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18th March 2002

Mr Tony Blair
10 Downing Street
London
SW1A 2AA

Dear Mr Blair,

I feel compelled to write to you again concerning the international policies which you are currently promoting and in particular your statements which would appear to pre-empt further attacks on Iraq.

Although I am well aware that sanctions and military action against Iraq have been in place for many years now, your remarks suggest that such activity will be increased.

I understand that your mandate is to do what is best for the British people, but what I do not understand is how your own moral beliefs as an individual can allow you to agree with this course of action. The hypocrisy of the situation must surely be clear to you? On the one hand you require Iraq not to produce weapons of mass destruction, whilst on the other Britain and the United States have an enormous arsenal of such weapons. If Iraq is a threat to Britain then by the same reasoning how can Iraq not see Britain as a threat to itself?

How can you feel it is right to insist on weapons inspectors to enter Iraq when you would never allow such intrusion if it were suggested that it be levied against Britain? Iraq's response to these demands is no different to that which you yourself would give if the roles were reversed.

The most reprehensible aspect of this is that given the situation which these policies have now created, the only apparent solution that you are able to suggest is that we should kill more people. To my mind any notion that this could be compatible with a civilised society indicates either a tragic error of judgement or an astonishing lack of ethical maturity.

I sincerely hope that you are able to find an alternative resolution to the problems which Britain now finds itself faced with.

I also apologise for the blunt tone of this letter. However, although I did send a more reasoned letter previously no further explanation was forthcoming from you. I'm sure you can understand if I tell you that I consider this to be one of the most important issues affecting the world and which involves Britain quite so closely.

Yours sincerely,

David Llewellyn-Jones



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

16 April 2002

Mr D Llewellyn-Jones

Foreign & Commonwealth Office
King Charles Street
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London

Dear Mr Llewellyn-Jones

Thank you for your recent letter about Iraq. I have been asked to reply.

I am of course aware of the considerable media speculation that the UK is preparing for imminent military action against Iraq. But the speculation is just that – speculation. No decision has been taken. But it is true to say that we, like the UN Security Council, the European Union and Iraq's neighbours, continue to have serious concerns about Iraq's weapons of mass destruction (WMD) programmes. Because not only does the Iraqi regime have these weapons, the potentially horrific capabilities of which threaten the security of the region and the world, the regime has also shown, with its extensive use of chemical weapons against Iran in the 1980s and against the Iraqi people of Halabja in 1988, that it is prepared to use them. Saddam Hussein remains the only leader in world history to have authorised the use of nerve agents.

We know that the Iraqi regime has these weapons because UN weapons inspectors working in Iraq from 1991 to 1998 found the evidence. For example, the Iraqis admitted possessing large quantities of chemical warfare agents including Sarin, Tabun, Mustard Gas and VX Gas. They admitted producing deadly biological warfare agents such as anthrax, botulinum toxin, gas gangrene and aflatoxin. And they admitted hiding these and other weapons in desert sands, caves and railway tunnels. At the end of 1998, however, Iraq's persistent obstruction of the work of the UN inspectors finally forced them to leave, although they were still unable to account for 31,000 chemical munitions, 610 tonnes of precursor chemicals used to produce VX gas and 4,000 tonnes of chemicals for other munitions. We believe that the Baghdad regime is still hiding these weapons in a range of locations. More importantly, we have seen evidence, much of it based on sensitive intelligence, that in the three year



absence of weapons inspectors, Iraq has persisted with its chemical and biological weapons programmes and that it is developing ballistic missiles capable of delivering these weapons to targets beyond the 150km limit imposed by the UN. This would allow Iraq to hit countries as far away as the United Arab Emirates.

Faced with this threat, the international community's most pressing demand is therefore that Iraq allow weapons inspectors to return and finish their work. If there is nothing to hide, the Iraqis should have no problem in allowing them to do so without preconditions. Saddam Hussein knows that the UN Monitoring and Verification Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) and International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) teams have been ready to get to work in Iraq for almost two years. He knows too that we are looking for real disarmament. But instead of co-operating with the UN weapons inspectors, he indulges in propaganda stunts, making phoney offers for British inspectors to visit under controlled conditions. It is not just in the key area of disarmament where Iraq has failed to co-operate with the UN. During the last twelve years the UN has imposed twenty seven obligations on Iraq, including that the regime end its repression of Iraq's civilian population and co-operate in accounting for the Kuwaitis and others missing since Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990. Iraq remains in breach of 23 of these obligations. In the face of these obstructions our diplomatic efforts will continue. But Baghdad must understand that we cannot allow Iraq to reject the will of the international community and to pose a threat to regional and world security forever.

Until the Baghdad regime complies, the rigorous controls which have helped to contain Iraq for the last twelve years must remain. This is a point on which all members of the Security Council are agreed. These controls have played a vital role in frustrating Saddam Hussein's ambitions. Nonetheless the human rights record of the Baghdad regime – a regime which thinks nothing of using rape, torture or assassination to silence its opponents - remains notorious as one of the worst in the world. Although the United Nations Security Council and the UN Commission on Human Rights have consistently condemned the repression of the civilian population, Iraq continues to flout UN resolutions and ignore its international human rights commitments. We agree with many others, including other governments in the region - that Iraq would be a better place without Saddam Hussein. But while he remains and continues to refuse to co-operate with the UN, so too must UN controls.

Meanwhile Iraqi propaganda continues to try lay the blame for the suffering in Iraq at the door of the UN rather than at the gates of Saddam's palaces, where it truly belongs. Unfortunately many well-intentioned people continue to be taken in by Saddam's lies. The truth is that the UN allows the Iraqi regime access to more than enough money for all the humanitarian goods the Iraqis need. Indeed, according to a senior UN official's recent report, the UN's "oil for food" programme continues to make an "ocean of difference" to the lives of the Iraqi people. Since the programme began in December 1996, over \$32 billion worth of goods – not just food and medicine but a wide range of goods helping to rebuild Iraq's infrastructure - have been approved for export to Iraq. Furthermore, the Sanctions Committee have agreed a list of over 16,000 items which are "fast-tracked" to Iraq, and which no longer



need to be referred to the Committee but simply notified to the Secretariat. More than \$8 billion worth of contracts have been processed through this accelerated procedure. As a result under “oil for food” last year, the UN’s humanitarian spending per head in Iraq was higher than government spending in equivalent areas (such as housing, health and education) in Egypt, Jordan, Syria or Iran. All of this has been achieved despite Iraq’s refusal to accept UN resolutions. How much more would be possible if the Iraqi regime put the Iraqi people first and began to co-operate. In northern Iraq, where the Iraqi regime’s writ does not run, for example, the benefits of the “oil for food” programme are even more clear. The infrastructure of the north continues to improve, despite Baghdad’s attempts to hamper the UN programme there. Child mortality rates in northern Iraq are now lower than before UN sanctions were imposed. Although under the same UN sanctions, they are lower than the rates in the centre and south of Iraq. And they are still falling.

The UK remains at the forefront of efforts made by the international community to improve the humanitarian situation in Iraq. Since 1991, the UK has donated approximately £100 million in aid, both bilaterally and via the EU, making us one of Iraq’s largest donors. The Department for International Development has allocated £9 million this financial year for humanitarian assistance to the people of Iraq. Our programme in Baghdad-controlled Iraq focuses on the rehabilitation of hospital, water and sanitation infrastructure. In the northern governorates, our programme includes assistance to vulnerable groups, village rehabilitation and de-mining projects.

In contrast, Saddam Hussein prefers to spend money on statues and monuments to himself, not on medicines; and on weapons, not welfare. The regime has, for example, again cut Iraq’s spending on medicines under the “oil for food” programme. At \$40 million, the allocation for the first six months of this year is a quarter what it was for the first half of last year. And yet the Iraqi regime is planning to build a \$25 million Olympic stadium. The Baghdad regime has failed to respond to a six-month old UN proposal to improve child nutrition. And yet it has found time to make plans for a two-week programme of festivities “celebrating” Saddam Hussein’s birthday this year. While Baghdad claims that “oil for food” cannot meet the health needs of the Iraqi people, it has submitted contracts to the UN in recent weeks for over two billion cigarettes and almost 200,000 television sets. Overall up to \$3.5 billion of funds regularly lie unspent by Iraq in the “oil for food” account. And a further \$1 billion of humanitarian goods already approved by the UN for import into Iraq are denied to the Iraqi people, blocked by the Iraqi regime’s failure to process them.

The truth is that it is Saddam who allows the Iraqi people to suffer. We prefer to see them prosper. This is why we worked so hard in the UN to introduce the “oil for food” programme - the largest such programme in the UN’s history - and why we have led the way in proposing new arrangements to improve the flow of goods to the Iraqi people while maintaining control on the Iraqi regime’s access to WMD and military-related items. By unanimous adoption of UN resolution 1382 in November 2001, the Security Council agreed to implement these arrangements in May after further consideration of a Goods Review List. This list will mean



no sanctions on ordinary imports, only controls on military- and weapons-related goods. It shows that we are focusing on the fundamentals - containing the threat that Iraq poses to its neighbours from its WMD and denying Iraq the opportunity to attribute the suffering in Iraq to UN controls rather than its own shortcomings. After further consultation with the Russians, who asked for more time to consider the list, we hope that these arrangements will be in place by the end of May.

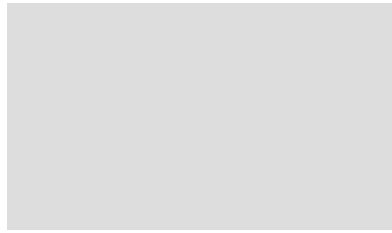
The Iraqi regime opposes these arrangements, just as it opposed the offer, in UN resolution 1284, of the suspension of sanctions in return for its co-operation with UN weapons inspectors. While Iraq remains in breach of this and its other international obligations we do not rule out any means of persuading it to comply. We have made it clear that any decision we make will be taken carefully, cautiously and in accordance with international law. But Saddam Hussein should be in no doubt that if he continues to refuse to allow weapons inspectors into Iraq to remove the threat, he will have to live with the consequences.

Further details of the UK's policy on Iraq may be found on the Iraq pages of the FCO website at www.fco.gov.uk/iraq.

Yours sincerely



Middle East Department



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21st April 2002



Middle East Department
Foreign & Commonwealth Office
King Charles Street
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London

Dear 

Thank you for your reply to my letter written to the Prime Minister on the 18th of March. Although you have provided a lot of information in your reply — for which I am grateful — you nonetheless seem not to have answered the main points which I made in my original correspondence.

To reiterate, I cannot understand how the government, and Tony Blair in particular, can fail to see the level of hypocrisy involved in its current stance on Iraq. In case there is any doubt, it might be useful to consider some of the issues which you point out in your letter to me, as I feel these precisely highlight the difficulties I have with the current policy. The most obvious discrepancy relates to Iraq's capability in respect of Weapons of Mass Destruction.

You point out that the Iraqi regime has admitted to possessing Sarin, Tabun, Mustard Gas and VX Gas, but you omit to point out that VX, the most toxic of them, was invented in Britain and has been mass produced by the US for its own purposes since 1961. The US currently stores over 4000 tonnes of VX nerve gas spread over six sites in the US¹. In addition it is widely known that Agent Orange was used during the Vietnam war and it has also been claimed that in 1968 the United States used VX on a North Vietnamese Army Outpost, in contravention of the 1925 Geneva Protocol.

Additionally, I'm sure you're well aware that — despite your claim that Iraq admitted to 'possessing large quantities of... VX gas' — they said that they had never manufactured VX of sufficient stability to mount on warheads.

The details in themselves are less important than the fact that if the same weapons inspectors were admitted into the US, they would doubtless find considerably more evidence of the existence and storage of chemical weapons than they did in Iraq. Of course, such a situation would never arise because Britain or the US would never allow such a blatant infringement of their sovereignty as to allow their military capability to be inspected by an outside party. At any rate, to insist that Iraq should not use such weapons when you yourself have access to them is clearly an untenable position.

The position becomes even more unsatisfactory when nuclear weapons are considered. The fact that Iraq had intended to or was in actuality developing nuclear weapons is —perhaps rightly —considered to be a serious threat. So serious that sanctions which directly cause the death of up to 5000 infants every month in Iraq are claimed to be a justifiable response.

Yet this is within a context in which Britain and the United States themselves retain a huge arsenal of nuclear weapons. It is an impossible position to hope to preach about the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons when Britain has never made any clear attempts to reduce its nuclear capability. This is made especially acute when Tony Blair himself has publicly stated that he may actually be willing to *use* nuclear weapons. Has Saddam Hussein made any such openly aggressive suggestions?

NATO official policy is that:

‘The supreme guarantee of the security of the Allies is provided by the strategic nuclear forces of the Alliance, particularly those of the United States; the independent nuclear forces of the United Kingdom and France, which have a deterrent role of their own, contribute to the overall deterrence and security of the Allies.’²

It is clear from this that nuclear weapons play an integral part in NATO’s defence plan. But if this is the case, it must surely follow that Iraq is also justified in acquiring nuclear weapons for its own defence as well.

To quote Tony Blair: ‘where countries are engaged in the terror or WMD business, we should not shirk from confronting them.’ But Britain is certainly involved in this business and yet he still cannot see the parallels. Should Iraq shirk from confronting us? The correlation is indeed so obvious that the only conclusion which can seemingly be drawn is that Tony Blair is being aggressive for reasons other than those which he would like us to believe.

To be clear on this, although you say yourself that ‘No decision has been taken’ concerning Iraq, Tony Blair’s statements have shown that he *is* being aggressive even if at the moment this is only taking the form of threats. He has been fairly specific, saying that ‘leaving Iraq to develop WMD...is not an option’ and that if necessary ‘action should be military and again, if necessary and justified, it should involve regime change.’ This seems fairly unambiguous, especially given that President Bush has said that ‘the policy of my government is the removal of Saddam’ and in a not unrelated statement Tony Blair has said that ‘when America is fighting for those values, then, however tough, we fight with her.’

I would dearly like to think that Tony Blair does not intend to invade Iraq, but unfortunately his statements lend no comforting weight to the claim.

You also talk about the twenty three UN obligations which Iraq is in breach of. Again, it is worth considering the UK and US records in this respect. As I’m sure you know, they could certainly be better.

For example, according to the Encyclopædia Britannica:

‘In 1966 the General Assembly unanimously approved a treaty prohibiting the placement of nuclear arms or other weapons of mass destruction in orbit, on the moon, or on other celestial bodies, and recognising the use of outer space for peaceful purposes only.’

This has been one of the fundamental treaties of the UN and yet Bush’s policy on

Missile Defence clearly contravenes this, which does not seem to bother him. Even if you feel this is not clear cut, resolutions which have arisen from this treaty concerning the registration of satellites³ have been routinely breached by the UK and US. Jonathan McDowell, a Harvard astrophysicist, has noted at least 10 counts of non-compliance by the UK and 118 by the US, seven of which have concerned classified military satellites and for which he states: 'The bulk of the information... is deliberately wrong or misleading'.

A further example is the lack of a UN resolution covering the NATO airstrikes of Kosovo which were 'in violation of UN Charter provisions, particularly its article 2(4)⁴,' according to Shinya Murase at the Sophia University Faculty of Law in Tokyo, who goes on to say that

'no matter how broadly or strictly we try to interpret the relevant provisions, at the very least large-scale uses of force as carried out without the explicit authorization of the Security Council, such as the NATO airstrikes, cannot be considered acceptable under the interpretation of the UN Charter.'

Tony Blair's and NATO's policy on nuclear weapons is also in flagrant breach of international law, as dictated by the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice⁵. This ICJ Advisory Opinion also stated that there is an obligation under the NPT to conduct and conclude negotiations for nuclear disarmament, but according to William Epstein in a Nuclear Disarmament Commentary published by the Lawyers' Committee on Nuclear Policy in April 2000, 'the nuclear weapons states simply refuse to begin any multilateral negotiations.'

The implication is that Britain and the United States, amongst other nations including Iraq, are not fulfilling their obligations under international law.

There are many other examples, such as the use of cluster bombs by NATO, or the United States' failings with regard to the UN convention against torture (the UN committee against Torture concluded that electro-shock stun belts and restraint chairs 'almost invariably' led to breaches of the convention and that it should cease holding juveniles and adult prisoners together⁶). During the bombing of Yugoslavia, NATO was in violation of international environmental regulations, in particular with its use of depleted Uranium. The list could go on, but the point I think is clear: Tony Blair's policy is deeply hypocritical.

The fact is that any invasion of Iraq by the US and UK without a UN resolution would also be illegal. Yet clearly Mr. Blair and President Bush are willing to consider this, and were it to become a reality my understanding is that it would constitute an act of aggression by Britain against Iraq, as defined in article 3 of the UN General Assembly Resolution 3314 (XXIX).

If the moral imperative is not clear enough —and it appears not to be —then surely the legal imperative ought to be? Or have I missed the point of international law? Tony Blair appears to use it as an excuse to justify an aggressive military invasion of Iraq, when in fact precisely the opposite is the case at the moment: international law clearly states that he may not do this.

As a final point, you mention that 'The UK remains at the forefront of efforts made by the international community to improve the humanitarian situation in Iraq'. Although I commend the sentiment, the truth of this has certainly not been universally accepted. In particular, regarding the new proposals for the "oil for food" program which you mention in your letter, I recently read a Reuters report⁷ containing quotes from Denis Halliday and Hans von Sponeck, both of whom have headed the "oil for food" program in the past. This stood out especially:

‘We have very carefully studied the draft resolution. We find it a provocation and an intensified punishment of a people for a crime they have never committed.’

They directly contradict the claims you yourself make, by stating that ‘The most recent report of the UN secretary-general, in October 2001 says that the US and UK governments’ blocking of \$4bn of humanitarian supplies is by far the greatest constraint on the implementation of the oil-for-food programme. The report says that, in contrast, the Iraqi government’s distribution of humanitarian supplies is fully satisfactory (as it was when we headed this programme).’

They also ‘accused Washington and London of misleading public opinion by saying the new proposals would ease the plight of the Iraqi people.’

Since this is the claim you seem to be making in your letter I am left wondering what to believe on the matter. Would it be possible to have more information such as a copy of the draft resolution so that I can attempt to make my own judgement? I would be very interested to know your response to the accusation that the claims you have made are misleading.

I realise that my own position could be easily misunderstood given the things I’ve written above. So in order to make it absolutely clear I must say that in no way do I condone Iraq violating its legal and moral obligations either towards its citizens or the rest of the world. However it is exactly the same reasoning that leaves me unable to accept your position. I am, I admit, not fully aware of the situation in Iraq and as a British citizen I have little control over it. On the other hand, when it comes to the British government it is my duty to make clear to the people who claim to represent me that I find the current policy on Iraq to be immoral and wrong. I fully support any diplomatic efforts which attempt to improve the situation in Iraq, but any act of violence conducted by the UK, especially if it were in further breach of international law, would be morally indefensible.

If there are any points which you find here to be inaccurate, which I have failed to take account of or which you feel may have a bearing on my opinion, I would be very grateful if you would let me know of them.

Yours sincerely,

David Llewellyn-Jones

1 Source: US Army Soldier and Biological Chemical Command.
2 Paragraph 62 of the NATO Strategic Concept, adopted in 1999.
3 UN resolution 1721B and the Convention on Registration of Outer Space Objects (1975).
4 Article 2(4) states that ‘All Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations.’
5 July 8th, 1996, on the Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons.
6 Amnesty International Report for the United States of America, 2001.
7 ‘Ex-UN Officials Attack US-UK Plan on Iraq’, June 18th 2001.



Foreign &
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20 May 2002

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Mr David Llewellyn-Jones

Dear Mr Llewellyn-Jones

Thank you for your letter making additional points about Government policy towards Iraq. We have noted your concerns carefully.

If you wish to find further details on our policy towards Iraq, I suggest you look at the Iraq pages on the FCO web-site: www.fco.gov.uk/iraq

Yours sincerely

Middle East Department