

Ex-U.K. Intelligence Head: Blair Blatantly Lied!

May 15—Secret evidence was declassified and released on May 12 which exposes former British Prime Minister Tony Blair and his communications officer Alastair Campbell as having knowingly fabricated a dossier on Iraq's alleged weapons of mass destruction (WMD) to launch an invasion of that country.

Maj.-Gen. Michael Laurie, the former head of the British Defence Intelligence Staff (DIS) responsible for collecting the intelligence used in the report, wrote an email to Sir John Chilcot, the Inquiry chairman, to complain that Campbell and Blair had lied about the dossier.

When Campbell gave evidence before the Chilcot Inquiry in January 2010, he vociferously denied that the dossier on Saddam's arsenal was specifically drawn up to make the case for war. But Laurie wrote flatly contradicted that:

“Alastair Campbell said to the inquiry that the purpose of the dossier was not to make a case for war. I had no doubt at that time this was exactly its purpose and these very words were used.

“We knew at the time that the purpose of the Dossier was precisely to make a case for war, rather than setting out the available intelligence. I and those involved in its production saw it exactly as that, and that was the direction we were given” (emphasis added).

Campbell also dismissed claims that he had pressured the Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC) to “beef up” the dossier which warned that Saddam could fire weapons of mass destruction in 45 minutes. But Laurie told the Inquiry: “During the drafting of the final Dossier, every fact was managed to make it as strong as possible, the final statements reaching beyond the conclusions intelligence assessments would normally draw from such facts. It was clear to me that there was direction and pressure being applied on the JIC and its drafters.”

Called to give evidence behind closed doors, Laurie was asked if the dossier gave the public a false picture of the intelligence. He replied, “Yes, yes, yes.”

Laurie made clear that the Labour government knew

the evidence for Saddam's arsenal was fraudulent: "We could find no evidence of planes, missiles or equipment that related to WMD, generally concluding that they must have been dismantled, buried or taken abroad."

Laurie said the government spent months building the case for war. A first dossier was drafted in February and March 2002, a year before the invasion, but was "rejected because it did not make a strong enough case," he said. "From then until September we were under pressure to find intelligence that could reinforce the case."

The major-general also accused Blair of lying. Blair wrote a foreword to the Downing Street dossier, claiming the "intelligence has established beyond doubt . . . that Saddam has continued to produce chemical and biological weapons." Asked if that was a justifiable encapsulation of the evidence, Laurie said, "No, because I don't believe it was beyond doubt."

Blair Plotted Iraq Coup 18 Months Before Invasion

May 15—According to papers declassified and released in Britain this week, MI6 plotted a coup against Saddam Hussein nearly 18 months before the invasion of Iraq in 2003.

The Inquiry into Britain's role in the Iraq War, which is headed by Sir John Chilcot, had heard that then-Prime Minister Tony Blair signalled that he would back regime change in Iraq, when he met President George W. Bush in Texas in 2002. However, the latest papers show that removing Saddam had been discussed by the Blair's inner circle months earlier.

Sir Richard Dearlove, then head of MI6, sent three documents to Blair's top foreign policy advisor, Sir David Manning, in December 2001. Two of them discussed how Britain could prevent the U.S. from pursuing regime change in Baghdad. The other set out a road map for regime change. The document's author, a Middle East expert at MI6 known only as SIS4, wrote to Sir David: "At our meeting on 30 November we discussed how we could combine an objective of regime change in Baghdad with the need to protect important regional interests which would be at grave risk." The MI6 agent raised the possibility of the U.S. and Britain covertly supporting a coup against

Saddam, by disgruntled Sunnis.

He wrote: "The key idea is that it is possible to speak openly about support for regime change in Iraq, without compromising the actual project to support a coup. The overall plan would need to be like an onion, each layer concealing the one below. . . . We want regime change in Baghdad and we are ready to provide air support to coup makers. The inmost part is knowledge of the coup makers with whom we are in touch and their operational plan."

Agent SIS4 suggested a 12- to 18-month timetable for the plan. He also recognized the problem of British officials taking illegal military action: "Government law officers to provide assurances of legality (there has been a serious problem here)."

Sir Richard Dearlove is currently a senior advisor to the Monitor Group based in Boston, which group had lobbied in behalf of Qaddafi and had helped Qaddafi's son Saif write his PhD thesis at the London School of Economics. Sir Mark Allen, who headed the MI6 Middle East desk, also worked for Monitor in behalf of Qaddafi, and with Baroness Elizabeth Symons, Blair's former Minister of State for Defense Procurement (1999-2001); Blair's then-chief of staff Jonathan Powell; and Sir David Manning, a member of the advisory board of the London School of Economics' Ideas Center.

Agent SIS4 Backs Laurie

May 15—Maj.-Gen. Michael Laurie's testimony (above) is supported by evidence provided by an intelligence officer identified only as SIS4 by the Chilcot Inquiry. That agent told the commission, regarding the role of career intelligence officers: "We were on the flypaper of WMD, whether we liked it or not."

The date of the testimony or its release is not indicated on the unofficial Iraq Inquiry Digest website (<http://iraqinquiry.org>), but it appears to have been released around the end of April, when Iraq Inquiry Digest editor Christopher Ames covered it. In an April 29, 2011 posting, Ames reported that SIS4 told the commission that the whole WMD issue was, indeed, concocted to provide the justification for war.

Ames wrote: "In justifying the tendency of MI6 to overstate the intelligence suggesting that Iraq had WMD, SIS4 has shown what a circular process it was.

The plan to overthrow Saddam was devised at the end of 2001 but justified on the basis of intelligence which appeared in 2002, which was treated on a ‘worst case’ basis, because there was going to be a war and the military needed to prepare for the worst. And that was even before Tony Blair and the spin doctors got involved.”

SIS4 told the inquiry: “What I think, with the benefit of hindsight, it’s interesting to speculate on is whether the chosen vehicle of national will, national mission, national objectives—WMD—had got slightly out of proportion and was being asked to carry more weight at the bar of history, and all this stuff, than it possibly could be expected to bear. There was a sense, perhaps, in which the metaphor of WMD as a bloody good reason for doing in Saddam was wearing thin. But no one could, in view of the technical aspects of the diplomatic context, change tune. We were on the flypaper of WMD, whether we liked it or not.”

SIS4 emphasized that the resources MI6 had to try to make a case that Iraq had WMD were really quite thin. “So, in that sense, the vehicle of WMD as an argument for the war was incapable of sustaining the weight put upon it, given that we didn’t have all the answers and we didn’t have the sources.”

Another document release, this one obtained by Ames through a freedom of information request, is a series of redacted e-mails from August and September 2002, between the government and the DIS, which shows the DIS’s pushback against the Blair government’s demands that intelligence make the case for war. In one example, DIS warns against the use of a chemical plant in Ash Sharqat to make that case. The plant had been built in the 1990s while the UN weapons inspectors were still in the country, and had been inspected by them on an almost daily basis. On Sept. 6, 2002, one intelligence officer wrote of its inclusion in drafts of the dossier, “Ash Sharqat—Surprised to see this appear, as it doesn’t present evidence of anything much.”

An official at the Ministry of Defence suggested that the reference should be dropped, and apparently it was at some point, but then this appeared in the dossier as it was published later in September: “Despite the site being far away from populated areas it is surrounded by a high wall with watch towers and guarded by armed guards. Intelligence reports indicate that it will produce nitric acid which can be used in explosives, missile fuel and in the purification of uranium.”

BBC: We Were Right And Campbell Lied

May 15—The editor of the BBC’s Today program at the time of its 2003 report that the Blair government had “sexed up” an Iraqi weapons dossier, said on May 13 that evidence provided to the Iraq Inquiry by former intelligence official Maj.-Gen. Michael Laurie proved that his team had been right all along.

Editor Kevin Marsh described Laurie’s evidence as “devastating for [Alastair] Campbell,” Blair’s communications chief, whose response to the Today report led to the Hutton Inquiry, and ultimately to the resignations of the BBC’s director general and chairman. “The thing that rankles with me a little bit is that I thought at the time when [the Today reporter] Andrew Gilligan came with the story was that it wasn’t just broadly correct, it was 100 percent correct,” Marsh said.

“Here’s the guy at the very top of the [Defence Intelligence Staff] saying, ‘we knew we were being pushed to find a certain bit of evidence and it was being presented in a certain way’ and that’s exactly what Andrew said in his story.”

Marsh said he was unhappy with the implications by Lord Hutton in his 2004 report, that the BBC Today staff had shown a lack of professionalism. “This vindicates our position and shows Hutton was wrong in criticising Andrew, criticising me and criticising the Today team,” he said. “Just flat wrong.”

Rod Liddle, a former Today editor who had hired Gilligan, said, “These comments tell us what we knew already, that the BBC told the truth, Gilligan told the truth and Alastair Campbell’s outrage was confected and it was a lie.”

Campbell Denies Everything

May 21—Alastair Campbell, Tony Blair’s former communications director, tried to dismiss the claims by Maj.-Gen. Michael Laurie, writing to Sir John Chilcot:

“I do not know and have never met Major General Laurie, and was not aware of any involvement he might

have had in the September 2002 dossier on Iraq's WMD.

“Neither I—nor, so far as I am aware, anyone else in Downing Street—was made aware of his views at the time, or at any time in the subsequent nine years, until he felt moved to write to you, and his letter was published.

“Witnesses who were directly involved in the drafting of the dossier have made clear to several inquiries that at no time did I put anyone in the intelligence community under pressure, or say to them or anyone else that the then prime minister's purpose in publishing the dossier was to make the case for war.”

Mysterious Helicopter and Dr. David Kelly's Death

May 15—Just as declassified documents have revealed that Dr. David Kelly's charge was absolutely correct, that the Blair government had “sexed up” a dossier on alleged WMD in Iraq, new evidence emerges which blows open the cover-up of Kelly's July 17, 2003 death, which has been labelled a suicide. Kelly was BBC reporter Andrew Gilligan's source for the charge that the WMD dossier against Iraq had been “sexed up.” He died two days after testifying before a parliamentary committee.

It has now been revealed that a helicopter mysteriously landed at the scene of Kelly's death shortly after the body was found. The aircraft remained on the ground for just five minutes before leaving.

Details from its flight log, released under Britain's Freedom of Information Act, show that the helicopter—hired by Thames Valley police—landed at Harrowdown Hill in Oxfordshire 90 minutes after Kelly's body was discovered. The flight log has been heavily redacted, making it impossible to know who was on board or what its exact purpose was. The flight was not mentioned in oral evidence at the 2003 Hutton Inquiry, set up by Prime Minister Blair to investigate Dr. Kelly's death.

Dr. Andrew Watt, who has previously raised questions about the suicide finding reached by Lord Hutton's commission, has written to Attorney General Dominic Grieve drawing his attention to the flight.

A Review of the Evidence

The 14-Year Coverup of Princess Diana's Death

by Susan Welsh

Since the Aug. 31, 1997 death of Princess Diana, her fiancé Dodi Fayed, and driver Henri Paul, *EIR* has been the international publication of record, chronicling what is known about what really happened—and what didn't happen—in Paris that night, and who has been complicit in the coverup. With the May 13 screening at the Cannes Film Festival of Keith Allen's film *Unlawful Killing*, there is every reason to expect that the dossier will be reopened.

There is massive evidence that the “accident” was no accident; the principal question then becomes, *cui bono?* The inescapable conclusion is that the address of those who stood to benefit is Buckingham Palace.

The feud between Diana and her former in-laws was no secret to anyone, especially after her divorce from the looney Prince Charles, and her increasingly activist political role. We limit ourselves to quoting from an article in the London *Sunday Mirror* on the very morning of Diana's death:

“At Balmoral next week, the Queen will preside over a meeting of The Way Ahead Group where the Windsors sit down with their senior advisers and discuss policy matters. MI6 has prepared a special report on the Egyptian-born Fayed's which will be presented to the meeting....

“A friend of the Royals said yesterday: ‘Prince Philip has let rip several times recently about the Fayed's.... He's been banging on about his contempt for Dodi and how he is undesirable as a future stepfather to William and Harry.’ Diana has been told in no uncertain terms about the consequences should she continue the relationship with the Fayed boy.... Now the Royal Family may have decided it is time to settle up.”

Soon before that edition of the *Sunday Mirror* appeared on the newsstands, Princess Diana was pronounced dead.

We summarize below some of the anomalies that *EIR* has pointed to over the years—the holes in the of-