

Flay J

Godric Smith

From: Godric Smith
Sent: 08 July 2003 09:16
To: 'ps/pus@mod.gsi.gov.uk'
Subject: Drafting suggestions

Dominic

This is a revise of version 2 reordering a bit with a different penultimate para which asks the question but doesn't point the finger. Grateful if you could forward to pam. Let me know how things progress

Godric



Gilligan source.doc

CAB/1/0068

An individual who works in the MoD has come forward to volunteer that he met Andrew Gilligan in a hotel on 22 May to discuss Iraq.

Their conversation included the Iraqi WMD programme and the '45' minute issue. The official volunteered that he had known Mr Gilligan for some time.

The individual is an expert on WMD but is not a member of the Intelligence Services or a member of the Defence Intelligence Services. He was not one of the senior officials in charge of drawing up the dossier.

During their meeting the official says that Mr Gilligan raised the involvement of Alastair Campbell. Since he was not involved in the process the individual says he did not comment on his role. He also says he made no accusations or allegations about any issue related to the dossier, in particular that the 45 minutes intelligence had been inserted by Mr Campbell or Downing Street against the wishes of the intelligence community.

We do not know how many people Mr Gilligan met in hotels shortly before May 29 to discuss Iraq and WMD. We do know that he had only one source for his story. He made clear to the Select Committee that the three subsequent sources he referred to did not talk to him about the WMD September dossier.

Something about ISC

CAB/1/0069

An individual working in the MoD has come forward to volunteer that he met Andrew Gilligan of the BBC on May 22. This was one week before Mr Gilligan broadcast allegations against the Government about the WMD dossier on the Today programme.

The person who has come forward has volunteered that he has known Mr Gilligan for some months. He says that he met Mr Gilligan in a central London hotel at Mr Gilligan's request. During the conversation Mr Gilligan raised the Iraqi WMD programme, including the "45 minutes" issue. The official says that Mr Gilligan also raised the issue of Alastair Campbell.

The individual is an expert on WMD who has advised ministers on WMD and whose contribution to the Dossier of September 2002 was to contribute towards drafts of historical accounts of UN inspections. He is not "one of the senior officials in charge of drawing up the dossier." He is not a member of the intelligence services and nor is he a member of the Senior Civil Service. He says he did not see the 45 minute intelligence report.

He says that when Mr Gilligan asked about the role of Alastair Campbell with regard to the 45 minute issue, he made no comment and explained that he was not involved in the process of drawing up the intelligence parts of the Dossier.

He says he made no other comment about Mr Campbell. When Mr Gilligan asked him why the 45 minute point was in the Dossier, he says he commented that it was "probably for impact."

He has said that, as an expert in the field, he believes Saddam Hussein possessed WMD.

The MoD, with the individual's agreement, intend to give his name to the Chairman of the Intelligence and Security Committee, in confidence, should they wish to interview him as part of their inquiry.

He says that as far as he is aware, Mr Gilligan has made no attempt to contact him since May 29.

We do not know that this official is the single source quoted by Mr Gilligan. We do know that Mr Gilligan told the FAC he had only one source for his story, and that the other three sources he mentioned to the FAC did not talk to him about the September Dossier, or did so after the broadcast.

CAB | 1 | 0070

The BBC has recently said that it was reporting the allegations of the source, rather than making the allegations themselves. That is why the question of the source is important. We hope it can now be resolved.

CAB | 1 | 0071