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SPEECHES



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REINTEGRATING IRAQ INTO THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY - A CAUSE WITH 'COMPELLING MORAL FORCE' (21/02/03)

Event: Meeting at the Royal Institute of International Affairs

Location: Chatham House, London

Speech Date: 21/02/03

Speaker: Jack Straw

الترجمة العربية

Video extract from Jack Straw's speech at Chatham House, 3mins (VID, 56k)

Video extract from Jack Straw's speech at Chatham House, 3mins (VID, 128k)

On behalf of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, I would like to thank Professor Bulmer-Thomas and his team for their efforts over the past twelve months. It's hard to overstate the importance of our partnership with Chatham House. As we enter an uncertain new era in international affairs, it's all the more important that FCO staff are able to step back from the day to day vicissitudes of diplomacy and develop a strategic perspective on the environment in which they operate. Chatham House has performed this invaluable service for British diplomats for the past 80 years.

Earlier this month, FCO officials and academics met here to discuss one of the great challenges of our times, the growing phenomenon of state failure. In my remarks today I want to focus on a state which has utterly failed its citizens: Iraq.

However, Iraq differs from the classic failed state in one key respect. Unlike, say Somalia and the Democratic Republic of Congo where it is the collapse of the state which has led to such misery for their peoples, in Iraq it is an all too powerful state – an authoritarian regime – which has terrorised its population in order first to establish and then to maintain control.

The United Nations has been trying to remove a central pillar of Saddam's apparatus of terror - his weapons of mass destruction – for the past 12 years. As this stand-off enters its final phase, my message today is that in securing Iraq's disarmament we will remove the threat Saddam poses to his neighbours and the wider world; we will effect a decisive shift in the fortunes of the long suffering Iraqi people; and we will have reasserted the authority of the international rule of law.

Amidst talk of European splits and transatlantic rifts, it's worth remembering that the objective of Iraqi disarmament unites the world. EU Heads of State confirmed this week that they would not tolerate Saddam's defiance of UN demands indefinitely. SCR 1441, which was passed unanimously last November, told Saddam that he had a final opportunity to disarm voluntarily. If he did not, and if he failed to comply immediately

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with weapons inspectors and the other obligations on him, he would face 'serious consequences'. Diplomatic parlance is notoriously ambiguous, but in this case the terminology had only one meaning: disarmament by force.

INTERNATIONAL UNITY

SCR 1441 hardly marked a sudden rush to war. Iraq was found guilty in 1991. Twelve years of defiance later, Saddam Hussein is not entitled to any presumption of innocence. It is for him to prove that he has, once and for all, given up what we know he has.

UN inspectors would not be in Iraq today without the threat of force. But inspectors cannot achieve containment without co-operation. If co-operation is denied, the UN Security Council has already warned that force must be used. Otherwise Iraq will again use these terrible weapons. This is a key part of the moral case - preventing Iraq launching more wars of aggression, and dealing definitively with a tyrant who flouts international non-proliferation norms.

In diplomacy, international unity on the ends - if not the means - is a rare and precious commodity. But in respect of Iraq there is agreement on the end. This reflects a common perception that Saddam's appetite for WMD, when married to his willingness to use all possible means to repress his own people and intimidate his neighbours, makes him a unique threat to international peace and security.

But consensus on the objective is not simply based on the extent of the Iraqi threat. With each passing year of Iraqi defiance of international opinion, there has been growing awareness of the immense consequences of a failure to match our words with actions. In a speech at the International Institute for Strategic Studies last week, I set out the profoundly damaging implications for international efforts to halt the spread of the world's most dangerous weapons. And I examined the great damage which inactivity and vacillation would inflict on the authority of the UN Security Council. The stakes could not be higher. If the UN proves unable to act on the spirit and the letter of mandatory Chapter VII resolutions when faced with the most egregious non-compliance it risks joining its predecessor, the League of Nations, as a footnote in history.

SADDAM'S WMD - A THREAT TO THE IRAQI PEOPLE

We should not forget that the consequences of inaction would not just be disastrous for the international legal system. We would be delivering another blow to the long suffering Iraqi people.

One of the myths about Saddam's regime, which I heard repeated only this morning, is that the full brutality of his regime has been effectively constrained since the end of the Gulf War. The UN and various NGOs have amassed a mountain of evidence to the contrary. Perhaps the most shocking example was Saddam's policy of ethnic cleansing in the 1990s, when he drained the marsh areas of southern Iraq, forcing the population to relocate to urban areas where it could be controlled by the regime's security forces. In the words of the UN Environment Programme, 'around 40,000 of the estimated half-million Marsh Arabs are now living in refugee camps in Iran,' and 'a 5000 year old culture . is in serious jeopardy of coming to an abrupt end.'

Neither should we forget that, amongst the welter of horrifying statistics about Saddam's human rights abuses, it is the Iraqi people themselves who have been and remain the most likely victims of his WMD.

One of the problems is that the statistics sound abstract. To counter this, I met 10 Iraqi exiles this morning. They reeled off a list impossible to invent of relatives who had disappeared or who had been tortured. One told me how a cousin - a woman doctor - had been killed in front of her family. Some of them would not be photographed, in case they were identified by the regime. If you wondered why Iraqi scientists are afraid to be interviewed by the inspectors, it is for the same reason. They fear for their lives.

Saddam believes his poisons and gases are a key element in his military arsenal, not a weapon of last resort. The Iraqi regime used nerve agents to

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barbarity. His impact on his country has been all the more depressing when one considers the direction Iraq might have taken in the 1970s. At that time, there was every prospect that Iraq might build on its rich cultural legacy and wealth of natural resources to become one of the leading countries in the Muslim world.

Although the state of Iraq has existed only since 1920, the area now incorporated within its borders has been the home of several of mankind's earliest civilisations. Two of the greatest advances in humankind's evolution have originated on Iraqi soil. The first was the practice of agriculture. In the foothills of what is now northern Iraq, agriculture and the domestication of animals were practised over 6000 years ago.

The second was the development of urban life in the city state organisations of Sumeria. By the fourth millennium BC, a complex of 13 city states stretched from Baghdad to the Gulf.

The Sumerians created the first accurate calendars based on the 12 month lunar year and the cycle of 60 minutes and 12 hours that we still use to tell the time.

THE SITUATION SINCE 1979

At the beginning of the twentieth century, there was every reason to expect that the territory which eventually became Iraq in 1920 would have a prosperous future. When Saddam Hussein assumed power, Iraq had a burgeoning salaried middle class and enjoyed a rising standard of living. Iraq's GDP per capita income in 1979 bore comparison with that of Malaysia and Portugal. At the start of the Iran-Iraq war it was more prosperous than most of the Arab world. As oil prices rose in 1980, its GDP per head reached \$3000 and its foreign reserves close to \$40 billion. With a decade of peace and merely tolerable economic management, Iraq would have widened the prosperity gap over its neighbours.

The appalling impact of Saddam's mismanagement is not well enough known. People understand that he is evil, but not that he has presided over an economic catastrophe, brought about by incompetence and indifference in equal measure. It is no accident. It is a product of enormous spending on his weapons of terror, and of his utter disregard for the fate of Iraq's people. As people come to learn more about the nature of the regime, I am convinced they increasingly see why it must be disarmed of its terrible weaponry, even if – as a last resort – that means military action. And the more people understand the regime, the less inclined they will be to give it the benefit of the doubt, as it claims laughably to have no WMD, and manoeuvres cynically to deceive the UN with minor concessions.

Saddam has engineered one of the swiftest transitions from potential prosperity to third world basket case in history. Misguided economic policies played their part. But the real culprits were Saddam's regional ambitions, his drive to expand his armed forces, and the wars of aggression he waged against Iran and then Kuwait.

These wars resulted in over one million Muslim casualties. Yet they hardly sated Saddam's appetite for slaughter. In 1988 he prosecuted a genocidal campaign in northern Iraq which was responsible for the deaths or disappearance of up to 100,000 Muslim Kurds.

Given the regime's obsession with secrecy and its isolation from the outside world, we may never know the full extent of Saddam Hussein's oppression of the Iraqi people. But the testimony of defectors and accounts from the UN Special Rapporteur provide a damning indictment of a regime that respects no moral boundaries.

The international community has been casting around for a response to Saddam's repression for the past ten years. It is clear that a solution does not lie in the international human rights machinery established in the aftermath of the Holocaust and reflected in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Whilst this machinery may have helped to improve human rights situations in certain countries from South Africa under apartheid to Suharto's Indonesia, it has utterly failed the people of Iraq.

The search for solutions led us in the first instance to impose military

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measures. In enforcing the southern and northern No Fly Zones, British and American aircraft have, at least for the time being, deterred Saddam from carrying out a repeat of the Halabja atrocity.

In northern Iraq, where UN sanctions also apply but Saddam's writ runs out, the people are better off than they ever were under his control. School enrolments are rising, not falling as in Baghdad controlled Iraq. Health indicators are improving. Infant mortality rates are now lower than before sanctions were imposed. Under the Oil for Food programme, \$18 million has been spent on renovating 41 hospitals in northern Iraq. Freed from the tyranny of Saddam's rule, the Iraqi Kurds have shown what might be possible across the country as a whole if Saddam wasn't there. A democracy has begun to emerge, underpinned by the principles of free speech and right of association

But in central Iraq there is only so much the outside world can do while Saddam remains in charge. A telling example is his decade-long abuse of the oil for food system. Saddam has regularly halted his oil exports to make a political point, starving the humanitarian programme of revenue for essential supplies, blackmailing the world through his people's suffering. In recent years billions of dollars has lain unspent in the UN Oil for Food Account. Oil revenues that should have been spent on essential medicines, foodstuffs, hospitals and schools have languished in a UN account in New York. Up to \$2.3 billion worth of goods already approved by the UN remain undelivered because Iraq has not processed the contracts. Saddam has attempted to perpetuate the myth that the UN – rather than his utter disregard for human life – is responsible for the dire humanitarian plight of the Iraqi people

At the same time, Saddam has circumvented UN sanctions both by smuggling oil and manipulating the Oil for Food Programme. The illegal revenues he has generated, worth up to \$3 billion to the regime, have underpinned a covert network to procure materiel for WMD, and have helped to bolster his apparatus of internal repression

The tragedy for the Iraqi people is that Security Council resolutions have always held out the prospect of a swift end to sanctions in return for Iraqi disarmament. In rejecting this path, Saddam has ensured that the UN policy of containment has effectively imprisoned the Iraqi people under his exceptionally brutal dictatorship. Millions of Iraqis have been condemned to a life of fear and penury.

The impact has been staggering. Almost four million Iraqis – a sixth of the population – have left the country, bringing their skills and talents to many countries, including the UK.

For those who cannot escape, the suffering has been truly unimaginable. About 60% of the population are completely dependent on the central government for food rations. About 50% of the Iraqi workforce are unemployed. UNICEF estimates that close to a quarter of Iraqi children under five suffer from chronic malnutrition. Against this backdrop, it beggars belief that the Iraqi regime has proposed spending \$20 million from the Oil for Food Programme to build an 'Olympic Sports City'. When I heard this I didn't believe. I checked it. The source is UN Office for Iraq Programme Distribution Plan, Para 222.

Given the understandable fear of expressing any criticism in public, it's difficult to assess the impact Saddam's policies have had on the attitudes of the Iraqi people. But one thing is clear. Saddam's popularity is a myth. Clandestine polling by the regime in recent months – picked up by our intelligence services – reveals that a majority of Iraqis support the overthrow of Saddam Hussein. A survey of Iraqi public opinion carried out by the International Crisis Group – a respected Brussels based NGO – has shown that a majority accepted that political change was both desirable and inevitable. This survey revealed a profound weariness with Saddam's rule, and a prevailing belief that the country has essentially been at war for the past two decades.

The ICG survey confirms that, like people in any other part of the world, the Iraqi public has a natural desire to choose their own destiny and Government, and to pursue a prosperous life within a safe environment for friends and family. The UK wants to help Iraq to achieve this. If we are

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obliged to take military action, our objective will be to secure Iraq's disarmament. But our next priority will be to help the Iraqi people to recover.

After the damage inflicted by Saddam, I am under no illusions about the scale of the reconstruction task. Democracy will not take root overnight in a country which has a long history of tribal, ethnic and religious division and mistrust.

OIL WEALTH SHOULD BENEFIT THE IRAQI PEOPLE

But the Iraqi people can take heart from nature's rich endowment. Iraq has the second largest oil reserves in the world. This can provide a vital source of national revenue as the country begins the long haul towards recovery. Of all the criticisms of our motives in pursuing Iraqi disarmament, the myth that we are actually motivated by a desire to secure Iraq's oil supplies is perhaps the most pervasive. Our cause is about weapons not oil, fear not greed.

The threat of military action is, and always has been, about pressuring Saddam Hussein to comply with SCR 1441. If this was about ensuring greater oil supplies, it would be infinitely easier to cut a deal with Saddam under which he would continue to develop his weapons in return for giving us access to his oil reserves.

Iraq is a major oil producer. We all depend on regularity of supplies, not least from the Middle East. But the simple answer to those who say this is about our greed for Iraqi oil is this: unlike Saddam, we would ensure that Iraq's oil wealth was used to the benefit of the Iraqi people. That is a promise, and not just from Britain. Colin Powell has made the same commitment on behalf of the US. I hope this oil pledge kills the myth once and for all. But I recognise that for the professional conspiracy theorists, no answer is good enough.

If a coalition of forces has to enter Iraq in the coming months to remove the threat posed by Saddam's weapons, we will move swiftly to secure Iraq's oil fields. We will ensure that the revenue generated from this resource will be used in accordance with international law and to the benefit of the people of Iraq. Oil is Iraq's legacy. It is a resource which the Iraqi people can use to build a better future, to buy clean water, to build schools and hospitals, not to enrich a murderous elite or to help the regime amass an arsenal of the world's most deadly weapons.

Our future vision for Iraq is of a stable, united and law abiding state, within its present borders, co-operating with the UN, no longer posing a threat to its neighbours or to international security, abiding by its international obligations and providing effective representative government for its people. We want the Iraqi people to live in a better Iraq - the prosperous country it was until Saddam imprisoned and plundered it.

CONCLUSION

Ladies and Gentlemen, one of the more extraordinary criticisms of the government's policy towards Iraq is that our approach smacks of hypocrisy. I have never fully grasped the logic of the argument, but it runs something like this. Given the military and diplomatic support from a host of western governments - including the UK - for Saddam during the 1980s, how can we now claim to occupy the moral high ground in criticising his human rights abuses and possession of WMD?

It is undoubtedly true that policy towards Iraq in the 1980s from many countries in the west did not factor in Saddam's real horror. But to suggest today that to atone for the errors of the past we should repeat them, and that we cannot act to address the horrors of the present defies rational analysis.

This flawed argument is a counsel of inaction, at best an exercise in hand washing. In the weeks preceding the military interventions in Kosovo and Afghanistan, some argued then that force could not possibly be justified. We acted, liberating millions of Muslims from fear and oppression. Enforcement of Saddam's obligations to disarm of his WMD may not have quite the same immediate impact on the long-suffering people of Iraq. But

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it will mark the first, decisive step towards Iraq's reintegration into the international community of nations. This cause is not only just in the narrow terms of international law, but it has a compelling moral force which is too great to ignore.

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Arrest over Observer report on spying highlights tensions between security services and No 10

Bugging row prompts UN investigation

by Martin Bright and Ed Vulliamy New York

THE United Nations has begun a top level investigation into the bugging of its delegations by the United States, first revealed in *The Observer* last week.

Sources in the office of UN Secretary General Kofi Annan confirmed last night that the spying operation had already been discussed at the UN's counter terrorism committee.

The news comes as British police confirmed the arrest of a 28-year old woman working at the top secret Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ) on suspicion of contravening the Official Secrets Act.

Last week, *The Observer* published details of a memo sent by Frank Koza, Defence Chief of Staff (Regional Targets) at the US National Security Agency, which monitors international communications. The memo ordered an intelligence 'surge' directed against Angola, Cameroon, Chile, Bulgaria and Guinea with 'extra focus on Pakistan UN matters' to win votes in favour of intervention in Iraq.

The Observer reported that it was sent to a friendly foreign intelligence agency asking for help. It has been known for some time that elements within the British security services were unhappy with the Government's use of intelligence.

The leak was described as 'more timely and potentially more important than the Pentagon Papers' by Daniel Ellsberg, the celebrated whistle blower who leaked the papers, on US involvement in Vietnam, in 1971.

The revelations of the spying operation have caused deep embarrassment to the Bush administration at a key point in the sensitive diplo-

matic negotiations at the UN.

White House spokesman Ari Fleischer was challenged about the operation last week, but said he could not comment on security issues.

The operation is thought to have been authorised by US National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice, but US intelligence experts told *The Observer* that a decision like this would also have involved Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, CIA director George Tenet and NSA chief General Michael Hayden.

President Bush would have been informed at an intelligence briefing.

Attention has now turned to the foreign intelligence agency responsible for the leak. It is believed the memo was sent out via Echelon, an international surveillance network set up by the NSA with the co-operation of GCHQ in Britain and similar organisations in Australia, New Zealand and Canada.

Wayne Madsen, of the Electronic Privacy Information Centre and himself a former NSA intelligence officer, said the leak demonstrated that there was deep unhappiness in the intelligence world.

'My feeling is that this was an authorised leak. I've been hearing of people in the US and British intelligence community who are deeply concerned about their governments "cooking" intelligence to link Iraq to al-Qaeda'.

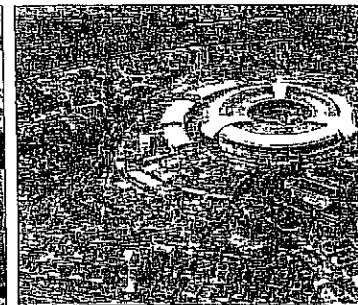
The Observer story caused a furore in Chile. President Richard Lagos spoke on the telephone with Tony Blair three times. Chile's ambassador to Britain, Mariano Fernandez, said 'We cannot understand why the US was spying on Chile'.

Global comment and reaction to *The Observer* scoop at www.observer.co.uk/iraq

Revealed: US dirty tricks to win vote on Iraq war



The *Observer* report last week (above), which led to the arrest of an employee at GCHQ (far right), the government spy-listening centre in Cheltenham. Left, Kofi Annan, whose office is investigating the bugging, which was ordered by the US National Security Agency, where (right) President Bush is pictured with the NSA director, Lieutenant-General Michael Hayden.



'Intelligence staff feel they are being forced to sacrifice their integrity for short-term political gain'

The spies and the spinner

Peter Beaumont in Amman and Gaby Hinsliff examine how Alastair Campbell and intelligence staff fell out over what we should know about Saddam

IN THE Cheltenham headquarters of Britain's secret global listening facility, GCHQ, analysts have access to one of the world's most powerful pieces of computer software.

They call it Dictionary, and its job is to screen the massive flows of intercepted data and look for groups of words of significance to whatever the analysts are seeking.

When those groups come up, the software alerts the analysts who then begin a review of all the intercepted communication in their search for hard intelligence.

It is a painstaking and rigorous procedure that is these days shared among experts across the globe from Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

On 31 January a memo was sent from the National Security Agency in Maryland from one Frank Koza at GCHQ's American sister listening operation.

The memo was blunt. It asked the recipients at GCHQ to help with an American mission to analyse US intercepts of the homes and offices

of certain UN delegations to the Security Council.

It singled out key members of the UNSC (Angola, Cameroon, Guinea, Bulgaria, Chile and Pakistan) for special attention, but said the operation should stretch to all delegations (except Britain and America, of course) if that proved necessary to give the US an edge.

The United States was looking for any information that could help Koza's government put pressure on these countries to vote for a US and UK sponsored resolution that would authorise a war against Iraq.

What Koza never suspected was that someone outside the NSA would be so shocked by his request to help with a dirty tricks campaign that they would leak his memo, or that it would end up in the hands of *The Observer*. But by last week that memo had led to the biggest spy hunt since the David Shayler affair.

In the Maryland headquarters of the NSA, incredulity at the leak - and the knowledge that someone in one of its partner intelligence organ-

isations had deliberately disclosed evidence of the operation at a time designed to cause severe damage to America's attempts to secure a second Security Council resolution authorising war against Iraq - turned to fury.

The leak, however, raises as many questions as the number of secrets it reveals. The most pressing of these remains why would a career intelligence officer risk discovery, ignominy and imprisonment to leak it in the first place?

The answer to that question is to be found not simply in the conscience of the individual intelligence officer, but in a wider conflict between the intelligence community on both sides of the Atlantic and their political masters.

In the imposing glass-fronted riverside headquarters of MI6 in London, as in the Cheltenham headquarters of GCHQ, the several thousand employees of the Secret Intelligence Service stuck to a view that some may regard as arcane in the individualism of the modern world.

They hold fast to a credo that they are the real guardians of the UK, that while politicians may come and go their work is eternal. 'The intelligence professionals feel that they stand somewhat above the vagaries of politics,' said one close observer familiar with their work.

But what has happened is that

they have come into conflict with the politicians over Iraq. They feel that their long history is in danger of being undermined by the uses made of the intelligence product by Number 10 and that the way information has been spun has corroded the public's belief in what they do.

This tension has been visible beneath the surface for months, as intelligence officials have briefed against the more outrageous claims made by the Government.

The tensions between the intelligence services and the Downing Street spin operation date back to last summer, when the first so-called secret dossier on Iraq, detailing Saddam's armoury of weapons of mass destruction, was being finalised in the autumn.

The team working on it - led by Tony Blair's director of communications Alastair Campbell, head of homeland security David Omand, Downing Street foreign policy adviser Sir David Manning, and representatives of MI5, MI6 and GCHQ - began by deciding what messages derived from intelligence material should be put across, and then attempting to find publicly available information backing them up.

The September dossier went through two or three final drafts with Campbell writing it off each time, and had already resulted in

fairly serious rows between Campbell, Omand and Stephen Lander, then head of MI5.

The essence of the disagreement is said to have been that intelligence material should be presented 'straight', rather than spiced up to make a political argument.

The problem with a second dossier on Saddam's record of deception, drawn up in January when it began to become obvious that Hans Blix's work was not making an uncontroversial case for war, was that it was completed with far less time for cross-checking.

The result was the infamous 'dodgy dossier', reliant on a plagiarised PhD thesis to make its argument that Saddam was a threat, and admissions from Downing Street that it should have acknowledged its sources.

'The dossier was unhelpful,' said one officer. 'It undermines the very real message that we are trying to get across - to persuade the public that Saddam Hussein is a risk, but for many complicated reasons.'

'There is a feeling that there is something reckless about some of the people around Tony Blair - that they are dangerous.'

'There is a feeling among many in the intelligence community that they are being forced to sacrifice their integrity for short-term political gain.'

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