



For immediate use 16 November 2004

Press Release

Blair Impeachment Case Goes to Europe

The campaign to impeach UK Prime Minister Tony Blair for misleading parliament and the country over the invasion of Iraq has been taken up at the European Parliament today. Euro-MPs from Plaid Cymru and the Scottish National Party are seeking to gain support for the measure from MEPs.

Plaid Cymru and SNP MEPs have tabled a written declaration (similar to an Early Day Motion at Westminster) in support of the impeachment process (text copied below). The motion criticises Tony Blair's conduct in making a flawed case for the war and reasserts the European Parliament's assertion that the war is in contravention of international law. They are also writing to all members of Parliament setting out the case for impeachment.

Plaid Cymru Deputy Leader Jill Evans MEP said:

"Our aim is to build as broad as possible a consensus for holding Tony Blair to account for his conduct over Iraq. People and politicians all over the world were outraged at the misleading statements made by Blair in trying to justify this illegal war. Now we are giving politicians from right across Europe, from whatever party, the opportunity to lend their support to the process of holding him to account.

It is becoming clearer by the day that he has a very serious case to answer and the backing of Euro-MPs will add to the pressure for his impeachment. We need to restore peoples' faith in politics by showing that individuals are accountable - whatever their position."

SNP European Leader Ian Hudghton MEP added:

"We are writing to all members of Parliament setting out why Blair should be impeached. The European Parliament was vocal in its opposition to the Iraq war and I'm sure that many colleagues will want the opportunity to support moves for Blair to answer his accusers. This motion also sets out our clear support for the exemplary work of our colleagues at Westminster. We are determined that liar Blair should not be left off the hook for instigating an illegal and unnecessary war that has led to the deaths of thousands of people."

Edinburgh: SNP Headquarters, 107 MacDonald Road, Edinburgh EH7 4NW

Inverness: Highland Railhouse, Station Square, Inverness, IV1 1LE

Glasgow: Suite 298, 3rd Floor, 93 Hope Street, Glasgow G2 6LD

Brussels: European Parliament, 60 rue Wiertz, 08H149, B-1047 Brussels, Belgium
Tel: 0032 (0)2 284 5187; Fax: 0032 (0)2 284 9187



Alyn Smith MEP (SNP) commented:

"Blair cannot be allowed to get away with taking a country to war on a flawed and false basis. We now know that he made statements to the House of Commons building the case for war that were clearly contradicted by the intelligence he was getting at the time. There is a long standing convention that ministers who mislead Parliament should resign. Blair seems to think himself above this kind of responsibility. We disagree - he clearly has a case to answer and we intend to build support for his impeachment across Europe."

Notes

The full text of the Written Declaration tabled in Strasbourg today reads:

The European Parliament,

– having regard to Rule 116 of its Rules of Procedure,

A. whereas the military forces of the United States and United Kingdom, and others, invaded Iraq in contravention of international law and without United Nations sanction,

B. whereas the public justification for this action in the United Kingdom were two claims that the Iraqi regime had weapons of mass destruction capable of use within 45 minutes, claims subsequently withdrawn by the UK government,

C. whereas Members from four parties in the United Kingdom Parliament have set in motion an impeachment procedure to hold the British Prime Minister to account,

1. RECOGNISES that the case for war was flawed from the outset and has destabilised an already volatile region, creating a source of global instability for years to come;

2. DECLARES the support of the European Parliament for the impeachment process; and

Edinburgh: SNP Headquarters, 107 MacDonald Road, Edinburgh EH7 4NW

Inverness: Highland Railhouse, Station Square, Inverness, IV1 1LE

Glasgow: Suite 298, 3rd Floor, 93 Hope Street, Glasgow G2 6LD

Brussels: European Parliament, 60 rue Wiertz, 08H149, B-1047 Brussels, Belgium
Tel: 0032 (0)2 284 5187; Fax: 0032 (0)2 284 9187



ALYN SMITH MEP

FIGHTING FOR AN INDEPENDENT SCOTLAND IN EUROPE

3. INSTRUCTS its President to forward this declaration, together with the names of the signatories, to the Commission, the Council, and the governments of the Member States as well as the Secretary General of the United Nations, and in so doing reinforce the importance this institution places in the sanctity of International Law.

Edinburgh: SNP Headquarters, 107 MacDonald Road, Edinburgh EH7 4NW

Inverness: Highland Railhouse, Station Square, Inverness , IV1 1LE

Glasgow: Suite 298, 3rd Floor, 93 Hope Street, Glasgow G2 6LD

Brussels: European Parliament, 60 rue Wiertz, 08H149, B-1047 Brussels, Belgium

Tel: 0032 (0)2 284 5187; Fax: 0032 (0)2 284 9187