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LOOSE MINUTE

16 July 2003

PS/Secretary of State

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Policy Director
Personnel Director
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D News

IRAQ WMD: DR KELLY'S EVIDENCE TO ISC

As requested, I attach a draft to No.10 on Dr Kelly's evidence to the Intelligence Select Committee this afternoon

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Attached:
Draft to No.10

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IRAQ WMD: DR KELLY'S EVIDENCE TO INTELLIGENCE SELECT COMMITTEE

Kelly describes his dealings with journalists. Reiterates that he does not believe he was Gilligan's main source; and that he did not know the process of finalising the September Dossier (and hence could not be the source of allegations about Alistair Campbell). Gives his assessment of "30% probability" that Iraq had CW weapons before war. Quotes Blix's "unwise" statement on inclusion of the "45 minute claim" in the Dossier, but comes under pressure on the extent of his knowledge.

1. Dr David Kelly gave evidence to the Intelligence Select Committee this afternoon on his dealings with Andrew Gilligan on Iraq and WMD. The session lasted 50 minutes.
2. The main areas covered in the evidence session were as follows:
 - a. Kelly's dealings with journalists Over a range of questions, Kelly outlined his dealing with journalists over the last ten years. As an UNSCOM Chief Weapons inspector, he had been used to dealing with journalists in Iraq, he had also briefed journalists in New York at that time. He had also (more recently) given press briefings authorised by Government Departments on his areas of expertise, and he met journalists at seminars and conferences. He acknowledged that the meetings with Gilligan were unauthorised, and constituted a breach of procedures.
 - b. Gilligan's "single source". Kelly was asked to comment on the statement in the FAC Chairman's letter of 15 July to the Foreign Secretary that "it seems most unlikely that Dr Kelly was Andrew Gilligan's prime source .." Kelly repeated his FAC line that he believed he was not Gilligan's

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main source. He had written to MOD on 30 June to explain his links with Gilligan because he felt that some might have considered him to be the source.

c Role of Alistair Campbell. Kelly said that the role of Alistair Campbell in the finalisation of the September Iraq WMD Dossier had been raised at his (May) meeting with Gilligan, but it had been Gilligan who had raised it. Kelly said that he had replied along the lines that he was not involved in the finalisation of the Dossier, and so had no knowledge of Alistair Campbell's role. Comment: a clearer answer than he gave to the FAC yesterday, and more consistent with the line he took on questioning from MOD officials

d. Iraqi Possession of CW Kelly said that the statement that Gilligan attributed to his source that "it is 30% likely that there was a CW programme in the six months before the war" was a (rather inaccurate) summary of what he himself believed. He believed 100% that there was a CW programme in Iraq, but in his view the likelihood that there were CW weapons immediately before the war was about 30%. Comment: this is consistent with what he has told us earlier: this point was not probed by the FAC

e "45 minutes claim". Kelly was asked repeatedly whether he could have been Gilligan's source of disparaging remarks on the assessment that some of Iraq's WMD could be ready with 45 minutes of an order, and what his own views on that assessment were, Kelly said that he was not aware of the intelligence on the issue. His own line was that it was included in the Dossier for "impact", in the sense that it was in the Prime Minister's foreword rather than just in the body of the text. He recalled that Hans Blix had recently described the claim as "unwise"; Kelly in retrospect agreed with that view on the basis that the claim raised more questions about its meaning than it answered. UNMOVIC analysts were uncertain what the "45 minute claim" referred to, and he could not himself relate it to any weapons system he was aware of. Comment: Kelly had not before aligned himself with Blix's view that inclusion of the "45 minute claim" in the Dossier had been unwise.

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Under subsequent close questioning he admitted that he had seen no reporting on the issue, and had not been involved in the assessment. The Committee were left with the impression that Kelly - on his own admission - was not party to the whole picture.

3. I am copying this letter to Simon MacDonald (FCO), John Scarlett and Sir David Omand (Cabinet Office).

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