

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 US 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 26-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 (Defection) Intelligence 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 Paper' by Daniel Filsberg, the celebrated whistle-blower who leaked the papers on US involvement in Vietnam, in 1971.

The revelations of the spy operation have caused deep embarrassment to the Bush administration at a key moment in the sensitive diplomatic negotiations at the



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 (left) Richard Myers.

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

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Peter Beaumont in Annan 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 communications 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 to 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 Saddam. It was a request that would have been seen as a major breach of the trust between the two agencies.

The memo 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.

they have come into conflict with the politicians over Iraq. They feel that their long history is in danger of being undermined by the use of intelligence product 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 September dossier on Iraq, detailing Saddam's armoury of weapons of mass destruction, was being finalised in the autumn.

fairly serious rows between Campbell, Onand and Stephen Lander, then head of M15.

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 deep ton, drawn up in January when it began to become obvious that Hans Blix's work was not making an incontestable 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. 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.'

But what has happened is that

The spies and the spinner

secretist reveals the number 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 courage of the individual intelligence officer, but in a wider context 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 secret intelligence 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 view that they are the real guardians of the UK, that while politicians may come and go their work is eternal. 'The intel league professionals feel that they stand somewhat above the vagaries of politics', said one close observer familiar with their work.

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