

RESTRICTED - STAFF

NOTE OF INTERVIEW WITH DR DAVID KELLY

I interviewed Dr Kelly about his letter dated 30 June to his line manager, Dr Bryan Wells, at 11.30 on Friday 4 July. Dr Wells was present. The interview ended at approximately 1315.

I began by explaining to Dr Kelly that his letter had serious implications. First, on the basis of his own account, it appeared that he breached the normal standards of Civil Service behaviour and departmental regulations by having had a number of unauthorised and unreported contacts with journalists. Regardless of the detail of what had passed, this opened up the possibility of disciplinary action. Second, his unauthorised discussion with Andrew Gilligan on 22 May appeared to be directly relevant to the controversy surrounding allegations made by Gilligan about the government's WMD dossier even if, as he had said in this letter, this had not been the discussion described by Gilligan at the FAC hearing.

I had two objects in the interview. First, I was looking to form a view of whether there was evidence to suggest that a sufficiently serious offence might have been committed to warrant formal disciplinary action. If I so concluded, the next step would be to initiate a formal fact-finding hearing in accordance with departmental procedures at which he could be accompanied by a colleague or TU representative if he so wished. Alternatively, I might conclude that a lesser offence had been committed which could be dealt with informally or that no offence had been committed. Second, I wished to try to establish if his meeting with Andrew Gilligan was likely to form the basis of evidence given by Gilligan to the FAC about the WMD dossier.

Dr Kelly said that he understood this.

I then asked him briefly to clarify one or two points in his letter which were not entirely clear before asking him to explain more fully the account on the second page of his dealings with journalists.

Dr Kelly said that he was widely known as an expert on Iraqi WMD, not least because of his extensive experience as a UN inspector. During his period with the UN he had often been asked to act as an expert spokesman. Subsequently, he continued to participate in many seminars and similar events concerning this and related subjects. He was often approached by academics, journalists and others operating in the field for background information and technical advice at such events and, sometimes, outside them. When a journalist approached him, he usually consulted the FCO press office, but on occasions he used his own judgement as explained in his letter.

I asked why he consulted the FCO press office rather than the MOD. Dr Kelly said that his salary was paid by the FCO. I said that was irrelevant – he was seconded to MOD. I asked who had given him authority to exercise his own judgement about contacts with journalists on defence related business, since this was contrary to standing departmental instructions. Dr Kelly said that he had never read those instructions, nor sought to discover what guidance existed about contact with journalists. He said that he had not really regarded his discussions with journalists, academics etc as being about defence business but as a continuation of his role as UN expert. I said that that was, at