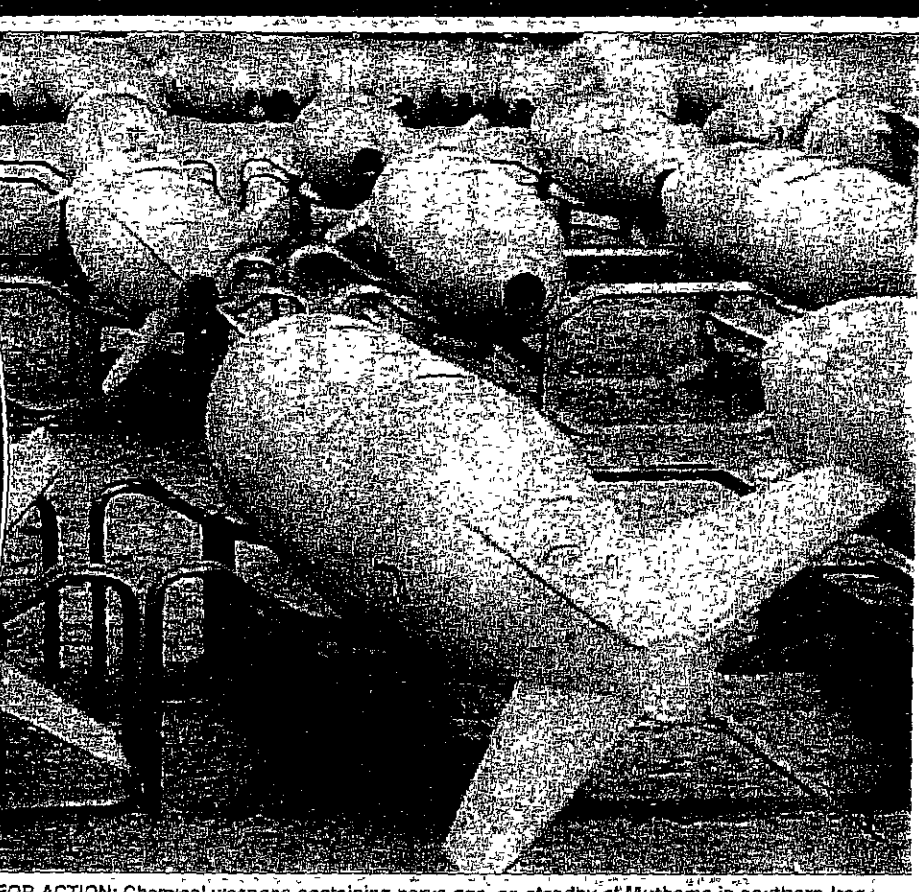


45 MINUTES FROM



POISED FOR ACTION: Chemical weapons containing nerve gas, on standby at Muthama in southern Iraq.

Mad Saddam set to attack

SADDAM Hussein has terrifying weapons at the ready which could be fired within 45 minutes.

The tyrant is developing missiles that could wipe out British military bases in Cyprus.

And he is just a few years from building his own nuclear warhead. These were among the chilling claims made yesterday in Tony Blair's "dossier of death" - 55

pages of dramatic revelations about Iraq's military strength which the Prime Minister believes will convince the public that a war to topple Saddam is justified.

The study said more than 3,500 British troops stationed on Cyprus could be targeted in an attack by chemical or biological weapons.

Saddam has hidden 20 medium-range missiles that could just about reach the Mediterranean island.

But he is only a few years away from developing a more powerful rocket engine and is known to have constructed testing equipment.

The new missile could hit Cyprus with ease and would have the potential to inflict massive casualties.

The Prime Minister published the long-awaited document before speaking to a packed Commons about the international crisis.

He faced down some of his backbenchers who have voiced doubts about joining the US in a military strike.

Sadistic

"I defy anyone to say that this cruel and sadistic dictator should be allowed any possibility of getting his hands on chemical, biological or even nuclear weapons of mass destruction," he told MPs.

The report, compiled from US and British intelligence sources, warns

● Saddam has plans to use chemical and biological weapons - even against his own people.

● He is one to two years

STAR SPECIAL REPORT By John McJannet

from building a nuclear bomb if he manages to obtain vital material from abroad - and five years from doing it on his own.

● He has been trying to buy "significant quantities" of uranium, needed for the missile, from Africa and may have gone so

Concealed

● Specialist workers have been secretly recalled to resume work on a nuclear weapons programme.

● Attempts are being made to develop missile engines capable of reaching British bases in Cyprus as well as Greece and Turkey.

● Saddam has illegally kept hold of 21 al-Hussein missiles which can carry chemical or biological warheads for 650km - putting Cyprus in Iraq's range.

● He has concealed sensitive equipment and documents in case of visits from UN arms inspectors.

In his foreword to the dossier Mr Blair says: "It is clear that, despite sanctions the policy of containment has not worked sufficiently well to prevent Saddam from developing these weapons."

"I am in no doubt that the threat is serious and current that he has managed

progress on weapons of mass destruction and that he has to be stopped."

The document accuses Saddam of running a gangster regime that keeps people in fear through torture and executions.

He is even said to have killed 40 of his relatives including women and children.

In Baghdad Iraq's culture minister Yousif Humaid told a news conference the dossier was "baseless".

He said the Prime Minister was part of "a campaign of lies" inspired by Israel against Iraq.

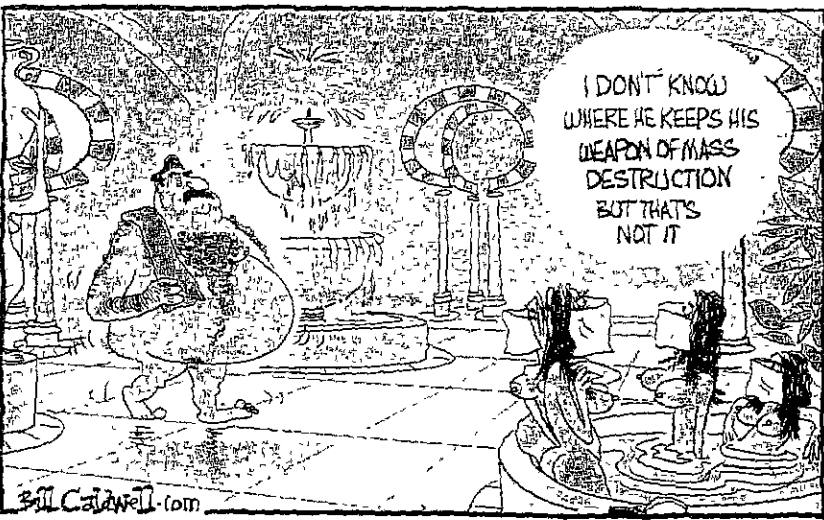
Backer

Mr Blair has been the main backer of President George W Bush's determination to remove Saddam from power.

He told MPs that he and other ministers had been briefed in detail by the intelligence services and were "satisfied" about the truth of the allegations.

Mr Blair said Saddam sees his weapons of mass destruction as "vital to his survival" - as a demonstration of his power and influence in the region.

He added: "The threat Saddam and weapons of mass destruction is r



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A CHEMICAL WAR



BRIEFING: Tony Blair puts his message across in the Commons yesterday

DAILY STAR says

TONY BLAIR'S dossier-of-death was not as convincing. It lacks the clinching fact to confirm we've no alternative but to go to war against it. Indeed, much of the 55 page report contained information we've heard many times before. But it would be wrong to dismiss it. This document wasn't the "dossier" that one Labour backbencher claimed it does make a frightening read.

The shock comes from seeing details about Saddam's military capabilities piled together in a single account. British troops in Cyprus, we're told, a range of his chemical and biological weapons.

Some of those missiles could be launched within minutes. And he's perhaps only a year away building a nuclear bomb.

Saddam is not just a threat to his own people nearby states - but to us as well. We don't know he intends to do with his growing arsenal of weapons. But we can't afford to wait and see.

The man is power-crazed, mad and evil and doesn't disarm - we may have to take him out.

American or British propaganda. The history and the present threat are real Iraq the region and the whole world would be better off without Saddam."

Crisis

Mr Blair added: "We have no quarrel with the Iraqi people. Liberated from Saddam they could make a force for good. The ending of the crisis would be the cause for regret for no-one other than Saddam."

Foreign Secretary Jack Straw said the crisis echoed the emergence of Hitler in the 1930s.

"Abandonment of responsibility equivocation in the face of evil led Europe down a desperate path in the late 1930s," he said.

"Diplomacy only has any chance of success if it is combined with the clearest possible prospect that force of arms will be used if diplomacy fails."

Tory leader Iain Duncan Smith gave Mr Blair his backing and said of Saddam: "He has had 10 years of second chances. Now surely is the time to act."

Military

But the dossier failed to convince many Labour MPs, Liberal Democrats and military experts.

Former Labour defence minister Peter Kilfoyle said it was full of "amateurish" claims. Labour

MP Diane Abbott dismissed the report as "a damp squib". She said "It really consists of a reworking of information that was already public. It seems more like a PR stunt than a serious attempt to bring new information forward."

Tony Blair will have to do better than this if he wants to convince the British public to go to war.

Liberal Democrat leader Charles Kennedy said Iraq was "a grotesque, amoral regime" that had to be dealt with.

Fright

But he called on Mr Blair to allow MPs to vote on any proposed military action.

"I would ask the Prime Minister to continue to resist calls, whether they come from certain people within this country or others in the US, for precipitate action," he said.

As Mr Blair addressed MPs, anti-war protesters sang Give Peace a Chance outside Parliament.

But a Sky TV poll suggested 78 per cent of the country agreed with his belief that Saddam needed to be tackled.

In the City, shares plunged into a six-year low as investors took fright at the prospect of war.

At one point more than £27 billion was taken off the value of Britain's top 100 companies.

PM'S DOSSIER 'NOT ENOUGH'



FACTS BARE: A protest yesterday

TONY Blair's dossier of "death" does not appear to justify attacking Iraq, said military experts.

Major Charles Heyman, editor of Jane's World Armies, said it had no "killer fact" showing Saddam had to be taken out.

But he added, "It is a very clever document. Everybody expected it to outline the case for war on Iraq, but it doesn't even attempt to do that."

"I think it is designed to be the start of a rolling campaign which will involve trying to get the weapons inspectors back in."

"Then, if Saddam doesn't allow them in, Bush and Blair will have the ammunition to do what they consider necessary."

Thomas Withington of King's College London said: "It shows Saddam has the means to threaten his neighbours, and this is probably Blair's best shot at selling his plans to the country."

But Dr John Shipman of the International Institute of Strategic Studies said the dossier showed "weapons of mass destruction were at the heart of Saddam's military plans."

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