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WITNESS STATEMENT OF SUSAN WATTS,  
SCIENCE EDITOR, BBC NEWSNIGHT  
TO HUTTON INQUIRY REGARDING THE CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING THE DEATH OF  
DR DAVID KELLY:

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**Attachment E**

FULL + FINAL  
20/7/03

Telephone rings

DK "David Kelly"

SW Hi David It's susan here

DK Oh hi! I've just left you a voicemail

SW Yes I just picked that up just relaxing after a week of doing GM crops  
(laugh)

I was hoping I wouldn't have to cover that story much again after the previous round . but it's all come up again with the national debate stuff next week - so there we are .ummm so you've been in New York?

DK Yes it was the UNMOVIC's commissioners meeting - it was Blix' farewell one so . (SW oh of course) xxx (make sure) no one said anything controversial, I think

DK. Of course he gives his presentation to the security council next week on his report

SW aah right which day is that?

DK err it's not yet been fixed - but it'll be one day next week

SW right, and what's that likely to contain - anything interesting or .?

DK it's actually a factual account of the inspections that they undertook, it's padded out with all sorts of discussions, well I shouldn't say padded out, with all sorts of statistical stuff that is in there . it's pretty comp .it's not controversial - at least in my eyes it's not controversial. but it does comment on the mobile labs, it does comment on some of the finds that they have and the destruction of the arms xx)

SW OK, um While I'm sure since you've been in New York I don't know whether you've been following the kind of the rumpus that's erupted over here over the . spat between the intelligence service and the umm.

DK. I guessed something was up -- I read the Times this am and I could see there was something there and I think this follows on from what was happening in the states with Rumsfeld's comments

SW yes it's partly prompted by Rumsfeld - two statements by Rumsfeld - the first one saying that it was "possible" the weapons were destroyed before the war started and then he went on I think in another speech yesterday to say that the use of the argument on the position on WMD was for bureaucratic reasons rather than being the prime motive for the war, which is a rather vague statement

DK yes

SW But what intrigued me and which made, prompted me to ring you, (huh) was the quotes yesterday on the Today programme about the 45 minutes part of the dossier

DK yep. We spoke about this before of course

SW We have

DK I think you know my views on that

SW Yes, I've looked back at my notes and you were actually quite specific at that time - I may have missed a trick on that one, but err

SJW | 1 | 0038

(both laugh)

SW you were more specific than the source on the Today programme – not that that necessarily means that it's not one and the same person. but, um in fact you actually referred to Alastair Campbell in that conversation

DK err yep yep with you? .

SW yes

DK. I mean I did talk to Gavin Hewitt yesterday – he phoned me in New York, so he may have picked up on what I said because I would have said exactly the same as I said to you.

SW Yes, so he presumably decided not to name Alastair Campbell himself but just to label this as Number 10 .

DK yep yep

SW are you getting much flak over that?

DK me? No, not yet anyway I was in New York (laughs)

SW yes good timing I suppose

DK I mean they wouldn't think it was me, I don't think Maybe they would, maybe they wouldn't. I don't know

SW um so is that the only item in the report that you had concerns over being single-sourced rather than double -sourced? .

DK You have to remember I'm not part of the intelligence community – I'm a user of intelligence . of course I'm very familiar with a lot of it, that's why I'm asked to comment on it but I'm not deeply embedded into that . xxx So some of it I really can't comment because I don't know whether it's single-sourced or not

SW but on the 45 minutes

DK oh that I knew because I knew the concern about the statement . it was a statement that was made and it just got out of all proportion . you know someone They were desperate for information. they were pushing hard for information which could be released that was one that popped up and it was seized on and it was unfortunate that it was which is why there is the argument between the intelligence services and cabinet office/number ten, because things were picked up on, and once they've picked up on it you can't pull it back, that's the problem

SW but it was against your advice that they should publish it?

DK I wouldn't go as strongly as to say that particular bit , because I was not involved in the assessment of it. no. I can't say that it was against MY advice I was uneasy with it I mean my problem was I could give other explanations which I've indicated to you . that it was the time to erect something like a scud missile or it was the time to fill a 40 barrel, multi-barrel rocket launcher

(Next 5 words physically removed from tape .not present on Monday 14/7/03 assume due to rubbing as tape constantly re-wound)

. ("all sorts of reasons why") 45 minutes might well be important and . I mean I have no idea who debriefed this guy quite often it's someone who has no idea of the topic and the information comes through and people then use it as they see fit

SJW|1|0039

SW so it wasn't as if there were lots of people saying don't put it in don't put it in it's just it was in there and was seized upon . rather than number ten specifically going against ?

DK there were lots of people saying that – I mean it was an interesting week before the dossier was put out because there were so many things in there that people were saying well we're not so sure about that, or in fact they were happy with it being in but not expressed the way that it was, because you know the word-smithing is actually quite important, and the intelligence community are a pretty cautious lot on the whole but once you get people putting it/presenting it for public consumption then of course they use different words. I don't think they're being wilfully dishonest I think they just think that that's the way the public will appreciate it best I'm sure you have the same problem as a journalist don't you, sometimes you've got to put things into words that the public will understand

SW simple

DK. in your heart of hearts you must realise sometimes that's not actually the right thing to say .but it's the only way you can put it over if you've got to get it over in two minutes or three minutes

SW did you actually write that section which refers to the 45 minutes Or was it somebody else?

DK errr I didn't write THAT section, no I mean I reviewed the whole thing, I was involved with the whole process . In the end it was just a flurry of activity and it was very difficult to get comments in because people at the top of the ladder didn't want to hear some of the things

SW so you expressed your unease about it? Put it that way

DK errr well yes yep yes

SW: so how do you feel now number ten is furiously denying it and Alastair Campbell specifically saying it's all nonsense it was all in the intelligence material?

DK well I think it's matter of perception isn't it I think people will perceive things and they'll be, how shall I put it, they'll see it from their own standpoint and they may not even appreciate quite what they were doing

SW do you think there ought to be a security and intelligence committee inquiry?

DK yes but not now I think that has to be done in about six months time when we actually have come to the end of the evaluation of Iraq and the information that is going to come out of it I still think it's far too early to be talking about the intelligence that is there . a lot of intelligence that would appear to be good quality intelligence , some of which is not and it take a long long time to get the information that's required from Iraq The process has only just started I think one of the problems with the dossier – and again I think you and I have talked about it in the past is that it was presented in a very black and white way without any sort of quantitative aspects of it The only quantitative aspects were the figures derived essentially from UNSCOM figures, which in turn are Iraq's figures presented to UNSCOM – you know the xxx litres anthrax, the 4 tonnes VX – all of that actually is Iraqi figures – but there was nothing else in there that was quantitative or even remotely qualitative – I mean it was just a black and white thing – they have weapons or they don't have weapons That in turn has been interpreted as being a vast arsenal and I'm not sure any of us ever said that . people have said to me that that was what was implied, Again we discussed it .and I discussed it with many people, that my own perception is that yes they have weapons but actually not xzxxx (xxx not problem ) at this point in time The PROBLEM was that one could anticipate that without any form of inspection, and that forms a real deterrence, other than the sanctions side of things, then that that would develop I think that was the real concern that everyone had, it was not so much what they have now but what they would have in the future But that unfortunately wasn't expressed strongly in the dossier because that takes away the case for war (I cough) to a certain extent

SW a clear and present, imminent threat?

DK yes

SJW | 1 | 0040

SW yes . so did you pick up anything in NY last week as to whether you'll be going back in or the chances of UNMOVIC going back in?

DK yes . remember I don't wear a blue hat anymore . I mean I go out to advise them, but I don't wear a blue hat

SW: you were hoping you might get involved in some of the interviewing process

DK: yes hopeful but it hasn't happened yet. and the reason for that is of course these guys aren't talking and there's actually not a lot of point in me discussing things if they are actually saying no. Once they start opening up, that's the time (to go back)

SW what's likely to make them start opening up though – do we need to get to the stage of talking about war trials? Or is that only going to make things worse

DK: well I think there has to be a whole selection of tools so to speak, depending on who the individual is . there will be some individuals where I suspect there's no option but for them to face up to the fact that they are going to be tried . one hopes it's going to be an Iraqi court eventually , but it may be another court and there will be others who will naturally hope that that's not going to happen to them and they get reassurances that won't happen . some form of custody . Who can actually provide that custody . I don't know – can't be just the US or the UK . So I really don't know, and then of course there are all sorts of other incentives . I mean financial incentives . I gather US has said the arrangement that they have that they will give financial support to people who come forward which is fine, but if no security for those guys .(because there's no govt) there are forces that are against the US who are Saddam loyalists – they maybe , maybe not and they face retribution afterwards . it's actually quite a complex situation . sorry I'm really talking about those who haven't surrendered or they're just talking and want to surrender .

SW ok just back momentarily on the 45 minute issue . I'm feeling like I ought to just explore that a little bit more with you . the um. err So would it be accurate then, as you did in that earlier conversation, to say that it was Alastair Campbell himself who. ?

DK No I can't . All I can say is the Number Ten press office. I've never met Alastair Campbell so I cant . (SW interrupts they seized on that ?) But . I think Alastair Campbell is synonymous with that press office because he's responsible for it

SW yeah hmmm .right ok, and now that we know that the IAEA inspectors are going back in do you feel any more optimistic that the replacement for Blix will lead a team back in?

DK well the IAEA inspectors are going to do one thing . not going back in to do

SW. a proper job?

DK: yep – they're can't do the job that they did before – they'll go in – they'll check on the distribution of looted radioactive materials - evaluate the hazards associated with that . And make recommendations about how that can be dealt with – they may have a role in supervising that but I don't think much beyond that

SW right, so you don't feel optimistic then?

DK well I think that eventually the UN is going to have a role to play in this, but I think the difficulty is how does the UN engage with the coalition forces – there has to be a process – they can't both do the same job . I think it's going to be very difficult for them to work in harmony together, because of the animosity between the UN and the US, both as institutions, and between people who are involved . There's tremendous . in UNSCOM possibly UNMOVIC - there's tremendous anti-US feeling . That they were pulled out and they were doing their job and that if they had continued to do their job they would have solved the problem . That may not be the case but they actually think that . And so they are very resentful of the US . .xxxx I think you know.

SJW | 1 | 0041

we've seen on the mobile labs the POLITICS of that is so STRONG that it deflects all practical objectivity .

SW Has your assessment of whether that, of how important that is changed - I think was 90 and went down to 45% ?

DK: In terms of its likelihood of being a fermentor?.. it's still down in 40s

SW Really? It's still that low?

DK oh yes

SW Is that still because you don't have the right information

DK Well I have more than I did before, but I still don't have the right information so until this team reports back and I'm unsighted as to whether they've actually finished their job because I've been in NY . as you know there's team in at the moment - until they come back and actually give their data I think it's actually quite difficult to make that determination but whatever it is it's certainly a very unusual fermentor

SW so where do you stand on the Rumsfeld point about the possibility of the weapons having been destroyed before the war started?

DK Well it is a possibility. I find it difficult to comment I mean it is a possibility that that's the case ummm . It may be that they had such a small arsenal that they determined that it wouldn't be militarily effective and therefore it would provide the embarrassment that's required to embarrass the coalition - I'm not sure, I mean it's such a trivial thing, that I can't see that being the case, but it's very difficult to rationalise why they would be destroyed when they worked so hard for years to conceal xxx capable

SW Although I suppose there's some evidence that Saddam was a fairly strategic thinker so if he decided that this was IT That he'd rather history record that he had nothing.

DK yes yes

SW that's the only way you can make any sense out of it

DK I think a lot is going to come out . it's one thing to be talking about hardware - which is what people are concerned about. But I think it's actually going to either come out of individuals, if they choose to talk, or it will come out of documentation. xxx might lead to incriminating evidence - there will be something somewhere in Saddam's documents that indicate ( interrupt) . destroyed

SW Sorry that indicate it WAS destroyed?

DK No unless those documents have been destroyed (SW oh themselves) I'm not sure at the highest level what they did in terms of keeping multiple copies of things . but certainly lower down the chain Iraq was so bureaucratic you could virtually guarantee there would be 6 copies of something But at the highest level I just have no idea.

SW good ok .well un So are you around next week or are you off?

DK am I around next week? I'm going back to the states I'm around but I expect to be more away than I am in the country, put it that way, but my days seem to change/ my plans seem to change daily

SW ok, well if we suddenly have a surprise in the Blix document I'll perhaps ring you, but you're not anticipating that?

DK I'm not, but you think differently to me so you might find there's a surprise there, I don't know (laughs) I'm certainly around Mon, Tues, Weds that's for sure

SJW | 1 | 0042

SW right ok

DK I'm in London Mon /Tues – probably my mobile will be on

SW ok I'll pester you if I need to but I'll avoid doing that if I don't

DK Call me in the evenings that's no problem if you have to do that . in the day – because I tend to be in the MoD or the Foreign Office that's not convenient

SW no, ok , good ok well many thanks again and I'll talk to you soon

DK Are you doing anything for NN?

SW at the moment I've been mainly concentrating on GM crops . but NN has been doing pieces that last 2 or 3 nights on the Rumsfeld situation and I've been feeding things in or pointing people in . the CIA report on the mobile labs came out yesterday and I made sure that was fed into the process

DK That was a funny report to me it looked like it had just been pushed out at a whim overnight

SW well yes that would be interesting to coincide with what Rumsfeld said

DK: Well if you look at it it's not well edited .the same thing is said in different paragraphs – there's been some cutting and pasting going on and things have got left around the place

SW It was odd because was put on the site – wasn't announced was put on the site CIA site for 7 hours which is kind of weird if you want to draw peoples attention to it . I don't know It was all very odd but it might be that come Tues when the commons is back, and Blair is going to be under pressure to make a statement or hold a debate or something on this whole question I may be put back onto it again so we'll see

DK yep, ok

SW it kind of varies between me and the general reporters (DK laughs) depending on what I'm up to

SW Ok well thanks again – thanks for calling back David and I'll keep in touch ok cheers

DK OK, thanks bye

ringing tone

STW | 1 | 0043