

SNP condemn Blair government

SNP Home Affairs spokesperson, Pete Wishart MP, has described the testimony to the Chilcot inquiry by the former head of MI5, Eliza Manningham-Buller, as a damning indictment of the Blair administration.

In her testimony Lady Manningham-Buller told the inquiry how she had warned about what sensible – but mostly frightened to speak out – senior Whitehall officials believed in 2003: that the invasion of Iraq would increase the terrorist threat to the UK.

Mr Wishart said:

“As former head of MI5, Eliza Manningham-Buller’s testimony comes as a damning indictment of the Blair administration, and will leave the former prime minister feeling queasy.

“This testimony explodes Labour’s claim that the Iraq War did not increase the terrorist threat to the UK.

“In light of Lady Manningham-Buller’s evidence, and that of the former Attorney General, it would seem incredible if Tony Blair was not now recalled to account for his actions.

“There are mounting questions for Tony Blair, and the cabinet colleagues who supported him, over why the former Attorney General changed his mind on the justification for the invasion, when his previous legal advice, and private letters to Tony Blair said that war without a security council resolution would be illegal. What led to this u-turn without any new evidence to justify it.

“Tony Blair’s last appearance raised more questions than it answered and I would hope, with considerations of the general election now passed, that he will be totally straight with people on what was going on in Downing Street – this is a

time for total candour on the worse foreign policy decision in recent history."