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From: Menna Rawlings

Date: 10 July 2003

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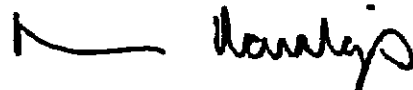
William Ehrman

PUS'S CONVERSATION WITH KEVIN TEBBIT: DAVID KELLY AND PARLIAMENT

1. Kevin Tebbit telephoned Michael Jay on 10 July to discuss requests from the FAC and the ISC for David Kelly (of Andrew Gilligan fame) to appear before them both on Tuesday 15 July. I had spoken about this to you and Kara Owen beforehand. Kevin said that the MOD was unlikely to stand in Kelly's way, if he decided this was something he should do. He was concerned, however, that two committees on one day was pushing it, especially when the FAC had finished their enquiry and published their report. He wondered if it would be possible to persuade the committees that David should give evidence to only one committee, preferably the ISC.

2. Michael said that it was really the MOD's call (echoing the Foreign Secretary's views, as discussed with Kara). It was difficult to see that there were grounds for the MOD to refuse these requests - or the press would run stories about the government silencing a whistle blower. But he could see why there was concern about two appearances in one day - not just from the perspective of the MOD's duty of care to their staff, but also because it would create opportunities for the press to compare one evidence session with another. But given the relationship between the two committees, it was very hard to see either one of them backing down in favour of the other. If the session with the ISC was to be in public, that would strengthen the MOD's hand; but if it was to be in private, then the converse would be true.

3. But, as he had said previously, the final decision on handling lay with the MOD.



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