerned and Conclusions. I think it would be helpful to draw together the state of advancement of both chemical and biological capability, with military thinking and the delivery means. It would be helpful if there was more about where ballistic missiles are likely to be targeted rather than what countries are in range. The map on page 41 gives a good idea of the potential coverage. This also links back to the point at paragraph 3 above on intentions.

There may be an additional point about Human Rights, probably for the FCO to elaborate, which is less about abuses and more about the year on year degradation of Iraqi economic conditions such that more and more of the population have been falling below the poverty line because of Saddam's policies.

Finally, the question which we have to have in the back of our mind is "Why Now?". I think we have moved away from promoting the idea that we are in

imminent danger of attack and therefore intend to act in pre-emptive self defence. The approach is rather that Saddam has failed to abide by UNSCRS and his flouting of international law and continuing acquisition of WMD cannot be tolerated any longer. This difference is important because the focus shifts to Saddam's continuing efforts to equip himself with WMD, which is what the evidence shows.