

Creating Reasons to Go to War

Open Letter to President Bush regarding Downing Street Memo

By [John Conyers](#)

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In-depth Report: [FAKE INTELLIGENCE, Prosecute Bush/Cheney](#)

Unfortunately, the mainstream media in the United States was too busy with wall-to-wall coverage of a “runaway bride” to cover a bombshell report out of the British newspapers. The London Times reports that the British government and the United States government had secretly agreed to attack Iraq in 2002, before authorization was sought for such an attack in Congress, and had discussed creating pretextual justifications for doing so.

The Times reports, based on a newly discovered document, that in 2002 British Prime Minister Tony Blair chaired a meeting in which he expressed his support for “regime change” through the use of force in Iraq and was warned by the nation’s top lawyer that such an action would be illegal. Blair also discussed the need for America to “create” conditions to justify the war.

The document itself is revealing as it indicates that “Bush wanted to remove Saddam, through military action, justified by the conjunction of terrorism and WMD. But the intelligence and facts were being fixed around the policy.” This is the British government proclaiming foreknowledge of the manipulation of intelligence many of us have alleged for some time.

It also quotes the British Foreign Secretary as stating about the case for war: “the case was thin. Saddam was not threatening his neighbours, and his WMD capability was less than that of Libya, North Korea or Iran. We should work up a plan for an ultimatum to Saddam to allow back in the UN weapons inspectors. This would also help with the legal justification for the use of force.”

This should not be allowed to fall down the memory hole during wall-to-wall coverage of the Michael Jackson trial and a runaway bride. To prevent that from occurring, I am circulating the following letter among my House colleagues and asking them to sign on to it:

May __, 2005

The Honorable George W. Bush President of the United States of America The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We write because of troubling revelations in the Sunday London Times apparently confirming that the United States and Great Britain had secretly agreed to attack Iraq in the summer of 2002, well before the invasion and before you even sought Congressional

authority to engage in military action. While various individuals have asserted this to be the case before, including Paul O'Neill, former U.S. Treasury Secretary, and Richard Clarke, a former National Security Council official, they have been previously dismissed by your Administration. However, when this story was divulged last weekend, Prime Minister Blair's representative claimed the document contained "nothing new." If the disclosure is accurate, it raises troubling new questions regarding the legal justifications for the war as well as the integrity of your own Administration.

The Sunday Times obtained a leaked document with the minutes of a secret meeting from highly placed sources inside the British Government. Among other things, the document revealed:

- * Prime Minister Tony Blair chaired a July 2002 meeting, at which he discussed military options, having already committed himself to supporting President Bush's plans for invading Iraq.

- * British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw acknowledged that the case for war was "thin" as "Saddam was not threatening his neighbours and his WMD capability was less than that of Libya, North Korea, or Iran."

- * A separate secret briefing for the meeting said that Britain and America had to "create" conditions to justify a war.

- * A British official "reported on his recent talks in Washington. There was a perceptible shift in attitude. Military action was now seen as inevitable. Bush wanted to remove Saddam, through military action, justified by the conjunction of terrorism and WMD. But the intelligence and facts were being fixed around the policy."

As a result of this recent disclosure, we would like to know the following:

- 1) Do you or anyone in your Administration dispute the accuracy of the leaked document?

- 2) Were arrangements being made, including the recruitment of allies, before you sought Congressional authorization to go to war? Did you or anyone in your Administration obtain Britain's commitment to invade prior to this time?

- 3) Was there an effort to create an ultimatum about weapons inspectors in order to help with the justification for the war as the minutes indicate?

- 4) At what point in time did you and Prime Minister Blair first agree it was necessary to invade Iraq?

- 5) Was there a coordinated effort with the U.S. intelligence community and/or British officials to "fix" the intelligence and facts around the policy as the leaked document states?

We have of course known for some time that subsequent to the invasion there has been a variety of varying reasons proffered to justify the invasion, particularly since the time it became evident that weapons of mass destruction would not be found. This leaked document - essentially acknowledged by the Blair government - is the first confirmation that the rationales were shifting well before the invasion as well.

Given the importance of this matter, we would ask that you respond to this inquiry as promptly as possible. Thank you.

Sincerely,

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