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Mr Jones

Our Ref: FOI 261 656

(by email: request-6614-85a75c06@whatdotheyknow.com)

20 February 2009

Dear Mr Jones,

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000

Thank you for your request for a copy of Tony Blair's response to Sir Callum McCarthy's letter dated 31 May 2005 along with any documents relating to that response. The Cabinet Office received your request on 23 January 2009 and I have dealt with it under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act, 2000.

I can confirm that the Cabinet Office does hold information relevant to your request but I have to advise you that I must extend the time limit for responding to your request.

It is occasionally necessary to extend the 20 working day time limit for issuing a response. Information you have requested is exempt under section 29 of the Freedom of Information Act. Section 29 exempts information if its disclosure would, or would be likely to, prejudice the economic interests of the United Kingdom or of any part of the United Kingdom, or would, or would be likely to, prejudice the financial interests of any administration in the United Kingdom. Section 29 is subject to a public interest test and the Cabinet Office has not yet reached a decision on whether the balance of the public interest favours disclosure of this information.

By virtue of section 10(3), when public authorities have to consider the balance of the public interest in relation to a request, they do not have to comply with the request until such time as is reasonable in the circumstances. Owing to the need to consider, in all the circumstances of the case, where the balance of the public interest lies in relation to your request, we will not be able to respond to your request in full within 20 working days. I hope to let you have a response by 24 March 2009. If I can reply before that date, I



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shall do so. If I need more time to consider the balance of the public interest, I shall write again to let you know.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me. Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Jenkins', with a stylized flourish at the end.

John Jenkins
Knowledge and Information Management Unit

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29 The economy

(1) Information is exempt information if its disclosure under this Act would, or would be likely to, prejudice—

(a) the economic interests of the United Kingdom or of any part of the United Kingdom, or

(b) the financial interests of any administration in the United Kingdom, as defined by section 28(2).

(2) The duty to confirm or deny does not arise if, or to the extent that, compliance with section 1(1)(a) would, or would be likely to, prejudice any of the matters mentioned in subsection (1).

(section 28 (2) reads: “administration in the United Kingdom” means –

(a) the government of the United Kingdom,

(b) the Scottish Administration,

(c) the Executive Committee of the Northern Ireland Assembly, or

(d) the National Assembly for Wales.