

had not attended the drafting meetings, that they had been chaired by the Chairman of the JIC.¹²⁶ We are concerned that a meeting to discuss a document which Ministers had asked the Chairman of the Joint Intelligence Committee to prepare was chaired by the Prime Minister's Special Adviser.

79. We conclude that it was wrong for Alastair Campbell or any Special Adviser to have chaired a meeting on an intelligence matter, and we recommend that this practice cease.

80. Mr Campbell tells us that he underlined the importance for the credibility of the document that it should be, and be seen to be, the work of the JIC. He states that he emphasised "it goes without saying that nothing should be published that you (the JIC Chairman and the Intelligence Agencies) are not 100% happy with."

81. The first draft of the document as prepared by the JIC Chairman reached Mr Campbell the following day. He tells us he made no comment on it. He received a further draft on 17 September. Mr Campbell has listed the comments which, to the best of his recollection and that of the Chairman of the JIC, he made on this draft.

82. Speaking about the generality of his comments, Mr Campbell told us that "I know the accusation is I sexed it up, I think this is sexing it down".¹²⁷ On the whole, the effect of his comments was, so far as we can tell, neutral. Some aspects of the draft he suggested should be toned down, some he asked to be explained more fully. Accepting his list as being as full and as accurate as he and the JIC Chairman can make it, we find that in only one case did Mr Campbell seek to interfere with the draft in a substantive way, by seeking to have the issue of aluminium tubes included in the executive summary. But in this he failed.

83. Mr Campbell received a final draft of the dossier on 19 September, five days before publication. He has told us that neither he nor the Chairman of the JIC can recall that he made any further comments. Mr Straw told us that "Let me make clear, nobody 'sexed-up' or exaggerated that September dossier, no-one at all, and that includes Alastair Campbell."¹²⁸

84. We conclude that on the basis of the evidence available to us Alastair Campbell did not exert or seek to exert improper influence on the drafting of the September dossier.

85. Jack Straw told us that there had been no formal complaints from members of the security and intelligence services about the content of the dossier.¹²⁹

86. We conclude that the claims made in the September dossier were in all probability well founded on the basis of the intelligence then available, although as we have already stated we have concerns about the emphasis given to some of them. We further conclude that, in the absence of reliable evidence that intelligence personnel have either complained about or sought to distance themselves from the content of the dossier, allegations of politically inspired meddling cannot credibly be established.

¹²⁶ Q 1250 (William Ehrman)

¹²⁷ Q 980

¹²⁸ Q 1292

¹²⁹ Qq 734, 1201, 1291

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