

have always given the honest answer that I do not know what it refers to and that I am not familiar with an Iraqi weapons system that it matches. The latter is of significance to the UN since they had to take it into account in their work. The UK Dossier was of general interest for about ten days after publication and, with the exception of UNMOVIC, was not a topic later raised with me. After that my discussions about Iraq's WMD centred on UNMOVIC's re-engagement with Iraq, the "enhanced" inspection process and UNMOVIC's findings. Since the war I have discussed with some of those same individuals the failure to use chemical and biological weapons by Iraq and the apparent lack of success in finding such weapons after the war. It is natural to do so since I am one of the few who knows Iraq's programmes in detail and my information is derived from my United Nations work.

I have not had extensive dealings with Andrew Gilligan. As I recall I first met him at the IISS "Global Strategic Review" in September 2002 after the IISS dossier was published but before the UK Government dossier appeared. We would have discussed the IISS dossier since it was at the forefront of delegates discussions but the detail is now forgotten. I cannot recall meeting him before that although it is entirely possible that we have attended the same meetings at Chatham House or IISS. I next met with him in February 2003 at his request because he was about to depart to Iraq to cover the forthcoming war. I cannot recall any contact in the interim and do not believe that contact was made. It is some time since that meeting but I believe that we covered the topics of Hans Blix and UNMOVIC inspections, Iraqi individuals associated with the WMD programmes and sites associated with the programme. I also spoke separately with Linsey Hilsum (Channel 4), Carolyn Hawley and Jane Corbin (BBC) about the same issues before they went to Iraq. Gilligan said that he would informally tell me about his experiences in Iraq on his return (as did Jane Corbin). I have spoken to both since the war. I have had a number of telephone exchanges with Jane Corbin principally because she is keen to do a follow up to her UNMOVIC "fly on the wall" with the Iraq Survey Group (and my comments to her have been neutral) but none with Gilligan other than one made by him to arrange to meet to discuss his experience in Iraq. I also speak irregularly with Susan Watts the BBC Science Editor and Andrew Veitch the Channel Four Science Editor about scientific and technical aspects of Iraq's weapons and UN inspections.

I met with Gilligan in London on May 22nd for 45 minutes in the evening to privately discuss his Iraq experiences and definitely not to discuss the dossier (I would not have met with him had it been the case). As I recall, we discussed his ability to report before, during, and after the war in the presence of minders and freedom to move around Baghdad, accommodation at the Palestine Hotel; his impression of the coalition attacks, US military protection of journalists; the revelations likely to be made by Amer Al-Sa'adi, Huda Amash, Rihab Taha, Tariq Aziz and Ahmed Murtadda who are individuals associated with Iraq's "past" programme. He was particularly intrigued by Huda since he visited her home and met her husband but not Huda after the war and found her home guarded by "regime" Iraqis. We also discussed the failure of Iraq to use WMD and the inability to find them. I offered my usual and standard explanations (conditions early in the war not favourable to CB use and lack of command and control late in the war; that the small arsenal of weapons (or its destroyed remnants) compared to 1991 would be difficult to find without human information). The issue of 45 minutes arose in terms of the threat (aerial versus land launch) and I stated that I did not know what it refers to (which I do not). He asked why it should be in the dossier and I replied probably for impact. He raised the issue of Alistair Campbell and since I was not involved in the process (not stated by me) I was unable to comment. This issue was not discussed at any length and was essentially an aside. I made no allegations or accusations about any issue related to the dossier or the Government's case for war concentrating on his account of his stay in Iraq. I did not discuss the "immediacy" of the threat. The discussion was not about the dossier. Had it been so then I would have indicated that from my extensive and authoritative knowledge of Iraq's WMD programme, notably its biological programme, that the dossier was a fair reflection of open source information (ie UNSCOM/UNMOVIC) and appreciations.

I most certainly have never attempted to undermine Government policy in any way especially since I was personally sympathetic to the war because I recognised from a decade's work