

**TRANSCRIPT OF EXTRACTS FROM  
BBC RADIO 4 WORLD AT ONE PROGRAMME  
THURSDAY 29<sup>th</sup> MAY 2003**

**Nick Clarke (Presenter):**

While Mr Blair experiences for himself the reality of post-war Iraq, he continues, as he himself acknowledged, to have trouble dealing with pre-war controversies at home. The latest row to flair up concerns the Government's use of intelligence material to make the case for war. The Today Programme this morning reported the views of an anonymous member of the Security Services who cast doubt on the status of the dossier published with a foreword by Tony Blair last September. This informant suggested that Downing Street asked for the material provided to be beefed up, made more sexy, and that in one highly significant instance chose to highlight a piece of information that came from a single source. The intelligence services conventionally demand double-sourcing at least. The information in question was the claim that Saddam Hussein could mobilise weapons of mass destruction in 45 minutes, a point made strongly by Mr Blair. The Today Programme informant said that the intelligence community wasn't happy about this, nor about the document as a whole because it didn't properly represent their considered view about Iraq at that time. Downing Street responded with a carefully worded, if inelegant, denial:

**Actor:** *'Not one word of the dossier was not entirely the work of the intelligence agencies'*

**NC:** The Today Programme then went back to Number Ten to ask the specific question: Had they made any request to MI6 to beef up the available intelligence material? The reply came back:

**Actor:** *'We will not get involved in processology'*

**NC:** The minister despatched to answer questions on Iraq this morning was the Armed Forces Minister Adam Ingram. He denied the suggestion that there might be any unhappiness in the intelligence services about Downing Streets approach to the dossier:

**Adam Ingram:** The war was fought for er, on the basis of all of those allegations, much of which was substantiated, not just in a security document produced by our security services, not concocted by by Number 10, or pressured, a pressure from Number 10 to produce it in a particular way, but their best knowledge, and their best assessment of what they could play out into the public domain, and based upon the knowledge which was out there, the whole world know what Saddam Hussein was up to in terms of the weapons of mass destruction, that's why we prosecuted that war, that's why we were right.

**NC:** Adam Ingram. But he will not have drawn a line under the affair. The charge that intelligence material was in any way being exploited for political ends is a

serious one. It arises from the Government's need to provide legal justification for an attack on Iraq under the terms of existing United Nations' Security Council resolutions. These focus on the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction and the need to disarm Saddam Hussein, hence the stress placed by Tony Blair on the evidence available to him. Liaison between security services takes place at the Joint Intelligence Committee and I spoke today to Pauline Neville Jones who chaired the committee in the mid-1990's. I asked her how a situation could arise whereby a government produced information not to the liking of the intelligence services:

**Pauline Neville-Jones:**

The most obvious construction that you can put upon what we know in public is that a draft was put up by presumably somebody from the Intelligence Machine, which wasn't entirely to the liking of Number 10, and presumably that means the press machine, who then re-drafted. The issue of course is whether in the course of that happening, the content was changed, either as regard what actually went in, or the construction put upon, whatever was in there. And I think that's the issue that is under contention with, it would appear, you know the intelligence side being unhappy about the way in which some of the material was actually used and interpreted.

**NC:** Well a minister this morning conceded that this crucial point about Saddam Hussein being able to use weapons of mass destruction within forty five minutes of the order to do so, that that was single-sourced, and in intelligence sense, that's a risky business isn't it?

**P N-J:** Well, certainly when you've got something which is obviously as significant as a piece of information of that kind, you would normally want I think to have some kind of corroboration. One of two things, either corroboration, that's ideal, or if you haven't got corroboration, to have real confidence in the source that has given you that piece of information. So, the implication I think of what we're, you know what we're hearing is that this was a source that wasn't so, wasn't so, either well-known or trusted, and that therefore, you know the absence of corroboration, you know put a big question mark over it.

**NC:** Why did the government get itself in the position where it found it had to, if it did, use intelligence information in this way?

**P N-J:** The reason I think why this information, given the context of the, of the defence being used in international law, which was one of self defence, and imminent self defence, was, if it was a, if it were the case that this capability, forty five minutes notice, was something that really existed, it was demonstrably a threat, because there was no, was no way in which you know, you can intervene and stop something, if the figure is forty five minutes, so that was obviously the political significance of this piece of information. It had great bolstered the and supported the case in international law for demonstrating this man was an imminent threat.

**NC:** But uncomfortable as you pointed out for the British government which found itself thereby using, I put that word in heavy quotes, the intelligence material to

make a case, and I mean how common is that? Do we see, have we seen a lot of that?

**P N-J:** Well no. This is a, a new phenomenon, one I think that we shouldn't object to, on the contrary, but it all leads er, this whole episode and the post mortem shows how extraordinarily careful and scrupulous and cautious you need to be with information of this kind.

**NC:** And the government may not have been quite cautious and scrupulous enough?

**P N-J:** I think that's you know, a conclusion that people may draw.