

The Mysterious Death of Dr. David Kelly. Was He Murdered? The Official Verdict Was Suicide...

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Provided herewith are the introductory sections of this important report on the Death of Dr. David Kelly. **Read complete report [here](#).**

Dr David Kelly was a British scientist, who worked as a weapons inspector for the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM). He was renowned for his expertise in his field; over the course of his career, he developed an intricate understanding of Iraq's weapons programmes. Thus, the government and secret services regularly sought his advice.⁽⁴⁹⁾

On March 19th 2003, five countries, including the UK and US, invaded Iraq. The basis for this war had been laid out in two dossiers (Section [3](#)), published in the preceding months, to which Kelly had contributed. However, when he began to raise concerns about the integrity of these documents, he would find himself caught in a political storm. Four months later, Kelly was dead. The official verdict was suicide; a decision that many believe is flawed. Twelve years later, many questions remain unanswered, and the search for the truth continues.

This report will investigate the death of Dr David Kelly on the presumption that: (i) he was murdered, or (ii) he committed suicide.

To achieve this, it is necessary to objectively assess the available evidence with consideration to current developments. Furthermore, the knowledge of those who have disputed the verdict will be sought to sharpen a picture still shrouded in ambiguity.

This topic is particularly pertinent in light of the impending Chilcot Report, which will examine "the UK's involvement in Iraq, including the way decisions were made and actions taken".⁽³⁶⁾

There are many aspects to the case, and these cannot be considered in isolation. The complexity demands an appreciation for how the evidence interacts within the wider context surrounding the key event.

Therefore, this report will address the events chronologically, regularly analysing how they may have contributed to the death of David Kelly. The report will then draw upon this essential information to outline the main theories and their relevance within the underlying context.

2.4 GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATED TERMS

Table 1: A list of common abbreviations that will be used throughout this report. The full form is given, along with the definition ^(23, 35, 46, 63,65, 66)

Abbreviation	Full Form	Explanation
CBW	Chemical and Biological Weapons	A chemical weapon is “any toxic chemical or its precursor that can cause death, injury, temporary incapacitation or sensory irritation through its chemical action”. A biological weapon delivers “toxins and microorganisms such as viruses and bacteria, so as to deliberately inflict disease”.
MoD	Ministry of Defence	A ministerial department which works to protect the UK. It aims to maintain the armed forces and provide them with training. David Kelly was employed by the MoD since 1984.
UNSCOM	United Nations Special Commission	An establishment that was set up to “implement the non-nuclear provisions of the resolution” to eliminate Iraq’s weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles.
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency	“An independent agency, responsible for providing national security intelligence to senior US policy makers”.
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction	“Any explosive device, any weapon that is designed or intended to cause death or serious bodily injury through the release, dissemination, or impact of toxic or poisonous chemicals, or their precursors”. “Any weapon that is designed to release radiation or radioactivity at a level dangerous to human life”.
FAC	Foreign Affairs (Select) Committee	A committee charged with “examining the expenditure, administration and policy of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), other bodies associated with the Foreign Office and thereby within the committee’s remit, include the British Council”.

2.5 TIMELINE OF MAIN EVENTS

Figure 1: The timeline describing the main events, from Dr Kelly’s appointment at the MoD, to the day his body was found⁽⁷⁾

2.6 KEY CHARACTERS



Figure 2: The key characters involved with Dr Kelly's death, and how they were involved ^(1, 2, 17, 41, 43, 47, 48, 64)

3 THE DOSSIER

Published on 24th September 2002 (see [Figure 1](#)), the 'September Dossier' (formally known as 'Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction: The Assessment of the British Government') would spark the cascade of events that led to Dr

Kelly's death.⁽²⁹⁾ The government's paper aimed to investigate WMD in Iraq, and ultimately led to the country's invasion in 2003. A second document, the 'February Dossier' (formally known as 'Iraq - Its Infrastructure of Concealment, Deception and Intimidation') was later published on 3rd February 2003.⁽²⁸⁾ This section will investigate the dossiers and their claims to determine how they could have led to Kelly's death.

3.1 THE 'SEPTEMBER DOSSIER'

According to Alastair Campbell (see [Figure 2](#)), the September Dossier aimed to "[set] out

the facts on Iraq's WMD".⁽⁴²⁾ However, when Whitehall published documents to discuss the creation of the dossier, it surfaced that many aspects were changed in order to justify the case for war.

The most major change caught Dr Kelly in the political storm that led to his death. Labelled as the '45-minute claim', the dossier suggested that Iraq could fire its WMD within 45 minutes of the order. This was among several other changes made to the first draft in order to, as BBC reporter Andrew Gilligan claimed, "sex up" the dossier to make the UK's case of invasion stronger.⁽⁴²⁾ These changes are outlined in [Table 2](#).

Many blamed Campbell for these changes, which he denied. The MoD claimed that "the purpose of the dossier was precisely to make a case for war, rather than setting out the available intelligence, and that to make the best out of sparse and inconclusive intelligence the wording was developed with care".⁽⁵⁹⁾

3.2 THE 'FEBRUARY DOSSIER'

In February 2003, the government released a second publication, which also focused on WMD in Iraq. However, there were fundamental flaws; a substantial amount of its wording came directly from the work of a postgraduate student, Ibrahim al-Marashi. In addition to this, grammatical errors were reflected between the two documents. Like the September dossier, more words were 'hardened' for impact: these are shown in [Table 3](#).

Table 2: *A comparison of the changes made between the draft September dossier (up until 19th September) and the final, published September dossier (24th September).*⁽⁴²⁾ *The last column states how this change affected the meaning of the dossier*

Alteration	Draft Dossier	Published Dossier	Implications
Changed title	"Iraq's Programme for WMD"	"Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction"	WMD were already developed and ready to fire, increasing the perceived threat of Iraq.
Changes to language	WMD could deploy within 45 minutes of an order to use them	WMD are deployable within 45 minutes of an order to use them	More threatening language used to emphasise an 'imminent' threat of attack.
	"Other dual-use facilities, which could be used to support the process of chemical agents and precursors, have been built and re-equipped."	"Other dual-use facilities, which are capable of being used to support the process of chemical agents and precursors, have been built and re-equipped."	Campbell suggested that 'could' was a weak word to use.
Removing text	"The case I make is not that Saddam could launch a nuclear attack on London or another part of the UK (he could not). The case I make is that the UN resolutions demanding he stops his WMD programme are being flouted."	[Text Removed]	The original text made the threat seem weaker than desired. It was removed to make the case for invasion stronger.
	"Saddam is prepared to use chemical and biological weapons if he believes his regime is under threat"	[Text Removed]	Britain knew that Saddam did not have WMD, but would create them if he came under attack. Johnathan Powell, chief of staff, expressed that this should be removed to increase the perceived threat.

Adding text	[Text not present]	“despite sanctions and the policy of containment, Saddam has continued to make progress with his illicit weapons programmes”	Sentences were added to increase the impact of the dossier. Alastair Campbell suggested this to John Scarlett (head of Joint Intelligence Committee).
	[Text not present]	“[WMD] are capable of reaching a number of countries in the region, including Cyprus”	Britain had a military base in Cyprus. This inclusion made Britain seem under greater threat.
Changing figures	“After the lifting of sanctions, we assess that Iraq would need at least five years to produce a weapon.”	“Iraq could produce a nuclear weapon in between one and two years.”	Adding and changing figures, using more favourable sources, to emphasise Iraq’s threat.
Uncorrected Errors	The ‘45-minute claim’ was only valid for battlefield weapons and not long-range missiles. This was unclear in the dossier, and left uncorrected.		

Table 3: Changes made to the February dossier. The flaws are listed, along with an example, and how this affected the meaning of the dossier^(9, 28, 45)

Flaw	Example	Implications
Text taken from the work of Ibrahim al-Marashi without correction of grammar mistakes	“Saddam appointed, Sabir 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Duri as head”.	The work is not that of the UK government, discrediting its validity.
Changing figures	Personnel to be of an estimated 18,000 to 40,000 in number, changed to 30,000 to 40,000 in final draft.	Exaggerating figures for more impact in order to emphasise Iraq’s threat.
Changing text	“aiding opposition groups in hostile regimes” became “supporting terrorist organisations in hostile regimes”.	Further ‘hardening’ of text for impact.

3.3 DR KELLY’S ROLE

Dr Kelly described his involvement in the September dossier as “writing an historical account of the UNSCOM inspections and providing input into Iraq’s concealment and deception”.⁽⁵⁴⁾ He was shown a draft on 9th September 2002; Kelly believed that the wording was not incorrect, but had “a lot of spin on it”.⁽⁷⁾ Despite this, he did not explicitly alert his seniors, and did not mention the 45-minute claim when attending a meeting on the dossier on 19th September.⁽⁷⁾ However, it must be noted that the dossier was further altered after this meeting: Kelly might not have seen the more dramatic changes until it was published.

At first, Kelly showed some concern about the dossier's exaggerations, and it appears that he distanced himself from its drafting. In an unpublished article, Kelly wrote that he believed that there was a long-term threat of WMD in Iraq, but that the immediate threat was only *modest*.⁽³⁸⁾ It is possible that when the exaggerations continued in the February dossier (*Section 3.2*), Kelly started to show more concern, thereby pushing him to voice his opinions.

3.4 ANALYSIS

The exaggerations and mistakes made in the dossier were glaringly obvious. It is now widely believed that the government, namely Alastair Campbell, did this in order to strengthen their case for the invasion of Iraq. Due to the seriousness of this allegation, any criticism might have had great repercussions, to which Kelly was not immune. This will be further explored in *Section 4*.

Overall, it is not possible to draw a definitive conclusion from this section alone. Rather, this provides a 'foundation' in order to contextualise and support subsequent evidence regarding the cause of Kelly's death.

Read complete report [here](#).

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