

apolitical Iraqi, for the moment, life is in lots of ways worse now.

So it's complicated - I'm sure you all recognise this too, but somehow Alastair and his legions of Downing Street minions always end up going for the crude headline thrust. I reckon people are more capable of hearing nuanced arguments than Downing Street thinks.

Whatever the JIC chairman may say, he is not the sole voice of the intelligence community. The fact remains that substantial portions of that community, on both sides of the Atlantic, are unhappy about the way their work was used. I might have put that story on the front pages - but I didn't keep it there. It was kept there because every journalist with intelligence contacts was told the same thing when they asked their contacts to confirm my story.

The allegation that I, or the intelligence services, are trying to undermine the Government or am refighting our alleged opposition to the war is typical of Downing Street's crude approach and is a complete misunderstanding of my, and I think their, views.

Anyway - now you know what I think.

Andrew

> -----Original Message-----

> From: pat.barrie@fco.gov.uk [SMTP:pat.barrie@fco.gov.uk]

> Sent: Thursday, June 05, 2003 2:36 PM

> To: Andrew Gilligan-INTERNET

> Subject: RE: Letter from John Williams, FCO Press Secretary

> Importance: High

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> Andrew

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> The intelligence arrived in August, it was published in
> September, the inspectors deployed in November, during
> February and March it must have been increasingly clear
> to Saddam that he was very likely to be invaded. I don't
> know what he did and am very much looking forward to the truth
> gradually emerging. But is it not possible, as Jack said in
> the House yesterday, that he made a calculation rather than
> use the weaponry he should disperse and conceal it because
> he could not win. In which case it would no longer be at
> 45 minutes readiness. I have no idea if this is the case,
> but it must at least be possible as intelligence which
> looked right in August was no longer so 7 months later

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> The point at issue is whether the dossier accurately reflected
> the 'intelligence assessments', or whether the information was
> "sexed up" at the behest of spin-doctors (incidentally you and
> your source have done great violence to the English language in
> the last week). The key fact to me is that this 'intelligence
> assessment' was used by the JIC internally on the usual basis,
> before it was put in the dossier. Not very sexy but true.

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> John

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> -----Original Message-----

> From: Andrew Gilligan-INTERNET [<mailto:andrew.gilligan@bbc.co.uk>]

> Sent: Thursday, June 05, 2003 1:59 PM

> To: 'pat.barrie@fco.gov.uk'

> Subject: RE: Letter from John Williams, FCO Press Secretary

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> Pat/John,

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> The problem is that that 45-minute claim was plainly wrong. Had there been

CAB 14 / 0010