

NEWSREADER FIONA BRUCE

FB. Tony Blair In Iraq pays tribute to British troops and defies critics of the war.

(CLIP OF TB SPEAKING IN IRAQ)

Here questions are asked about whether the government distorted intelligence reports to justify the war. Also tonight ... (HEADLINES)

(REPORT ON TB'S VISIT TO IRAQ)

FB. Here, MPs are calling for an enquiry after accusations that the government's dossier on Iraq's weapons was distorted by Downing Street. Security sources have told the BBC they believe parts of the report overstated the threat posed by Saddam Hussein. Downing Street though has dismissed the claims. Our special correspondent Gavin Hewitt investigates.

GH This is really a story about trust. It begins here at MI6, the headquarters of the intelligence service. Some of those who work here are said to be uneasy about what the government did with information they passed on about Iraq. There were claims today that when Downing Street received the dossier it wanted

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it toughened up. When it was eventually published it did contain some dramatic warnings.

TONY BLAIR

That he has existing and active military plans for the use of chemical and biological weapons, which could be activated within forty five minutes.

GH The government acknowledged today that the forty five minute threat was based on a single source, it wasn't corroborated. This has rattled some MPs who are calling for an investigation.

MENZIES CAMPBELL MP

If you take intelligence and you massage it for political purposes, then essentially you turn it into propaganda. If these allegations are true, then there will be very considerable anxiety in all branches of the security services.

GH The government said today that every word within the dossier was the work of the security services. There had been no pressure from Number 10.

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ADAM INGRAM

All of the information which the prime minister, and others, including myself, presented in the build up to this conflict was based upon well informed information.

GH But others with experience in the intelligence community say there were some murmurings about the final wording of a dossier. This is what they think happened:

PAULINE NEVILLE-JONES

Professionals are cautious. They will only have put things into it which they were really confident about. I think probably that when it got into the political part of the machine, into the government information services, they probably said to themselves, this won't convince anybody because it doesn't come across clearly enough, you know, we need actually to beef up the language in a way so it carries conviction.

GH I have spoken to one of those who was consulted on the dossier. Six months work was apparently involved. But in the final week before publication, some material was taken out, some material put in. His judgement, some spin from

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Number Ten did come into play. Even so the intelligence community remains convinced weapons of mass destruction will be found in Iraq. Only then will all the doubts go away. Gavin Hewitt, BBC News.

FB Our political correspondent John Pienaar has been travelling with the prime minister. He's now in Poland's capital Warsaw for the start of a round of discussions with world leaders. John, Mr Blair we saw there in a very upbeat mood in Iraq. Is there any sign of concern about the fact that the weapons of mass destruction have still not been found, and now these allegations about overstating the threat posed by Iraq in the first place?

JP I think it must be embarrassing to have such a fundamental justification for the war in Iraq called into question continually like this. And there's no denying that that case, that justification, has been rather rescripted by Mr Blair, just as it has been by political leaders in Washington. Now all the emphasis as we saw in Jeremy's report today, was on the liberation of an oppressed people, was on bringing stability to the region. The absence of those

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weapons of mass destruction in the speech was a glaring omission. And meanwhile politically those who are most critical of the war in the first place, and plenty of others besides are now beginning to find their voices again.

FB And John, that statement were saw from Mr Blair there about the war being seen as one of the defining moments of the century, it's quite ambitious given it's only 2003. What did he mean by that?

JP Well it was quite, quite a statement, not the sort of thing you just casually drop into, into conversation. And what Tony Blair meant by that was that the war had shown that it was possible for armed intervention to, to end in good. That it was possible to give some stimulus to the Middle East peace process, but the diplomatic wounds are still fresh, and all the diplomacy of which this is a part, he goes onto Russia and then France can only just make a start in healing those wounds at best.

FB John, thanks very much.

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