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To: Stephen Pattison,
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**SUBJECT: DR DAVID KELLY: REQUESTS FOR PRESS INTERVIEWS:
FCO HANDLING**

Customary practice

1. The manner in which Press and media contacts with FCO were handled, in my experience, was as follows. The request for an interview would be made to the Press Office. They in turn would contact CPD where the identity of the journalist, nature of the news outlet and any potential sensitivities were discussed and a decision made on whether to accept or reject. The Press Office or CPD would then speak to Dr Kelly to relay our views and ask whether he was ready to go ahead.
2. There were obviously also instances where he was contacted first by the journalist or researcher but he was, as far as I was aware, scrupulous about informing FCO in order to seek prior agreement and discuss areas on which he should not be drawn. This situation applied over a number of years. I took on the responsibility of being most often the initial CPD point of contact on becoming Deputy Head of Department in September 2000. Other colleagues, in what was then the UNSCOM/UNMOVIC Section, may have handled requests in my absence on leave. Dr Kelly would also on occasion call in from overseas to inform us of an unexpected request for a TV appearance in the US or Canada and, I also recall, an interview for German radio.
3. He was much in demand and an obvious Press target because of his technical expertise and experience as an UNSCOM inspector. His frequent visits to New York gave him an international profile. I, in turn, had confidence in him as he had become an accomplished media performer. On what was always a difficult and complex issue he expressed himself clearly and put across HMG's line with authority.
4. This system, which ultimately relied on self-discipline and judgement on all sides, worked well and provided the media with expert background briefing and led to no embarrassments for HMG over the period 2000-2002.

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The 'September Dossier'

5. During the period of the drafting of the 'September Dossier', which attracted much Press speculation in early and mid-2002, the above disciplines continued to apply. Dr Kelly's role in that Dossier was as an adviser to CPD on the purely historical element of that Dossier e.g., the role of UNSCOM, the extent of Iraqi deception and concealment as well as on the types and quantities of chemical and biological agents Iraq had produced. He was not present at the Cabinet Office drafting meetings which discussed that historical element and played no part in addressing either the Intelligence or Human Rights components of the Dossier.
6. It should be recalled that the September Dossier, at the time of its publication, was felt to be a measured and sober assessment and attracted no adversely critical comment. At that time, as I recall, he was not greatly solicited by the media for his views, although there were enquiries following his appearance alongside the Foreign Secretary in a 'War Against Terrorism' Committee hearing on 25 September. These were turned down.
7. As Dr Kelly made clear during his FAC appearance on 15 July, he was in any case supportive of the Dossier and agreed with its broad assessment. It will be recalled that he did however express doubts when questioned by the Committee on the "45 minute deployment" issue. That was the first occasion I became aware that he had questions about its validity - although even then he was careful to make clear that his scepticism was based on his knowledge of Iraqi practice some ten years ago.

Events in 2003

8. I recall few if any occasions in the course of 2003 when we received formal briefing requests from the Press or were approached by Dr Kelly. There was a request for an appearance on an Australian TV programme but this was fairly standard fare and uncontroversial. The first indication I had that he might no longer be seeking prior agreement for his contacts came in June. I was called at home one Sunday by the FCO Press Office (Ian Gleeson) about a request from ABC News for an interview with Dr Kelly. The request had been provoked by a "Sunday Times" article of that same day which had mentioned Dr Kelly by name. He was quoted as saying that the recently arrested Iraqi Chief Scientist "knew where all the bodies were buried". This generated an immediate media interest. After speaking to Dr Kelly at home I decided that we would reject the ABC request (and any others) and say he was unavailable for further comment. Dr Kelly accepted and was grateful for this. When I later followed this up with him he told me that he had give a background briefing to a "Sunday Times" journalist (Nick Rufford). He trusted Rufford and was annoyed and surprised to see his name mentioned because he believed that there was an understanding his name would not be used.
9. Around this time Dr Kelly was working more closely with MOD than FCO as he was due to deploy to Iraq as part of the UK component of the Iraq Survey Group, for which MOD has the policy lead. His travel and visits overseas were no longer

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authorised and paid for by FCO but were instead funded as part of Operation TELIC. I do not know if he was clearing Press enquiries with MOD at this time as he had previously done with FCO.

10. There is now evidence that he was also talking to the Press quite separately from his contacts with Andrew Gilligan and Susan Watts. The evidence for this lies in the critical comments from an unnamed UK expert on the 'mobile BW trailers' found in Iraq. "The Observer" of 20 July has now confirmed that he was the source of an article they had carried in which he had argued that they could not be used for the production of BW. This was a damaging statement and a view not shared by the other UK BW experts who had examined the trailers and also seen the accompanying intelligence.
11. Dr Kelly also told me in passing some time in late May early June that he had been speaking to Andrew Gilligan and Susan Watts. I did not react at the time but recall being surprised because I was unaware of any formal request to do so and because I knew that Andrew Gilligan had taken a critical view of many aspects of the prosecution of the war. (There had been no prior request to FCO Press Office or CPD concerning these contacts, nor the earlier meeting he had with Andrew Gilligan in February and which he revealed to the FAC on 15 July)

Conclusion

12. The period when he failed to inform FCO of requests from the Press was early to mid 2003. I was unaware that any meetings or contacts were taking place until the "Sunday Times " report, the suspicions about source of the 'BW trailer' story and David Kelly's comment about having met Gilligan and Watts. I do not know if MOD Press Office were approached about any of the above.

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