



Ninth Report  
of the  
**Foreign Affairs Committee**

Session 2002-03

**The Decision to go to War in Iraq**

Further Response of the Secretary of State for  
Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs

*Presented to Parliament  
by the Secretary of State for  
Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs  
By Command of Her Majesty  
February 2004*

**© Crown Copyright 2004**

The text in this document (excluding the Royal Arms and departmental logos) may be reproduced free of charge in any format or medium providing that it is reproduced accurately and not used in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Crown copyright and the title of the document specified.

Any enquiries relating to the copyright in this document should be addressed to The Licensing Division, HMSO, St. Clements House, 2-16 Colegate, Norwich NR3 1BQ. Fax: 01603-723000 or e-mail: [licensing@cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk)

**In its initial response to the Foreign Affairs Committee's Report on the Decision to go to War in Iraq (Cm 6062), the Foreign and Commonwealth Office deferred replying to points 9-14 of the Report until after Lord Hutton's Report on the Circumstances Surrounding the Death of Dr David Kelly. Lord Hutton reported on 28 January. Responses to the deferred questions are:**

**9. We conclude that the 45 minutes claim did not warrant the prominence given to it in the dossier, because it was based on intelligence from a single, uncorroborated source. We recommend that the Government explain why the claim was given such prominence. (Paragraph 70)**

We disagree that the 45 minute claim was given undue prominence. The 45 minutes claim came from an established, reliable and long-standing line of reporting. It was included in an early September Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC) assessment, as soon as the underlying intelligence had become available. It was consistent with previous JIC judgements on Iraq's command and control arrangements. Other issues were given a similar level of prominence in the dossier: for example the judgement that Iraq was building up its Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) capability and that it was concealing its programmes.

**10. We further recommend that in its response to this Report the Government set out whether it still considers the September dossier to be accurate in what it states about the 45 minute claim, in the light of subsequent events. (Paragraph 71)**

Had Saddam used Chemical and Biological Weapons (CBW) munitions during the conflict we have no reason to doubt he could have deployed them in this timeframe.

**11. We conclude that Alastair Campbell did not play any role in The Inclusion of the 45 minutes claim in the September dossier. (Paragraph 77)**

This is a statement of fact.

**12. We conclude that it was wrong for Alastair Campbell or any Special Adviser to have chaired a meeting on an intelligence matter, and we recommend that this practice cease. (Paragraph 79)**

The purpose of the 9 September meeting was not to review or assess intelligence, but to discuss public presentation of Iraq policy, including the publication of the WMD dossier. It was entirely appropriate for Alastair Campbell to call and chair such a meeting.

**13. We conclude that on the basis of the evidence available to us Alastair Campbell did not exert or seek to exert improper influence on the drafting of the September dossier. (Paragraph 84)**

We agree.

**14. We conclude that the claims made in the September dossier were in all probability well founded on the basis of the intelligence then available, although as we have already stated we have concerns about the emphasis given to some of them. We further conclude that, in the absence of reliable evidence that intelligence personnel have either complained about or sought to distance themselves from the content of the dossier, allegations of politically inspired meddling cannot credibly be established. (Paragraph 86)**

We welcome the Committee's conclusion that the claims in the September dossier were well founded. As stated above we do not agree that some of them were given undue emphasis. We also welcome the conclusion that allegations of politically inspired meddling cannot credibly be established.









Published by TSO (The Stationery Office) and available from:

**Online**

[www.tso.co.uk/bookshop](http://www.tso.co.uk/bookshop)

**Mail, Telephone, Fax & E-mail**

TSO

PO Box 29, Norwich NR3 1GN

Telephone orders/General enquiries 0870 600 5522

Order through the Parliamentary Hotline *Lo-call* 0845 7 023474

Fax orders 0870 600 5533

Email [book.orders@tso.co.uk](mailto:book.orders@tso.co.uk)

Textphone 0870 240 3701

**TSO Shops**

123 Kingsway, London WC2B 6PQ

020 7242 6393 Fax 020 7242 6394

68-69 Bull Street, Birmingham B4 6AD

0121 236 9696 Fax 0121 236 9699

9-21 Princess Street, Manchester M60 8AS

0161 834 7201 Fax 0161 833 0634

16 Arthur Street, Belfast BT1 4GD

028 9023 8451 Fax 028 9023 5401

18-19 High Street, Cardiff CF10 1PT

029 2039 5548 Fax 029 2038 4347

71 Lothian Road, Edinburgh EH3 9AZ

0870 606 5566 Fax 0870 606 5588

**TSO Accredited Agents**

(See Yellow Pages)

*and through good booksellers*

