

Sir John Chilcot,
Chairman,
Iraq Inquiry,
35 Great Smith Street,
London SW1P 3BG

Thursday May 19 2011

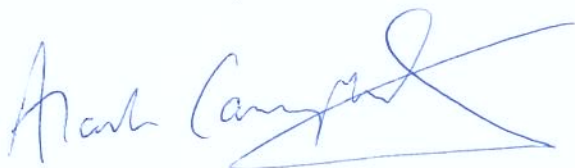
Dear Sir John,

You may have seen the considerable media coverage, print, broadcast and online, aroused by the evidence of Major General Laurie, published on the Inquiry's website last week.

As his letter to the Inquiry was specifically targeted at my evidence to you, and as much of the coverage it generated was inaccurate, I would like to make three points. The first is that 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. Second, 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. The third point is that 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.

I know the Inquiry cannot dictate the media coverage of material submitted to it, and I have throughout sought to refrain from making any comment on the evidence of others, despite regularly being asked to do so. Given Major General Laurie's letter was aimed at my evidence to you, however, and given the scale and nature of allegations it led to at home and overseas, I would appreciate the opportunity to place the above on record to the Inquiry.

Yours sincerely,



Alastair Campbell