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SHORT NEWS CUE

It seems that parts of the government's dossier on Iraq, produced last September when they were trying to make the case for war, were cobbled together at the last minute, with unconfirmed material from single sources - to the disapproval of the security services

- This is illustrated 2-way with Gilligan who has been speaking to anonymous source who saw the document a week before it was published (it was sent away to be "improved" in the intervening week) He has a clip from Gary Samore from the International Institute of Strategic Studies into Ming

SUGGESTED QUESTION AREAS

*There have been suspicions about this dossier but until now no confirmation the govt asked for it to be made "sexier"

To Ming

*What does this do to the Gov's case

*With the US now backtracking on wmd is Blair looking increasingly isolated

*Legally and morally - isn't the govt in deep trouble for backing Bush's war?

WHAT DO THEY SAY.

- see details below of what anonymous source told Gilligan

Campbell

Takes a similar line to Cook - that if this is the case it will cause grave problems for the govt and explode the justification for going to war

BACKGROUND

- See pg 6 of today's Independent for comprehensive rundown of quotes on WMD

- see also attached briefings on what the govt dossier said when published September 24th 2002

GILLIGAN'S BRIEF ON WHAT HIS MAN SAID:

"Q What about the Blair dossier (Sept 2002)? When we last met (in spring 2002) you said the dossier wouldn't tell us anything we didn't already know

A Until the week before it was just the same as I told you. It was transformed in the week before it was published, to make it sexier

Q What do you mean?

A The classic was the statement that WMD were ready for use within 45 minutes. Most things in the dossier were double-source but that was single source. And we believed that the source was wrong. He said it took 45 minutes to construct a missile assembly and that was misinterpreted (in the dossier) to mean that WMD could be deployed in 45 minutes. What we thought it actually meant was that they could launch a conventional missile in 45 minutes. There was no evidence that they had loaded missiles with WMD, or could do so anything like that quickly

Q So how did this transformation happen?

A Campbell

Q What do you mean? They made it up?

A No, it was real information. But it was included in the dossier against our wishes because it wasn't reliable. It was a single source and it was not reliable."

He said Downing Street had asked if there was anything else on seeing the dull original dossier and had been told about this and other things

Other examples - he mentioned the African uranium although said he had no personal knowledge of that because he doesn't do nuclear.

Other quotes: "What you have to understand is that 10-15 years ago there was a lot of information. With the concealment and deception operation (by the Iraqis) there was far less material."

"I believe it is 30 per cent likely there was a CW programme in the six months before the war, and more likely that there was a BW programme, but it was small because you couldn't conceal a larger programme. The sanctions were actually quite effective. They did limit the programme."

"Most people in intelligence weren't happy with it (the dossier), because it didn't reflect the considered view they were putting forward."

On the aftermath: "We don't have a great deal more information yet than we had before. We have not got very much out of the detainees yet."

MF