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Policy Director

D/Policy Director/6/10 (392/02)

20 September 2002

PS/Secretary of State

Copy to:  
PUS  
CDS  
Head of Sec(O)

IRAQ DOSSIER

I have sent you by hand a copy of the latest draft of the dossier on Iraq's WMD. It has been given an extremely restricted circulation (essentially JIC members only). This text has now gone to HMSO for setting up, returning for proof reading on Sunday. CDI's staff have been closely associated with the preparation of the detail of the dossier. I understand they are content from a professional DIS point of view with the judgements it contains. The passages in paragraphs 22 and 23 on page 28 are more cautious than the US Department of Defense views and no consultation is planned outside Intelligence and White House channels.

I regret I have no discretion to copy this document further, in particular to junior Ministers. You may wish to press No 10 to allow Min(AF) and Min(DP) access to the material as early as possible to enable them to prepare for Tuesday's debate. In this context I understand that the FCO are arranging some briefings for Baroness Symons and Lord Williams on Monday. We are told that Dr Ingram and Lord Bach would be welcome to join in if they are available. You may wish to touch base with the office of Baroness Symons.

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Arrangements have been made to brief Opposition leaders, Select Committee chairs and key Allies. The US Department of Defense have been asking me to see texts for several weeks referring to their openness on military operations. Arrangements have also been made for the Secretary of State to take printed copies of the dossier to Warsaw to hand to Mr Rumsfeld, his NATO colleagues and Lord Robertson. Sec(O) will provide a draft covering letter if required. Ideally, we should seek to persuade No 10 to let the Pentagon have access on Monday. I think it would help if you could secure agreement for me to give his team the text at 0800 London time on 24 September.

I had some reservations as a JIC member about citing the Committee's views explicitly (lest we become less usefully direct in our future judgements) but the way this has been achieved has reassured me.

Overall I am content to recommend the material to Secretary of State. On a very small point I have suggested to the Cabinet Office replacing the word "papers" in the PM's foreword by "work" to reduce the risk of a FOIA action succeeding.



SIMON WEBB

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