



# Sixsmith to write 'Spingate' memoir

by Gaby Hinsliff  
and Vanessa Thorpe

MARTIN Sixsmith, the ousted civil servant at the heart of the 'Spingate' row, is planning an explosive book lifting the lid on life in Whitehall under New Labour.

Publishers are lining up for the rights to his memoirs, which friends say will take in not only previously undisclosed details about his life as press chief to Stephen Byers, but also his turbulent time as head of press to the then Social Security Secretary, Harriet Harman, at the height of her war with her deputy, Frank Field.

But Sixsmith will face strong resistance from the Whitehall machine. Civil servants have a duty of confidentiality and memoirs are expected to be submitted for security vetting.

The news comes as friends of Byers' former special adviser, Jo Moore – described last week as a 'classic textbook bully' by the civil service union, the First Division

Association – blamed sexism for aggravating her downfall

over a leaked email accusing her of trying to bury bad news on the day of Princess Margaret's funeral.

'There aren't many women in the senior civil service, and if you are female but firmly stand your ground, then you are a bully. If you are a male doing the same thing, you are just doing your job,' said one supporter. 'I think this is largely about being female, frankly.'

Moore worked part-time at the Department of Transport to fit in with her children and allies said some meetings had been deliberately scheduled for days when it was known she would not be there, keeping her out of the loop.

Both Sixsmith and Moore are likely to be called to give evidence to an inquiry by Sir Nigel Wicks, the Commissioner for Standards in Public Life.

Civil service sources said personal memoirs were 'frowned upon', although it was often difficult for the

Government to take legal action except in cases such as books by former spies. The decision by Derek Lewis, the Prison Service boss sacked by Tory Home Secretary Michael Howard, to write his memoirs upset some Whitehall colleagues. 'It just makes it harder to have frank discussions if you think it's going to end up in someone's memoirs,' said one source.

Although Sixsmith's terms of departure, including his pay-off, are still being negotiated, he accepts that there is no chance of another job in Whitehall. Friends said the former BBC journalist believed it would be 'daft not to write a book' and had already begun sifting his notes.

Michael Fishwick of HarperCollins, who edited Lady Thatcher's and John Major's autobiographies, said he would be 'very interested' in a book.

Andrew Gordon, editorial director of Simon and Schuster, who edited John Rentoul's biography of Tony Blair, said it would have to be

'revealing' to sell. 'There is a danger that it will just concentrate on the machinations of civil servants, but if, as it sounds, he has approached this job with an eye to posterity then I would be very interested to read it.'

The news comes amid a fresh row over memos uncovered by the Liberal Democrats from the Treasury. In briefings on answers being prepared to parliamentary questions tabled by Lib Dem economics spokesman Matthew Taylor, unnamed officials warn that he is a 'tricky customer' and question why he wants the information. Another note records that 'I have gone for a narrow interpretation of Taylor's question, which makes the answer pretty short and easy.'

Taylor said the civil service guide stated that 'straight answers should be given to straight questions' and accused the Treasury of blocking him.







Source:

Date:

Page:

Circulation:

Ad Rates:

Tel:

Aberdeen Press & Journal

Tuesday 26. February 2002

14

ABC 100421 Daily  
page rate £9,632.00  
scc rate £21.50  
01224 690222

Harriet Harman



Durrants

(D1799-1)

Page 1 of 1

## Quotes of the Day

**"The public is inching towards the use of kilometres"** – *The Solicitor General, Harriet Harman.*

**"I have my witty-titty sex smile, and the one where I'm an idiot"** – *Former James Bond star Roger Moore.*

**"Coming out as a Christian – particularly C of E, which is so naff – is probably worse than coming out as gay"** – *Actress Sally Phillips, star of the TV hit Smack the Pony.*

**"When I was a communist, before the war, people used to say: 'Who will do the dirty work under socialism?' The answer, I discovered, was Denis Healey"** – *Lord (Denis) Healey, former Labour Chancellor and Defence Secretary.*

**"Less substantial than a mouthful of air"** – *Theatre critic Georgina Brown's verdict on a new West End production, The Feast of Snails.*



### Rather old and very dusty

ACTRESS DAME JUDI DENCH, WHEN ASKED HOW SHE FELT ABOUT BEING DESCRIBED AS A NATIONAL TREASURE

**"If I am in any way, shape or form the centre of attention, I become like a deer in the headlights. I just freeze. I get catatonic. I can't think. I can't see. I can't hear"** – *Actress Daryl Hannah.*

**"I'm encouraging stropiness on the Labour benches"** – *Labour's chairman Charles Clarke.*

**"If Andrew Motion is fit to be the Poet Laureate, then I'm a direct descendant of William Shakespeare. Motion's latest effort, A Hymn for the Golden Jubilee, is a load of old cobbles"** – *Football legend George Best.*

**"If one is in a tiny boat in a big storm, as I was two years ago, one is completely powerless. At that moment, all that matters is surviving. Those threatening letters from the bank manager suddenly seem very trivial, indeed"** – *Survival expert Ray Mears.*





# Sixsmith, just the latest victim

## New Labour bullying destroys another civil service press chief

by Andy Wood

former director of information, Northern Ireland Office

**I**f there's a cardinal sin in Whitehall, it's not going quietly. Making a fuss and hanging out the departmental washing on a public line is unforgivable in the eyes of the Permanent Secretary. Being found on your desk embracing a blow-up doll of Margaret Thatcher will get you six months' compassionate leave on full pay. But blow the whistle? Not done in Whitehall. Such displays get right up Sir Humphrey's nose. He prides himself he's in charge of a "Rolls-Royce" (as the British Civil Service used to be known). He hates the idea of some overalled oik from the more worldly end of his empire pointing out that there's an oil leak.

That, essentially, is what Martin Sixsmith has done this week. Right or wrong — and I believe the double-dealing and the clumsy attempt to "bounce" him into resigning justifies his going public — the mandarins will not forgive or forget.

I was eased out of the Northern Office on the grounds of "personal chemistry and style" in July 1997 on the orders of — but not directly by — Mo Mowlam. Even though I'd gone, she still bad-mouthed me. I was, variously, "not up to the job", "a w\*\*\*\*\*", "anally retentive". I was still a civil servant so I held my peace until spring 1998 and then, like Sixsmith, revealed what had happened in *The Sunday Times*.

The Downing Street media

machine is trying to limit the damage of the Sixsmith/Jo Moore affair, suggesting that the spin-doctor problem is a temporary, recent and localised difficulty. It is none of these.

It is not temporary — so long as so many special advisers remain in top posts, at the shoulder of their ministers. The Tories got by with 35 — under New Labour the number is 80, with more than 20 in Downing Street alone.

It is not recent — almost the minute Labour came to power in 1997, the destabilising of established Civil Service press officers started. Within a short time of Mo Mowlam's arrival at the Northern Ireland Office, I was fingered in the press — "Speculation now surrounds the future of Andy Wood, the NIO's redoubtable spin doctor..."

And it is not localised: in his previous job, Byers tried to exert political pressure on his head of information at the employment and education department. At the Treasury, the highly able information chief Jill Rutter was, in her own words, "left with a quarter of her job" as Ed Balls, the Chancellor's special adviser, and Charlie Whelan, his irrepressible but dangerously amateur media adviser, started extending their spheres of activity. Jill was shrewdly snapped up by BP. At the Department of Social Security, Steve Reardon was labelled "dead meat" by Harriet Har-

man's special adviser. Blinded by Harman's dithering inability to decide whether to take a Cabinet pay rise or not, Steve soon found a new post at the Institute of Directors. (His successor? Martin Sixsmith.)

After I'd gone, things got no better. In 1998, three experienced career press officers — neutral civil servants — were excluded from interviews for the position of head of news at my old department. I protested to permanent secretary Joe Pilling even though I was no longer with the NIO. Their exclusion was "as bizarre as it is indefensible", I wrote. Pilling's reply pooh-poohed such unworthy thought. The post was filled by a *Daily Mirror* journalist, Sheree Dodd — who, only months before had written a gushing profile of Mo Mowlam.

**T**HE truth is as brutal as it is bald: within a couple of years of Tony Blair's 1997 victory at the polls not a single pre-election head of information remained in place in Whitehall.

Eighteen years in opposition had produced a "never again" attitude in New Labour. This time the media would not dismiss them so easily. Reporters would be harried, challenged and bullied. But civil service information officers wouldn't do this — they would, quite rightly, resist turning out party propaganda disguised as supposedly apolitical government press notices. New people — their own people — had to be brought in to do the dirty work. The Government information machine had to change tack — it would be impossible to drive forward the Labour agenda while there were still impartial and non-biddable operators at the helm. So out we went in a mass cull.

Where is this all leading? I suggest the answer is about 3,000 miles west. In Washington DC,





Source:  
Date:  
Page:

Evening Standard (London)  
Wednesday 27. February 2002  
55

Circulation:  
Ad Rates:

ABC 441146 Daily  
page rate £11,715.00  
scc rate £55.00  
020 7938 6000

Tel:

Harriet Harman



Durrants

[D1799-1]

Page 2 of 2

every time there's a change of President, about 7,000 public servants are kicked out to make way for a new wave of political appointees. Change the party of government as well as President and that number is doubled. It may do wonders for the Washington furniture removal industry — but it does nothing for continuity of government.

I prefer the British system, whereby the Civil Service is able to provide continuity and professional advice, and to be able to offer a contrasting view without being judged disloyal. The growing gang of media manipulators browbeating government press officers into producing taxpayer-funded party-political propaganda instead of reliable facts and figures are beginning to make this impossible.



Andy Wood with Mo Mowlam, who eventually had him removed



Martin Sixsmith: will not be forgiven for his disloyalty by Whitehall





## Marcel Berlins

### Why wannabe lawyers cannot afford to qualify, and a battle over a mobster's smuggled sperm

● Qualifying as a lawyer is gradually, but inevitably, becoming once again the preserve of the well-heeled. I say "once again" because there was a period – broadly the 1960s until the early 1990s – when the legal profession was genuinely opening its doors to all, mainly because of local authority grants available to the less well-off. Those days are over and, despite higher (though rarely liveable-on) salaries to trainee solicitors and barristers, studying for the profession is all but out of reach for those without their own money (rare) or financially supportive parents. The latest news is that fees for students taking the legal practice course – an essential step to qualification – have risen significantly. Two law schools have upped theirs by more than 10%; one now charges £8,250 for the year. Coincidental with the news of these price rises, the Law Society and the bar embarked on a programme to combat social exclusion in the law. Cherie Booth QC and the solicitor general **Harriet Harman** QC attended an open day aimed at encouraging inner-city schoolchildren to think about going into the law. A worthy aim, but what hope have those children of becoming lawyers when the financial barriers are

so forbidding?

● A federal appeal court in California has ruled that the draconian "three strikes and you're out" law is unconstitutional where the third offence was a petty theft (of three videos, in one case). The mandatory minimum of 25 years' imprisonment, the court said, could amount to cruel and unusual punishment. Contrast that approach with our own home secretary's in-depth look at the same law, in a recent speech: "So banging people away in California for three minor offences for 25 years has its own reward – they are away for 25 years – but even they have to come out. They may be elderly and slightly more decrepit in the crimes they commit but I think after 25 years in a Californian jail you probably learn how to do it without having to use strong-arm tactics."

● John Thaw playing Kavanagh QC was, in my opinion, the most convincing and accurate portrayal of the English advocate I've seen in television or cinema. I interviewed him during Kavanagh's second series, and I was astonished by how worried he was about his performance. The series was doing very well in the ratings, Thaw himself was immensely popular, but what really mattered to him was

whether or not he'd got it right. He had. He was understated, his tone was aggressive when needed (seldom) but mainly matter-of-fact, as it is in real trials, and he got the pace of courtroom questioning perfectly. Unlike most actors playing barristers in court, he realised that not every question in cross-examination and not every speech to the jury has to be invested with high drama. Compare, for instance, Sir Derek Jacobi's overwrought barrister in the current series of *The Jury* and you realise how good Thaw was.

● *Bagels before Breakfast* (Piatkus Books) is a Woody Allen-meets-Portnoy's-Complaint-meets-Adrian-Mole kind of novel about a meek Jewish north London small-firm solicitor faced with a fearsome mother and various predatory girlfriends. It's by solicitor Neil Rose, currently a writer on the Law Society's Gazette. It's hard enough to unearth solicitors who have written readable novels. It's rare indeed to find one who does that and has a sense of humour.

● Antonino Parlavacchio is a New York mobster serving 14 years in jail, an incarceration which has somewhat interfered with his and his wife Maria's plans to start a family. But they are an enterprising couple, and there are always guards to be bribed. On payment of a few hundred dollars, a blind eye was turned as Maria left the prison carrying a container of her husband's sperm, which she took to her gynaecologist for freezing. Alas, the force of authority got to know of the sperm's movements and impounded it, so that it is now government property. Maria's now taking court action to get her property back. And this is where we have to applaud the sheer imagination of the US authorities. No, they claim, it's ours. The law says we can confiscate the fruits of criminal activity. The crime in question was the illegal smuggling of the sperm from prison. The sperm is therefore contraband and subject to seizure. The fight continues.







Source:  
Date:  
Page:

Metro London  
Tuesday 26. February 2002  
5

Circulation:  
Ad Rates:

ABC 367686 Daily  
page rate £17,388.00  
scc rate £69.00  
020 7938 6000

Tel:

Harriet Harman



Durrants

(D1799-1)

Page 1 of 1

27 FEB 2002



## OTHERS WHO ENJOYED MR BLAIR'S CONFIDENCE



**Harriet Harman**

'She's shown huge courage in very difficult circumstances' – Tony Blair, February 1998. Five months later the Social Security Secretary left the Cabinet



**Geoffrey Robinson**

'No reason why he should be moved' – No.10 'sources', in July 1998. Five months later, Mr Robinson quit the Treasury over the Mandelson loan scandal



**Peter Mandelson**

'The PM is confident Peter Mandelson has been insulated from any decision relating to Mr Robinson' – No.10, December 1998. Mandelson quit two days later



**Keith Vaz**

'From the look of the papers I have seen, I cannot see anything wrong with what has been done.' Tony Blair, January 2001. The Europe Minister left his job in June.





Source: Birmingham Post  
Date: Tuesday 26. February 2002  
Page: 10

Circulation: ABC 21833 Daily  
Ad Rates: page rate £5,913.60  
scc rate £0.00  
Tel: 0121 236 3366

Harriet Harman

(01799-1)



**Durrants**

Page 1 of 1

27 FEB 2002

## They Said

The public is inching towards the use of kilometres

- The Solicitor General, Harriet Harman.



# Family-friendly means flexibility

Life is tough enough for single parents, without work creating extra obstacles.

**Tina Bexson** looks at the hopes of some and the plans afoot to help them out

**A**RE you a working parent frantically trying to juggle your children and career? Are you a single mum or dad who has found that employers believe lone parents spell trouble? Or perhaps you are desperate to return to work after having children but find the obstacles impossible to overcome? Whatever the more intricate details of your life, parenting and working rarely seem anything but diametrically opposed. However, things could be looking up. The movers and shakers in Government and industry appear to be finally listening to the demands of working parents and attempting to meet them, giving you more opportunities to offer your skills and abilities to the labour market.

**Harriet Harman** QC, MP for Camberwell and Peckham, has consistently lobbied the Government to give working mothers a legal right to flexible hours and she is currently involved in backing Southwark's attempts to give local employers a chance to open up new work opportunities to

lone parents in the borough.

"Childcare should be seen as part of the economic infrastructure, just as roads and railways are, and not seen as social services for people who were just hopeless or neglectful parents," she says. "Lone parents are more committed because they have a family to support. They are working not despite their children, but because of their children."

The Government's proposed legislation to make working life easier for parents by giving them the right to have their requests for flexible working seriously considered deserves a few cheers, though it will not be implemented until 2003 when the new Employment Act comes into being.

Theo Blackwell, policy specialist at the Industrial Society, welcomes the initiative. "It recognises what progressive employers have been saying for some time: that flexible working helps employees balance work/life commitments and boosts the bottom line for employers."

"Some employers will find it hard to see this as an opportunity rather than an increase in red tape without a considerable shift in attitude, but we expect the experience of flexible practices will prove much less onerous than they might originally have expected."

Whether or not any concessions will be introduced for single parents remains to be seen. In the meantime, how are lone parents coping?

"I had my son, Matthew, when I was 30," says Jane Kirkby, 38. "I was in a casual relationship, got pregnant and then he dumped me, so I've been on my own from day

one."

Kirkby is a registered nurse and did agency nursing up until two weeks before her son was born. "I went on maternity benefits, then income support. I investigated childminders and nurseries, but it wasn't worth my while going back to work and paying someone to look after Matthew at that stage."

Today, Kirkby works 20 hours a week on the oncology ward at a private hospital in Chelsea. "I used to work two night shifts a week and my mum would look after Matthew. Then my mum died so I had to negotiate new hours. Now they let me work more family-friendly hours so I can take Matthew to school and pick him up from the after-school club. They were excellent in that respect. It's a shame that, in this day and age, NHS trusts and other hospitals are not more flexible."

Calette Roulston, 42, has five children and, after divorcing her husband, was on income support for four years. She then noticed adverts explaining how the Government's New Deal programme could help her back to work. It has recently been extended by reducing barriers to employment through benefit advice, childcare support, careers guidance, work preparation and training. "They put me in touch with a Lone Parent Adviser who, from the word go, was extremely helpful," says Roulston. "She did a job search for me, coming up with the gallery assistant post at the Tate Modern, and helped me get a deposit from the employment service for two weeks' childcare when I first

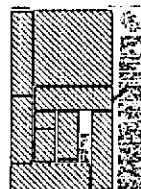
got the job."

The Tate Modern does not provide any childcare facilities and she would like to see a crèche scheme introduced. Though her mother helps her out and babysits when she has to work weekends, Roulston still finds the cost of childcare cuts into her salary, but says: "I'm still much better off financially [more than £100 a week] and my life has changed for the better in other ways too. I can now be a role model for my children."

About 179,000 (11 per cent) of lone parents are men and, of those, 60 per cent are working. David Galvin, a divorced single father with two children of school age, is angry that society has got "sick to death of single parents".

"Many are 16- and 17-year-old girls which tarnishes the image," he says. "Sympathy has dried up. But women will still get more sympathy than men." He works full time as a mortuary manager at Northwick Park Public Mortuary in Harrow. "Nobody seems to be jumping in to help you but my boss has a pretty open-door policy and if I have any problems with school holidays or sick children he is always flexible."

"I think there should be more help available for all single parents nationwide when their children are sick. Perhaps there could be a system where, if proof of sickness were provided, such as with a doctor's certificate, then they could still take a day off but be paid out of a separate pool or as a form of compassionate leave instead of having to use it as a day out of their holiday."





Source:  
Date:  
Page:

Evening Standard (London - supplement - Just the Job)  
Monday 25. February 2002  
7

Circulation:  
Ad Rates:

Weekly  
page rate  
scc rate  
020 7938 6000

Tel:

Harriet Harman

(D1799-1)

Durrants

Page 2 of 2

● For information on the New Deal for Lone Parents (NDLP), contact your local JobCentre.

● The National Council for One Parent Families (NCOPF) has produced a booklet called Lone Parents into the Workplace. Contact NCOPF on freephone 0800 018 5026.

● The Southwark Lone Parent Jobfair is scheduled to take place on 1 March at

## Help for lone parents

Fusion Leisure Centre, 10am to 3.30pm. It is aimed at giving local "family-friendly" employers the opportunity to recruit lone parents. Those expected to attend include: the local council, NHS trusts, South Bank University, PricewaterhouseCoopers and the police. Call the Employment Service on 020 7301 8905.

● Gingerbread, the national organisation of lone parent families, offers a range of

services for lone parents, their children and people who work with them. A list of its network of national groups is on [www.gingerbread.org.uk](http://www.gingerbread.org.uk). For its recent report, *Becoming Visible - Focus on Lone Fathers*, contact the Gingerbread national office on 020 7488 9300.

● The Industrial Society policy statement on flexible working can be found at [www.indsoc.co.uk](http://www.indsoc.co.uk)



Juggling act:  
being a single  
parent means  
difficulties  
balancing  
childcare with  
working

Photo: Tony Stone



# The Byers row Revenge of the press aide who refuses to go quietly

## New email affair claims push Byers into a corner

**Lucy Ward**  
Political correspondent

**W**hen Stephen Byers announced Martin Sixsmith's and Jo Moore's resignations just over a week ago he may have thought he was putting a cap on a crisis which had harmed the government and severely damaged his own career. But losing his department's press chief and his own beleaguered special adviser has not proved so simple.

Instead, a row centring on charges of government manipulation and deceit exploded into fresh life yesterday. Mr Sixsmith — denied the job deal he claims he was offered — directly contradicted the transport secretary's version of events in the Sunday Times.

If Mr Byers, in the tradition established

by Ms Moore, had sought to "bury" bad news, he spectacularly failed, and the fallout now also engulfs No 10 and the permanent secretary at the Department of Transport, Local Government, and the Regions, Sir Richard Mottram.

The affair is another episode in a controversy rumbling since September 11, when Ms Moore wrote her notorious email suggesting the trade centre attacks would provide cover for "burying" bad news. For many civil servants, notably those who

clashed with Ms Moore in the media office at the transport department, her protection by Mr Byers merely underlined a government determination to ride roughshod over a Whitehall machine which resisted its attempts at politicisation.

Fast forward to the events of the past week, and the resentments triggered or highlighted by the "bad news" email have

come back to haunt the government. "This was a pretty old-fashioned, set-up job," says one adviser of the leaked email sent by Mr Sixsmith on February 11 warning Mr Byers against any move to announce bad news on rail performance on the same day as Princess Margaret's funeral.

The charge is clear: that Mr Sixsmith, already a veteran of several run-ins with Ms Moore over politicisation of the DTLR's press team in his short stint as press chief, decided to seek revenge, with explosive results.

The former BBC Moscow correspondent, naturally, denies playing such dangerous games. While tensions were clearly high with Ms Moore, the facts suggest that Mr Sixsmith did not personally leak his email, nor that he sanctioned oth-





Source: The Guardian  
Date: Monday 25. February 2002  
Page: 4,5  
Circulation: ABC 413674 Daily  
Ad Rates: page rate £16,275.00  
scc rate £38.00  
Tel: 020 7278 2332

Harriet Harman

(D1799-1)

Durrants

Page 2 of 6

ers to do so, though he may have talked about it in the presence of others who seized an opportunity to damage Ms Moore.

Even after Mr Byers had, allegedly incorrectly, announced Mr Sixsmith's resignation, the media chief was still willing to do a deal which would save his own and the transport secretary's face, only turning to the media when his chance of a pay-off and apology or a shift to an alternative job were — he claims — vetoed by Mr Byers.

If Mr Sixsmith is a highly-principled whistleblower, he is one who was — initially at least — more than willing to help smooth over the damage that ensued, and to go quietly.

The resentments of some government advisers against the civil service, however, have been stoked by the episode and will

not be so easily calmed. "This was a civil service problem which became a political problem and is now a huge problem for Stephen Byers," said one source, who dismisses as "garbage" the common perception that government is run under tight control from Downing Street. "Sixsmith wants to look like a victim rather than part of the problem."

The government may make mistakes but is battling with a civil service of very mixed quality, it is argued. "Anyone who believes we have got a Rolls Royce civil service either doesn't own a Rolls Royce or doesn't know much about the civil service."

Sir Richard Mottram, being left silently to take the rap yesterday as Mr Sixsmith insisted he had not resigned and Mr Byers insisted the permanent secretary had told him his press chief had agreed to go, must accept responsibility for a failure to get to grips with the turmoil breaking out in his department, according to a Labour source. "Cabinet ministers do not make decisions about civil servants, permanent secretaries do, and when things are going horrendously wrong, as they clearly were, it is the perm sec's job to bring that to a close with some sort of action."

For Sir Richard, defeated by Sir Richard Wilson for the post of cabinet secretary

but tentatively touted as a candidate to succeed him, the affair is likely to have put paid to a further step up the career ladder.

Not only has he failed to keep his warring department in check but he is claimed to have swerved from readiness to do a deal with Mr Sixsmith to fury at a government "complete cock-up", before

finally throwing in his lot with Mr Byers and leaking confirmation last Wednesday that the press chief did agree to resign.

But if Sir Richard has been tainted by the affair, and if Mr Sixsmith's role may not have been as entirely well-intentioned as he claims, the individual most damaged by the row remains Stephen Byers. With Jo Moore yet again in the headlines,

the transport secretary's judgment in not firing her after her September 11 memo is once more called into question.

Interviewed on the ITV David Dimbleby programme yesterday, he looked under greater stress than he has appeared throughout the affair, but failed to evoke sympathy in the studio audience after repeatedly offloading responsibility for the departure of Mr Sixsmith on to Sir Richard Mottram.

Technically, Mr Byers may be right that the issue of the press chief's resignation or otherwise is a "personnel matter" falling under the responsibility of the permanent secretary, but his unwillingness to shoulder any blame will be seen by critics

as part of a pattern. Mr Byers' ability to survive crises from the Rover closure to the row over Railtrack to the financial crisis of air traffic control is technically an asset in politics, but each crisis with its attendant calls for his resignation erodes his credibility, and that of the government.

Mr Byers is unlikely to step down unless No 10 signs his death warrant, and Tony Blair, aware that the government's own spin machine is closely implicated in the affair itself, will be unwilling to offer the opposition a scalp.

But even if the personnel involved remain at their desks — with the exception of Ms Moore and Mr Sixsmith — the institutions they belong to, whether government or Whitehall, emerge badly tarnished from the affair.

The latest allegations could not have come at a worse time. The Mittal affair, in which No 10 shifted its story to accommodate each new fact in the cash for influence row, has only recently highlighted a growing credibility problem for the government when forced into a corner.

The revelations of apparent government willingness to sacrifice truth, civil service independence and even political colleagues for the sake of presentation resonate strongly with many of the most serious allegations already facing Tony Blair's government.

“

This was a civil service problem which became a political problem and is now a huge problem for Stephen Byers

Anyone who believes we have got a Rolls-Royce civil service either doesn't own a Rolls-Royce or doesn't know much about the civil service

Cabinet ministers do not make decisions about civil servants, permanent secretaries do, and when things are going horrendously wrong, as they clearly were, it is the perm sec's job to bring that to a close with some sort of action

”



Source: The Guardian  
Date: Monday 25. February 2002  
Page: 4,5  
Circulation: ABC 413674 Daily  
Ad Rates: page rate £16,275.00  
scc rate £38.00  
020 7278 2332  
Tel:  
Harriet Harman



Durrants

(D1799-1)

Page 3 of 6

## Who said what History of the row

**February 14, 2002** Jo Moore is at the centre of controversy over claims that she proposed releasing bad news — the rail figures — on the day of Princess Margaret's funeral. Versions of an email said to have been written to Ms Moore by Martin Sixsmith appear in newspapers.

**9am** Ms Moore says reports of the email are "completely fictitious... complete and utter lies". Mr Sixsmith shows his real email to Godric Smith, the prime minister's official spokesman. But, according to No 10, he fails to make clear that Ms Moore had not argued for the rail figures to be "buried".

**February 15, 12.30pm** Mr Sixsmith claims Sir Richard Mottram tells him Ms Moore has offered to resign, but that Mr Byers will only accept if Mr Sixsmith also resigns. Mr Byers denies he made any such condition.

According to his account, Mr Sixsmith says he will consider the request. Sir Richard assures him that he will not "progress the matter further" by having him "resigned", Mr Sixsmith claims.

**4pm** According to Mr Sixsmith, he hears on the radio that Mr Byers has announced the two resignations.

**5.30pm** Mr Sixsmith claims Sir Richard tells him he was sorry but there had been a "complete cock-up" thanks to some "low grade twerp from No 10".

According to Mr Sixsmith, a compromise is reached, with him agreeing to resign retrospectively from the department, but not the civil service.

**February 18-19** According to Mr Sixsmith, Mr Byers vetoes the deal.

**February 20** Sir Richard tells the Financial Times that Mr Sixsmith did agree to go.

**February 24** Mr Sixsmith denies he has resigned.



Source:  
Date:  
Page:

The Guardian  
Monday 25. February 2002  
4,5

Circulation:  
Ad Rates:

ABC 413674 Daily  
page rate £16,275.00  
scc rate £38.00  
020 7278 2332

Tel:

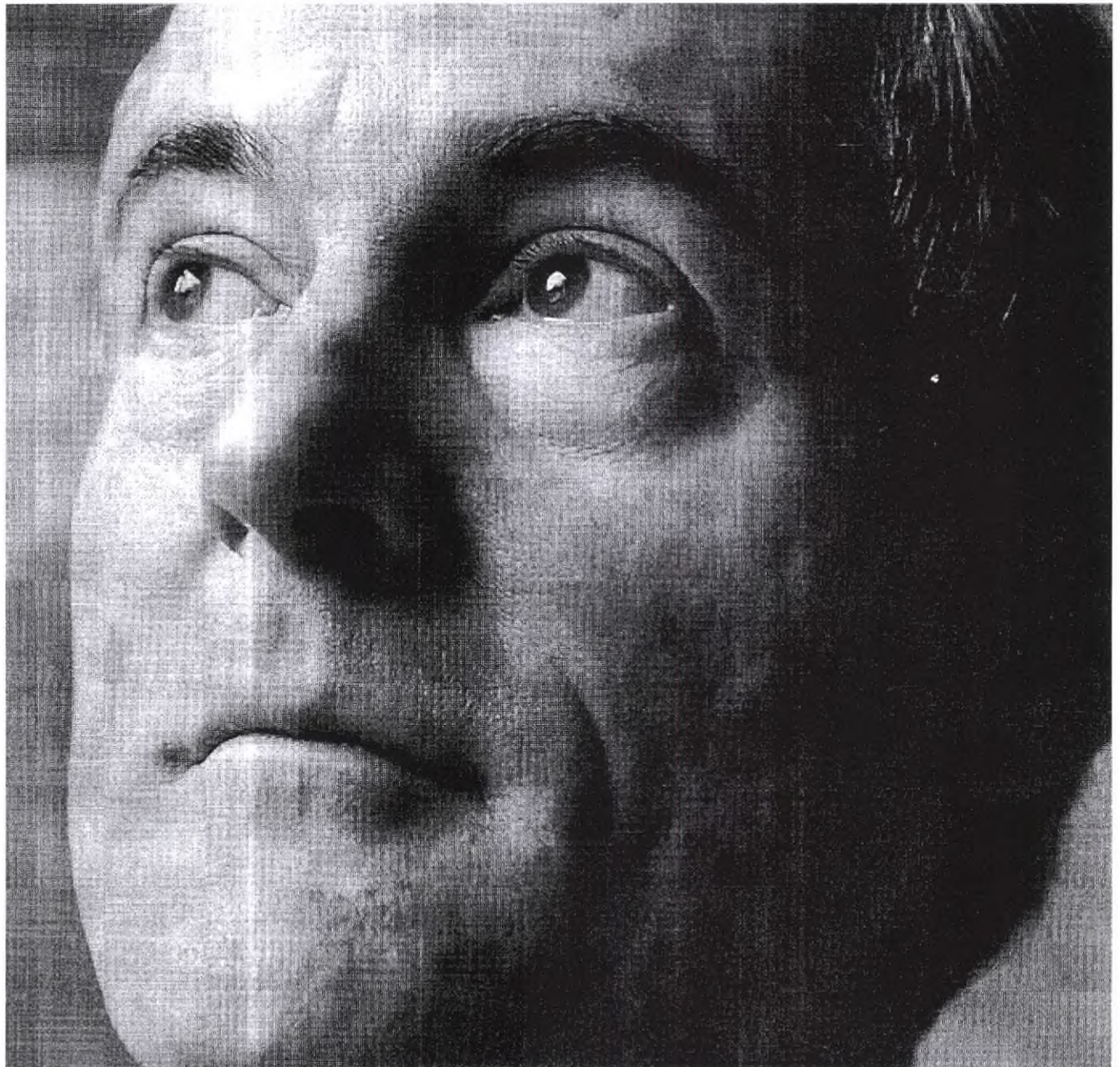
Harriet Harman



Durrants

(D1799-1)

Page 4 of 6



**Martin Sixsmith:**  
he contradicts the  
transport  
secretary's  
version of events,  
and says his  
chances of a  
pay-off, apology  
or shift to another  
job were vetoed  
by Mr Byers

Photograph:  
John Giles/PA





## Profiles

### Sir Richard Mottram

Richard Norton-Taylor

Sir Richard Mottram, the top civil servant caught up in the row engulfing Stephen Byers and his Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions, first entered the public spotlight at the Old Bailey in 1985.

As private secretary to Michael Heseltine, then defence secretary, he was a prosecution witness in the trial of Clive Ponting, the senior MoD official charged — and acquitted — with breaking the Official Secrets Act for passing information to the Labour MP, Tam Dalyell, about the circumstances surrounding the sinking of the Argentine cruiser, the *Belgrano*, during the Falklands war.

Sir Richard was asked by Mr Ponting's counsel whether it had long been the constitutional practice that answers to parliamentary questions should be truthful and not deliberately ambiguous or misleading. After a long pause,



Sir Richard replied: "In highly charged political matters, one person's ambiguity may be another person's truth".

Sir Richard may have been pondering such classic mandarin responses when faced with the Martin Sixsmith affair.

In his 30-plus years in Whitehall, Sir Richard, 55, has not backed away from controversy. Indeed, he has a reputation in Whitehall as one of the few mandarins who thrive on tackling problems head-on and admitting mistakes.

Sir Richard is known in the MoD for his clear thinking and confidence in presenting policy options to ministers, however unpalatable. For a mandarin, he is remarkably unstuffy. If he has not given full answers in evidence to MPs, it is at least partly because he has not been asked the right questions.

### Martin Sixsmith

David Walker

Early last week Martin Sixsmith decided not to follow his one-time political boss, the former social security secretary Harriet Harman, and take his punishment, stay loyal and win eventual rehabilitation.

By telling his story to the Murdoch press and promising damaging revelations, he has done what PRs are supposed never to do and made himself the story.

Not all journalists, he proves, make successful PRs, however attractive they find the financial rewards. After Manchester Grammar, Oxford and post-graduate study (in Russian literature — he can still recite chunks of poetry) Mr Sixsmith, now 48, turned down the Foreign Office for the BBC.

There his career went swimmingly, with assign-

ments in Geneva, eastern Europe and Moscow where, in 1991, he reported the August coup against Gorbachev. A spell in Washington and a second tour in Moscow were less happy. With four children to support Mr Sixsmith returned to Britain.

In 1997 a civil service appointments panel found his knowledge of BBC bureaucracy good preparation for the information job at social security (£80,000-plus). His known politics are BBC — liberal left but uncommitted.

Somewhat naive, he was unable to deal effectively with Alastair Campbell and Charlie Whelan, the Treasury spin doctor. He survived Ms Harman by six months or so before in 1999 becoming a corporate spokesman for Marconi-GEC at an undisclosed salary.

After a year in the wilderness he returned to Whitehall last November — again after a competitive interview — to a post carrying a salary of £100,000-plus. And the kiss of death.



Source:  
Date:  
Page:

The Guardian  
Monday 25. February 2002  
4,5

Circulation:  
Ad Rates:

ABC 413674 Daily  
page rate £16,275.00  
scc rate £38.00  
020 7278 2332

Tel:

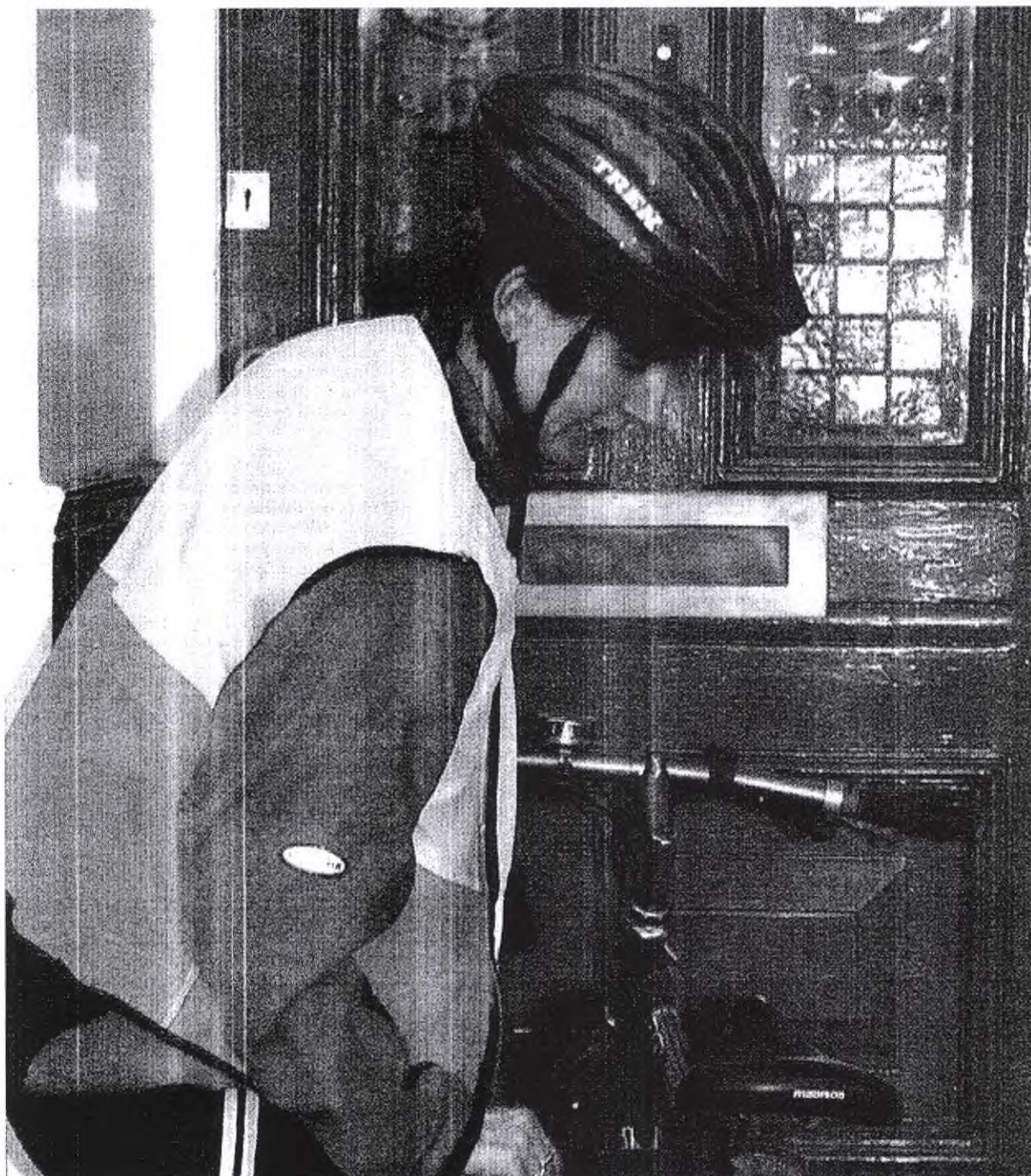
Harriet Harman



Durrants

[D1799-1]

Page 6 of 6



**Jo Moore: the failure by Byers to sack her after the notorious September 11 email has come back to haunt the government**  
Photograph: Kirsty Wigglesworth/PA





Source:  
Date:  
Page:

Circulation:  
Ad Rates:

Tel:

The Herald (Glasgow)  
Monday 25. February 2002  
4

ABC 100603 Daily  
page rate £11,500.00  
scc rate £26.50  
0141 302 7000

Harriet Harman

(D1799-1)

Durrants

27 FEB 2002

Page 1 of 3

# Sixsmith's 18,000-word 'dossier of deceit' puts Byers on the rack

Spin doctor goes public as scandal reaches heart of government

## ANALYSIS

DEBORAH SUMMERS  
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

ROCKED by accusations of lying, back stabbing and double-dealing at the highest level, Stephen Byers, the hapless transport minister, was yesterday forced on to the rack by his own former spin doctor, Martin Sixsmith.

Armed with an 18,000 word dossier of deceit, Mr Sixsmith, a former BBC journalist, decided to go public about the scandal that reaches to the very heart of a government obsessed with presentation.

"The notes strip away the veneer of Whitehall to reveal a pervasive rot - caused by the politicisation of the civil service and exacerbated by cynicism, mendacity, double-dealing and personal vendettas," the Sunday Times reported.

Mr Sixsmith made his name reporting on brutal wars around the globe, but he faced his toughest battles as communications chief of the department of transport.

He knew what he was walking into. His predecessor had been transferred after resisting Jo Moore's attempts to recruit a junior press officer into a smear campaign against Bob Kiley, the London transport commissioner.

It was the same politicisation, the willingness of Ms Moore - Mr Byers' special adviser - to forgo the facts in favour of politics, and presenting the government in the best possible light.

When Mr Byers announced the resignation of his two most senior spin doctors he had hoped it would draw a line under the affair.

But the aggrieved Mr Sixsmith is refusing to go quietly.

Having failed to secure a compromise deal or even exoneration for his involvement in the scandal, Mr Sixsmith is now considering whether to speak to the Commons public administration committee, which is due to hold a hearing on Thursday about the relationship between civil servants and special advisers.

An official of the FDA, the civil service union, who is aware of the contents of Mr Sixsmith's dossier, is expected to give evidence.

The roots of the scandal lay in a simmering row between Mr Sixsmith and Ms Moore. When he joined the department of transport, local government and the regions in late November, Ms Moore was already a controversial figure - a New Labour activist paid by the civil service but working as Mr Byers' political adviser.

Mr Sixsmith, while a lifelong Labour sympathiser, was committed to civil service impartiality.

He clashed with Ms Moore and the secretary of state over their alleged attempt to block the appointment of a career civil servant, the the DTLR's deputy press chief, in order to make way for a friend of Ms Moore's.

The announced resignation of Mr Sixsmith and Ms Moore followed reports that he sent an e-mail to Ms Moore, rebuking her for proposing to bury more bad news on the day of Princess Margaret's funeral.

It was reported to have stated: "There is no way I will allow this department to make any substantive announcements next Friday."

"Princess Margaret is being buried on that day. I will absolutely not allow anything else to be."

However, the report was incorrect. The real text of the e-mail was from Mr Sixsmith to Mr Byers and cc Ms Moore.

It read: "You spoke about pos-

sibly making this announcement on Friday. We should not do it on Friday as that is the day on which Princess Margaret is being buried. There are too many connotations to the word "buried" for us to do anything on that day."

But Mr Byers is alleged to have blocked publication of the genuine e-mail.

Downing Street denied it ever existed and Mr Sixsmith was

accused of instigating the leak.

Mr Sixsmith claims that on the morning of Friday, February 15, he went to see Sir Richard Mottram, the departmental permanent secretary, to deny this.

According to Mr Sixsmith, Sir Richard not only accepted his denial but also revealed that the lie that the e-mail did not exist had come from Mr Byers' office.

Sir Richard allegedly revealed that Ms Moore was willing to resign in order to draw a line under the affair, but Mr Byers

would only accept this if Mr Sixsmith went to.

Mr Sixsmith said he would think about his response during a hospital appointment that afternoon, yet as he was leaving the Chelsea and Westminster hospital he heard his resignation announced along with Ms Moore's on a news bulletin.

As the BBC's foreign correspondent Mr Sixsmith became known to British viewers for his despatches about the Soviet conflict with Afghanistan and the bloody civil war raging in Azerbaijan.

The 47-year-old has brought many momentous stories to television screens, including the collapse of communism in the USSR, the Los Angeles earthquake, the Heyssel disaster and Bill Clinton's election as US president.

But in 1998, he became the first BBC television journalist to cross the line from reporting to a government role when he became Harriet Harman's press

secretary at the department of social security.

There he got his first taste of the internal warfare at the heart of a government department as Ms Harman battled with her junior minister, Frank Field, over plans for welfare reform.

Both ministers left the government - Ms Harman was sacked and Mr Field resigned when he was not given her job.

Mr Sixsmith quit soon after and joined GEC Marconi, which later saw its share price plunge by millions of pounds.

He was appointed director of communications at the department of transport last November, just weeks after revelations that Ms Moore had e-mailed colleagues on September 11 to say it was a good day to "bury" bad news.

Mr Sixsmith replaced Alun Evans, who was reportedly forced out by Ms Moore when he refused to take part in a smear campaign against Mr Kiley.

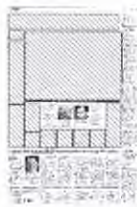
The father of four, who was educated at Oxford, Harvard and the Sorbonne, earned £100,000 a year to report directly to Mr Byers.

But tensions between the men emerged when Mr Sixsmith's deputy was appointed earlier this year.

Mr Sixsmith was reported to have had a "blazing row" with Mr Byers, who it was claimed was pushing for a friend of Ms Moore to get the job. Career civil servant Ian Jones was finally appointed.

It proved to be only a minor skirmish compared to the hostilities that opened between the pair on February 16.

Yesterday's revelations suggest Mr Sixsmith has dug in for a long campaign.





Source: The Herald (Glasgow)  
Date: Monday 25. February 2002  
Page: 4  
Circulation: ABC 100603 Daily  
Ad Rates: page rate £11,500.00  
scc rate £26.50  
Tel: 0141 302 7000  
Harriet Harman

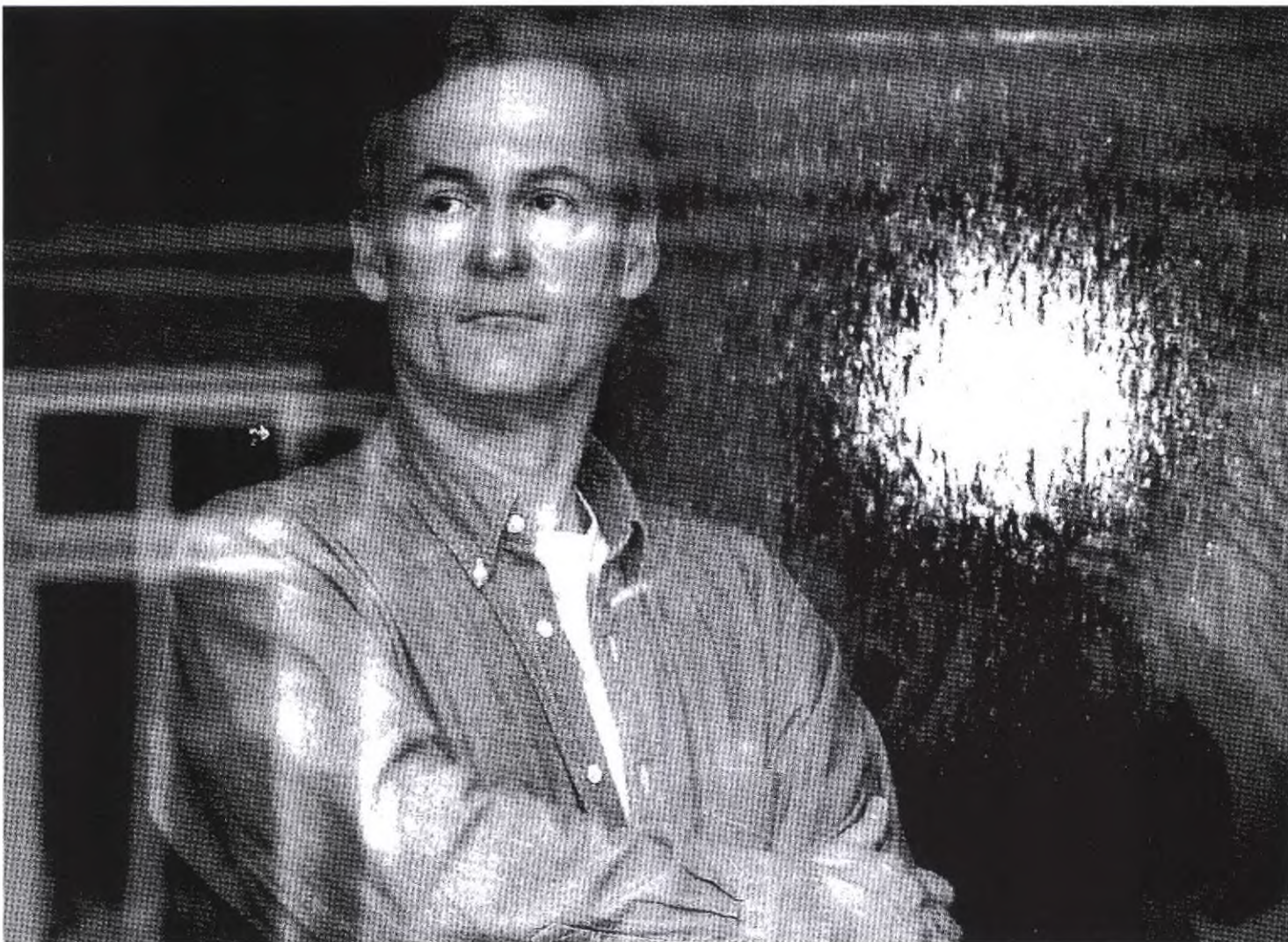


Durrants

[D1799-1]

Page 2 of 3

27 FEB 2002



OUT OF REACH: Martin Sixsmith retreats from the media spotlight after denying he had resigned over a row about burying bad news – despite an announcement that he had done so. Picture: John Giles/PA





27 FEB 2002

#### KEY CLAIMS OVER STEPHEN BYERS AND SIR RICHARD MOTTRAM

● Byers lied over Sixsmith's resignation – Sixsmith claims that he did not resign and that Mottram had given his word that he would not be forced out.

● Alastair Campbell, Labour's director of strategic communications, told Sixsmith that Byers promised Moore that, if she went, Sixsmith would go too – Byers denies this.

● Byers blocked publication of the e-mail at the centre of the controversy – the real text of the e-mail has now released.



**SIR RICHARD MOTTRAM: Said to have given assurances.**

● Byers blocked Sir Richard Wilson, the cabinet secretary's, exoneration of Sixsmith that



**STEPHEN BYERS: Blocked move to exonerate spin-doctor.**

would have allowed the spin-doctor to take up another Civil Service post

at the same grade and pay in another government department – Byers maintains that personnel matters are the domain of his permanent secretary.

● Mottram, realising that he was being lined up to take the blame for Sixsmith's departure, asked DTLR security officers to question Sixsmith and insisted that the spin-doctor had intimated he would resign – Sixsmith is adamant that he did not resign.



# Another week, another Labour myth about Mittal



Mr Blair, it is claimed, was driven only by love of the Romanian people

There are lies, there are damned lies – and there are Labour statements on the Mittal Affair. When *The Sunday Telegraph* first broke the story of the Prime Minister's intervention in Lakshmi Mittal's purchase of the Romanian steel firm, Sidex, the Government immediately countered that Mr Mittal's company was British – and, initially, that the Indian tycoon was, too. Neither claim, of course, was remotely true.

In the past fortnight, ministers and Labour spokesmen have persisted relentlessly with the fiction that LNM Holdings, a company based in the Dutch Antilles with fewer than 100 employees in this country, is British or, in Mr Blair's wonderfully meaningless phrase, "British-based". With each passing day, this particular mendacity has looked more and more ridiculous. Mr Mittal, it transpires, has spent even more than he gave to the Labour Party funding a lobby group in America which campaigns against the interests of British steelworkers. It has also emerged that Usinor, the French company which competed with LNM for the Romanian steelworks, has three times as many British employees as Mr Mittal's firm. But as one myth has col-

lapsed, another has sprung up in its place.

The latest Labour lie of the week – the "lie to take", if you like – has been a particularly inventive one. It goes like this: Mr Blair's letter last July to Adrian Nastase, the Romanian Prime Minister, championing LNM's bid was not, as originally suggested, primarily motivated by the supposed Britishness of the company, however splendid that motive might have been. No – Mr Blair's real intention was much nobler. He was, it seems, driven by the higher purpose of opening up markets in the former Eastern bloc and promoting mature capitalism and privatisation in Romania.

On BBC's *Question Time* last week, Harriet Harman said that "there was general international agreement that it was good to help Romania strengthen its economy... that was the context in which Tony Blair wrote that letter". Maybe: but it is not as if the Mittal deal was the only option available to the Romanians, who were also weighing up the French offer. Mr Blair, Miss Harman went on, was in favour of "a strong and prosperous Europe and that includes the emerging countries of eastern Europe, too". But, she was asked,

wasn't Mr Blair effectively lobbying for a foreign firm directly threatening British jobs? Ms Harman blushed as if pricked by a residue of conscience, but rallied to elaborate upon her original argument. The Prime Minister's intervention was all about "modernising" Romania's steel capacity, she claimed, rather than increasing it. I have no idea what she meant by this distinction. But her underlying point seemed to be that Mr Blair was simply incapable of doing wrong.

In Thursday's *Guardian*, Hugo Young made a similar case, but more poetically, claiming that "the deforming influence over all this was in fact not a party donation, but foreign policy". Mr Blair's actions were, according to the columnist, the product of his "possibly imprudent moral passion", his unshakeable ethical commitment to the Romanian people. The Prime Min-

ister's only error, in other words, was to be too good. Having promised to be "purer than pure", he has actually become too pure. What the cynical media caricature as "sleaze" in the Mittal affair was therefore precisely the opposite.

According to this fantasy, the Prime Minister was not advancing the claims of a crafty businessman who had given £125,000 to the Labour Party, or simply helping out a company he (mistakenly) believed to be British. He was discharging the commercial component of his duty as moral guardian of the entire planet. Even before, as Mr Blair put it, the "kaleidoscope" of world affairs was shaken by September 11, he was shaking sense into the Romanian Prime Minister – for his own good, of course. The Mittal deal was not the consequence of a bung to Labour, or even of a misunderstanding about the nationality of LNM Holdings, but the epitome of the new Blairite global vision. "Let us reorder this world," said the Prime Minister in his conference speech last October. None us guessed that what he meant was: let us give Romanians the more competitive steel industry they so richly deserve. Here endeth the spin.

It stinks. It truly does. I have never been persuaded by the argument that this administration is hopelessly corrupt, or that Mr Blair is a bad man, or that New Labour is a Mephistophelean force for evil. But the Mittal scandal, and the torrent of lies that have followed it, are a disgrace to Government, Prime Minister and party. Charles Clarke, the Labour Party Chairman, told a

seminar at the Social Market Foundation last week that the story was "smoke without fire". Wrong again. The fire of *The Sunday Telegraph's* story has been clear all along – the Prime Minister gave personal and decisive backing to a deal of less than no benefit to this country, involving a company which is not British and is owned by a Labour donor – and it continues to burn. It was revealed yesterday, for example, that Mr Mittal's firm had broken company law by failing to disclose one of its donations to Labour. The flames are there, all right; what has been striking is the





Source: Sunday Telegraph  
Date: Sunday 24. February 2002  
Page: 23

Circulation: ABC 814944 Weekly  
Ad Rates: page rate £30,250.00  
scc rate £70.00  
Tel: 020 7538 5000

Harriet Harman

[D1799-1]

Durrants

Page 2 of 2

desperate methods the Government has used in seeking to douse them.

The Prime Minister's evident hope is that the garbage of what he calls "Garbagegate" will be collected by the binmen very soon, as interest drains from the story. Last week's parliamentary recess, which denied the Opposition the chance to harry Mr Blair with written questions and over the Despatch Box, was described to me by one senior Government adviser as "an unbelievably well-timed stroke of luck". But if the garbage doesn't get collected ministers will have to come up

with some new misrepresentations and untruths.

This week's *Economist*, which carries a brief interview with Mr Mittal, claims that he feels "that much of the coverage of his deal has been tinged with racism". I can easily imagine Labour pagers buzzing with this line in the next days and weeks. You may recall that those investigating Keith Vaz were accused of racism, as was Rose Addis, the 94-year-old patient poorly treated in a London casualty department last month. What chance of avoiding the same charge have those who dare to question the relations between the Prime Minister and an Indian tycoon?

Indeed, why stop there? Why not say that the Mittal deal will help find a cure for cancer? Or that, without it, Britain's curling team would not have romped to glory last week? Or that the Sidex sale will improve the weather in Britain? The content of the lies is less important than the relentlessness with which they are repeated, the apparent sincerity with which they are uttered. And this is something at which the Government is proving itself depressingly adept. That's the trouble with telling lies for too long. You start to believe them yourself.

Source: Sunday Telegraph  
Date: Sunday 24. February 2002  
Page: 23

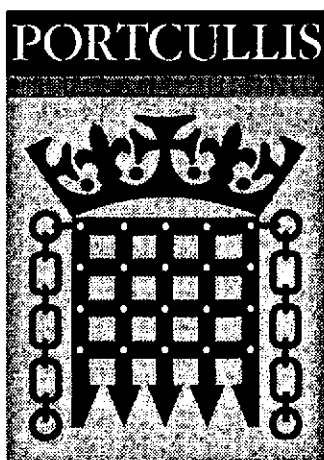
Circulation: ABC 814944 Weekly  
Ad Rates: page rate £30,250.00  
scc rate £70.00  
Tel: 020 7538 5000

Harriet Harman

(D1799-1)

Durrants

Page 1 of 1



● WHEN defending the imposition of metric measures by the European Union, Harriet Harman came out with the priceless line: "The public is inching towards the use of kilometres." No wonder colleagues are warned not to telephone her while she is doing the ironing.





# ALL FALL DOWN

**Rarely has the  
cynicism of politics  
been laid this bare.  
Jonathon Carr-Brown  
unravels a story of  
top-level intrigue  
and backstabbing  
in Westminster  
and Whitehall**

**I**n his 34 years in the civil service, the ascent of Sir Richard Mottram KCB to the heights of Whitehall has been a credit to subtle intelligence and constant endeavour. The 55-year-old former West Midlands grammar school boy is now a permanent secretary, running one of the great departments of government.

There is a downside to power, however. Mottram's fiefdom is the misbegotten and unmanageable Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions — the DTLR.

During the first new Labour government, the giant department's titular political master was the ebullient John Prescott; but after last year's general election the much less jocose Stephen Byers moved into the secretary of state's suite on the sixth floor of Eland House in Victoria.

As Mottram soon discovered, Byers was the inscrutably passive half of a political partnership from hell. He brought with him his doctrinal dominatrix, an adviser called Jo Moore.

Last Wednesday afternoon, Mottram was in a "terrible" fix. For nearly a week he had been trying to finesse his way out of a scandal. It was barely understood beyond the

political boundaries of London SW1, but it had led to Moore's forced resignation and had left the normally placid Byers in a vengeful fury.

Mottram's anxiety focused on Martin Sixsmith, the 47-year-old former BBC foreign correspondent who — after only three months as the DTLR's director of communications — had proved to be Moore's nemesis and now looked like being Mottram's and even Byers's too.

Moore had resigned in the belief that she was taking Sixsmith down with her. Indeed, Byers had announced that he had accepted Sixsmith's resignation. This was untrue, however. Sixsmith had not resigned — nor had he been sacked — and he was asking Byers to retract publicly the resignation announcement and to clear him of any smears on his character.

This would expose Byers to a charge of lying and reveal Mottram to be an incompetent mandarin who couldn't put a lid on a scandal, not a good augury for the remaining five years of his civil service career.

The messages from Downing Street were ominous. Mottram was told to sort out the mess. There was only one course open. Late on Wednesday afternoon the permanent secretary picked up his telephone and spoke to Cathy Newman, a political correspondent of the Financial Times.

Next morning a subtly wrought story appeared, undermining Sixsmith's position. It was the first probing move in what is expected to become an all-out assault on him from the government trenches. Whitehall friends have warned Sixsmith that the No 10 smear machine is amassing a black dossier on his past to disseminate to malleable journalists. From now on, they say, his life will be made a misery.

The inside story of Sixsmith's

phantom "resignation" and the subsequent attempts to crush him is explosive. It reveals a ministry in chaos and a government staffed by apparatchiks who have lost contact with the truth.

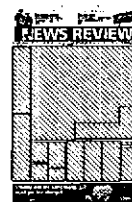
Once again, their obsession with appearance over substance — with powerful spin doctors marshalling a fictitious "line to take" on an incident or policy, while trampling on the civil service's commitment to impartial truth — has got the government into deep trouble. This time, however, we can see exactly what happens to somebody who refuses to spin.

SIXSMITH, who reported for the BBC from Moscow and Washington before moving into government information work in 1997, took up his post as director of the DTLR's 90-strong communications department on November 26.

He knew what he was walking into. His predecessor had been transferred after resisting Moore's attempts to recruit a junior press officer into a smear campaign against Bob Kiley, the London transport commissioner. Moore was also notorious for her suggestion that the terrorist attacks in America on September 11 made it a good day to bury bad news. The outraged media had demanded but did not get her resignation.

Sixsmith had told his civil service appointments board that he believed principles and political impartiality were paramount. On his second day in the new job, however, he found Moore in her usual form — shielding bad news about Railtrack behind Gordon Brown's high-profile pre-budget statement. Again there was a media outcry; again she did not go.

Sixsmith's position gave him responsibility for the department's relations with the media and for keeping these politically impartial. Moore saw her job as making sure



they put Byers and the Labour party in the best possible light. Yet Sixsmith and Moore did not clash directly. Their war was more subtle.

Before Christmas, a civil service appointments board picked a press officer called Ian Jones as the clear winner of a contest to be Sixsmith's new deputy. It is standard

procedure for such appointments to be rubber-stamped by a secretary of state. Byers sat on this one for seven weeks.

The reason, departmental insiders believe, was that a woman called Ann Wallis had come second. She was a former colleague of Moore at a political consultancy, Westminster Strategy.

Byers apparently hoped that Jones would get fed up with waiting and withdraw, allowing Wallis to take the appointment. Byers and Moore knew the rules: if he had simply vetoed Jones, a new board would have had to meet and Wallis might not have won.

This cold war at last resolved itself — with Jones's victory — after Sixsmith confronted Byers and Moore in late January. Moore and Byers were displeased with this show of temerity. The scene was set for a fight to the finish.

On the morning of Monday, February 11, Sixsmith convened a media planning meeting, attended by Moore and his press officers. They discussed the timing of an announcement of rail performance indicators, scheduled for Thurs-

day. Moore suggested doing it on Friday. Sixsmith disagreed. Afterwards, Sixsmith sent an e-mail to Byers, copied to Moore, pointing out that Princess Margaret's funeral would be on the Friday.

Moore was absent from a press office meeting the next morning, Tuesday, when the rail performance indicators announcement was again discussed. Sixsmith mentioned his e-mail warning against announcing it on Friday because of the royal funeral. There were jokey exchanges about burying news.

Late on Wednesday, reporters from The Mirror and the Daily Express rang the DTLR press office, saying they had been tipped off about Sixsmith's e-mail. They did not have a copy of it, but carried what were wrongly claimed to be quotes from it in their Thursday editions. Mistakenly, they said it had been sent to Moore, not Byers.

Here a complex game of political manoeuvring began. Some of the moves seem petty in the extreme, but they are crucial to the much more dramatic consequences.

At a regular 10 Downing Street

planning meeting, which began at 8.30am on Thursday, February 14, the Mirror and Express stories were discussed — as was their mock-up e-mail.

Sixsmith showed a print-out of his real e-mail to Godric Smith, the prime minister's spokesman, and to others present.

They agreed that the "line to take" — the pit prop of new Labour news management — should be that the stories in The Mirror and Express were rubbish, that Moore played no part in the timing of the rail performance announcement and that all decisions were taken by Sixsmith.

At 11.23am Sixsmith was paged by Smith during a DTLR board meeting: "Lobby briefing in seven minutes. Please ring asap."

With three minutes to go, Smith asked Sixsmith to clear a new line on the story for the lobby. He wanted to say that the "quotes" from the e-mail in The Mirror and the Express were a fabrication; that the rail performance announcement was not bad news anyway and there had been no reason to bury it; and that they would not do

it on Friday because of the royal funeral. Sixsmith agreed.

At the subsequent lobby briefing, though, Smith went further. He said the e-mail that had appeared in the papers did not exist — a line not approved by Sixsmith.

During the afternoon, Smith asked Sixsmith to put out a statement saying that the line given at the lobby was correct and had been cleared by Sixsmith in advance. Feeling under pressure, Sixsmith agreed.

The Press Association (PA) reported, however, that somebody had rung it to say Smith was not telling the truth: there had been an e-mail.

Smith — a career civil servant, and normally an urbane, low-key figure — counterattacked. He angrily accused "anonymous briefers" of undermining him, and announced that Mike Granatt, the

*Continued on page 2*

*Continued from page 1*

head of the government information service, would write to Sixsmith to complain about leaks. This was a fairly clear hint that No 10 was suggesting that Sixsmith had contradicted its line, a serious breach of discipline.

By Friday all other work in the DTLR and No 10 was being overshadowed by this bizarre spat.

At 10.15am, Smith suggested to Sixsmith that they release the real text of the e-mail at the 11am lobby briefing to draw a line under the matter. Fifteen minutes later Smith said this had been vetoed by Byers. Sixsmith asked for a meeting with Byers, who refused.

By 11am Sixsmith was meeting Mottram, who had some news: the call to PA contradicting Smith's lobby briefing had come from someone describing himself as a DTLR official and claiming to speak on behalf of Sixsmith.

Sixsmith told Mottram this claim was untrue. He said nobody had rung PA on his behalf, at his instigation or with his knowledge. More meetings followed that day between Mottram and Sixsmith. At one Mottram said Smith's lobby briefing line that "there was no e-mail" had come from Byers's office. He showed Sixsmith a copy with handwritten corrections by a member of Byers's staff.

It was Mottram who raised the question of resign-



nation. He told Sixsmith that Moore would be willing to resign, but Byers would only accept this if Sixsmith were to resign at the same time. Mottram said that by the standards of natural justice this would be very unfair, since Moore had misbehaved while Sixsmith had not. He said there was no suggestion of any misconduct on Sixsmith's part.

Sixsmith said he would consider his response while at a hospital appointment that afternoon. Before leaving he asked if there was any question of his being sacked. Mottram replied: "Absolutely not. You have not done anything wrong. I will not sack you."

Mottram also gave his word that Sixsmith would not be "resigned" while out of touch at the hospital.

**W**hen another senior civil servant entered Mottram's office that afternoon, however, he found the permanent secretary in a terrible state, shouting: "We're all f\*\*\*\*. I'm f\*\*\*\*. You're f\*\*\*\*. The whole department's f\*\*\*\*. It's been the biggest cock-up ever and we're all completely f\*\*\*\*." Then Mottram pulled himself together and apologised for the language.

The reason for his desperation emerged as Sixsmith left hospital late in the afternoon. He heard on the radio that he had "resigned". He went straight to a meeting with Mottram. Byers had again refused to see him.

The permanent secretary told him that a "low grade twerp" from No 10 had deliberately leaked the (incorrect) news that two resignations were "about to be announced". This had completely dropped the government in it.

Mottram said Sixsmith now had two options. He could go quietly, confirm that he had resigned, and receive compensation of £45,000 and an official statement of exoneration. Or he could go public with the untruths and half-truths of the past week. In that case, Mottram warned, the No 10 smear machine would go into overdrive to make Sixsmith's life very unpleasant, and Mottram would have to sack him for "breakdown of trust".

Next day, Saturday, a compromise proposal arose: Sixsmith should resign retrospectively from the DTLR but not from the civil service and would be found another job in another department,

possibly working on the Queen's golden jubilee. Mottram told him Byers should be happy with the proposal because it absolved Byers from the public revelation that he had lied over Sixsmith's resignation. Sixsmith agreed, provided there was an unequivocal statement from Sir Richard Wilson, the cabinet secretary, exonerating him.

Powerful friends in Westminster and Whitehall advised Sixsmith to demand, too, an undertaking from No 10 not to brief against him. Some warned him not to be tempted to go public himself as it would blight his future career.

One said: "It would obviously make things difficult for Byers and Mottram. But for you, the consequences would be very unpleasant. No 10 would do everything possible to smear you and make your life difficult. They are very vindictive. They would never leave you alone." Already Downing Street had begun briefing that Sixsmith was disloyal in general and that he had briefed against both Byers and No 10, although no specific allegations were cited.

Sixsmith spoke to Alastair Campbell, the government's all-powerful director of communications, who said: "What I am concerned about is that the papers are portraying you as the shining example of civil service probity in all this ... and people like Jo and me as the dirty, underhand political advisers. And Godric is feeling particularly vulnerable at the moment. So if we now announce that you have been exonerated and reinstated it just becomes another excuse for the media to dump on us and on Downing Street."

Nonetheless, Campbell gave qualified support for the compromise proposal. The only person still needed to clear it was Byers.

He refused. Although he stood to gain the most — it got him off the hook of having lied — he apparently felt he was being stitched up by civil servants eager to save Sixsmith. Campbell told Sixsmith that Byers was "very sore. The wounds are very fresh." He promised Jo that if she went, you would go too. Now it's going to be very hard for him to see the second part of that equation unpicked so quickly after announcing it.

He added: "Part of the problem is that Steve's relationship with Mottram is pretty bad ... Steve thought Mottram was going to deliver his half of the resignations deal and he didn't. So I'm not sure

Mottram is going to be able to convince Steve that he should sign up to the compromise deal. Steve really does think a lot of people are out to get him."

By Monday, Mottram was dwelling on his own vulnerability. He told a colleague: "Byers is very clever — or very cunning, at least. As you know, he never takes responsibility for difficult decisions. So the way he arranged the bargain over Jo stepping down in return for Sixsmith going was to get me to offer him a series of options."

"He then refused to say which option he himself preferred. Instead he got me to pick one of the options — clearly under his guidance, of course — and the option that came out was — surprise, surprise — the double resignation option. So technically he will be able to say: 'It wasn't me who decided Martin had to go. It was Mottram who recommended it to me. So I, Stephen Byers, was acting totally in good faith on Friday afternoon when I announced Martin had resigned.'"

Sixsmith was pressing to force the issue. He threatened to turn up for work if the compromise deal was not resolved. When Byers refused to speak to him, he asked Campbell to call the minister.

On Tuesday, Mottram had a new proposal "to get round the Byers roadblock": Sixsmith should hand him a letter resigning from the DTLR (but not the civil service), which would make his future no longer a matter for Byers.

Sixsmith turned to a legal adviser, who resisted. He warned: "I have seen this happen before. They will put it in their back pocket and you've had it. They have given you nothing concrete in exchange and your position is very badly weakened."

**I**t was at this point that Mottram's attitude appeared to change. He remarked that he was "very pessimistic" about reaching the compromise deal. He then surprised an official from the FDA, the civil service trade union, by claiming that, during the busy crisis-ridden events of Friday, Sixsmith had in fact offered to resign. Mottram said he had passed this offer on to Byers, who had therefore acted in good faith. The official commented: "What he is obviously doing is protecting his own back in case things go wrong. He's obviously decided that if things go nuclear he is safer lining up with Byers's version of events."

Mottram repeated his offer-of-



Source: Sunday Times  
Date: Sunday 24. February 2002  
Page: 1,2  
Circulation: ABC 1366499 Weekly  
Ad Rates: page rate £54,500.00  
scd rate £129.00  
Tel: 020 7782 5000

Harriet Harman

(D1799-1)

Durrants

Page 4 of 8

resignation claim to Sixsmith, who told him: "I have a detailed contemporaneous note of our meeting and it makes clear I never resigned or gave you any grounds to think I was ready to resign. You have never said to me in the many conversations we have had over the last few days that you consider I resigned, so why are you saying this now? I also specifically said to you at our meeting that you must not allow anyone to 'resign me' while I was away in hospital. You agreed this."

Mottram replied: I too will have a contemporaneous note, my own contemporaneous note, not as detailed as yours, but it will have a different recollection."

That evening, Sixsmith made a brief appearance in the DTLR press office. He was greeted by cheers and a standing ovation.

Next day, Wednesday, Mottram told Sixsmith: "I have been speaking to our security people and they have some issues they want to raise with you about events last Thursday." Two DTLR security officers questioned him that afternoon. One said: "This is a official leak inquiry. We are here to try to establish what happened to the e-mail you sent to Jo Moore and how it found its way into the press. We also want to find out who rang the Press Association news service on Thursday afternoon to contradict No 10 Downing Street's claim that morning that no e-mail existed."

Sixsmith said he was happy to account for all his actions.

"We have a complete record of your phone calls on the Thursday in question," said the officer. "There is no record of any call to the Press Association, but did you — or anyone acting on your behalf or at your instigation or with your knowledge — ring PA to tell them that an e-mail really does exist?"

"No."

"Do you feel anyone else in the press office might have done this?"

"It is possible. Feelings have been running high about the need for civil service impartiality and attempts by political advisers to make civil servants do party political work. I imagine the majority of our press officers have had some experience of this. There have sometimes been unpleasant confrontations. You know, for instance, that my predecessor was forced out when he refused instructions from Jo Moore to mount a smear campaign against Ken Livingstone and Bob Kiley."

"Can you name any individuals whom you might suspect more than others?"

"I will not do that."

That same afternoon members of the DTLR press office discovered that Cathy Newman of the Financial Times was probing the story. Sixsmith, who had given an undertaking not to talk to the press, kept his head down.

At 6pm, Mottram called Sixsmith. He had also agreed not to talk to the press but now revealed: "I am a little worried. I have just been speaking to Cathy Newman for quite a long time on the phone. I told her you had resigned from the DTLR and we are now discussing your future."

"But, Richard, that is not true and we both know it is not true."

"Well, I left things open by saying we were discussing your future."

"But we shouldn't be talking to the press. We agreed we would all keep quiet and not say anything. It isn't helping anyone if we start laying out our negotiating positions in the press. What is Alastair saying about the compromise deal now?"

"He says it may still be doable. But there are a lot of people who don't like it. They think it is giving too much away to you. So I think a lot will depend on what you say or do tomorrow when the FT story comes out. If you speak out in public, you can be sure No 10 will go all out to get you and make your life difficult. And you will certainly not get the compromise deal you want, you can be sure of that."

This warning was backed up by Sixsmith's legal adviser: "You mustn't talk to the press, or Downing Street will s\*\*\* on you."

**A**t 8.45 the next morning, Thursday, Sixsmith bluffed his way into Downing Street past the police on the gate. His House of Commons and DTLR passes had already been deactivated.

A reluctant Anne Shevas, Downing Street's chief press officer, met him. Sixsmith told her he had been a Labour man all his life and that he broadly supported what the government was doing. He felt that he was now being hung out to dry over the Jo Moore affair — like one of the loyal old Bolsheviks in the 1930s who were told it would be good for them to have a show trial and be executed because that was best for the party.

He added that since some details of his non-resignation were now appearing in the press, they needed

to act swiftly to kill the story.

Sixsmith and Shevas agreed on the need to find a way to respond to the article in the FT — and particularly to its claim that Downing Street had said that Sixsmith did actually resign.

Shevas urged Sixsmith to continue to negotiate with Mottram. But Sixsmith objected that not only was the permanent secretary unable to deliver any agreement on a deal but he had talked at length to the FT.

Sixsmith felt the only person who could realistically deliver the long-mooted compromise — under which he would resign retrospectively in return for another civil service job and a statement of exoneration — was Campbell, who had spoken favourably of the proposal in the previous few days.

Shevas called Campbell and reported back to Sixsmith: "I have spoken to Alastair and we say you should sort this out with Mottram."

"But I said to you Mottram has no clout to deliver a deal. Only Alastair can."

"Talk to Mottram."

"Does that mean Alastair is washing his hands of it? Is the compromise deal now impossible?"

"Talk to Mottram."

But with Mottram now treating Sixsmith with frosty disdain, the only talking possible was through go-betweens.

A highly placed colleague warned Sixsmith: "They are going to take a completely hands-off line. They'll say that this is a private matter between Mr Sixsmith and Richard Mottram and they won't comment any further. So a complete stonewall. The problem is what Mottram is going to say when the press start ringing him."

"Well, he should stick exactly to the No 10 line and we should do the same."

"The problem is what does he say when they ask him if you did resign? When I spoke to him last night, he was saying that if you go public with what happened on Friday, then he'll start using his line that you did actually indicate to him that you would resign."

"Well, that is factually incorrect and I have the contemporaneous record of the meeting to prove it."

"I know, but don't underestimate the force of the No 10 smear machine if you do go public. Mottram last night was saying to me that No 10 have already started compiling their black dossier about





you. They've been talking to journalists and people you've worked with to get every little bit of gossip about you.

"Mottram says they're looking for journalists who can say you briefed against Byers --- or even go

as far back as your days with Harriet Harman --- anyone who can say you were disloyal to the government, or difficult or whatever. It doesn't have to be true, even.

"We all know journalists are a fine body of people, of course, but there are some unscrupulous ones who will tell No 10 what No 10 wants to hear in order to curry favour with them. So don't underestimate how hard they will make life for you. Mottram says they will savage you."

**T**his colleague rang Mottram again and reported to Sixsmith: "I have to say he is preparing for a fight. He's saying the compromise deal isn't doable any more. There is no realistic prospect of another post in the civil service, mainly because Byers is blocking it. So what he's proposing is that you agree to go quietly and he will agree an extra tranche of cash as a payoff. You are contractually entitled to six months' salary, but he says there might be double that available if you go quietly."

"Well, I have always said it isn't the cash I'm interested in. What I'm concerned about is my reputation. But if the compromise we negotiated over the weekend has really been blocked by Byers, then I will have to decide what to do next. What do you think Mottram will do if I do go public?"

"Well, he rehearsed his line with me over the telephone. He said he would definitely use his line that you did resign last Friday. He'll say you promised him you would

go. He says there were only two people present at that meeting, you and him. So he's saying it will be like a court of law where you can't decide who is telling the truth if there are no other witnesses."

"But why is he doing this?"

"Well, he's got five years to go as a permanent secretary. He doesn't want to ruin his career by siding with the wrong people in this. He's obviously decided Byers is the man to side with and you may have to be expendable. I did say to him --- jokingly --- that it was very noble of him to sacrifice his honour for the sake of Stephen Byers. He didn't laugh."

"But what about all the promises he gave me over the past six days?"

"Well, I don't mind telling that I don't trust him. I don't doubt that you are telling the truth in all this. But he is feeling desperately vulnerable. He feels he's in a corner and he's going to fight to protect himself. The thing is that the system protects its own. It will protect Mottram and Byers even if it doesn't like doing so. And you are no longer part of the system. So you don't get any protection. They can sack you at will. If you go public and say you didn't resign last Friday, Mottram told me he'll say he actually sacked you. He's now compiling his dossier of complaints against you to justify why he might have sacked you."

"But he said to me on at least two occasions that he would not sack me under any circumstances, because he knew I had done nothing wrong."

"Well, he's now saying that if you go public and say you never resigned, he'll say you did so, and if you didn't then he would have sacked you."

"It all seems so unfair, really: I haven't done anything wrong and here they are trying to force me

into backing down."

Late last Thursday, Sixsmith made a last bid for peace. He sent a last proposal to Downing Street, agreeing to an announcement that he had resigned (without a date on the resignation) in return for a statement of exoneration and compensation for the loss of his job. A deadline of 2pm on Friday was set.

Half an hour after it expired, the response came through from Mottram. It was even worse than Sixsmith had expected: it asked him to step down but offered little in return, not even exoneration.

Sixsmith said in a statement to The Sunday Times yesterday that, a week ago, "everyone who watched TV news or listened to the radio went to bed thinking Martin Sixsmith had resigned and --- what is more --- was being tarred with same brush as Jo Moore."

"Very senior people, including ministers, MPs, journalists and union officials, found themselves being misled into providing on-the-record reaction to a false story. Why did this all happen? Because Stephen Byers had said so."

"Before Mr Byers's announcement, the permanent secretary assured me they accepted there was no suspicion of misconduct against me. I was therefore amazed to hear they had unilaterally 'resigned' me."

"For the past seven days, I have asked them to acknowledge publicly that they made a very serious error and to clear my name of any smears. I was not interested in offers of monetary compensation."

"It was clear that this was their problem and they needed to resolve it. For a week, I have done my best to help them do this. But I have been stupefied by their attempts to exculpate themselves and put the blame on others."



Source:  
Date:  
Page:

Sunday Times  
Sunday 24. February 2002  
1,2

Circulation:  
Ad Rates:

ABC 1366499 Weekly  
page rate £54,500.00  
scc rate £129.00  
020 7782 5000

Tel:

Harriet Harman



Durrants

(D1799-1)

Page 6 of 8



Playing a deadly game:  
Blair, Byers, Sixsmith  
and Moore



## Spinning out of control: Who's who in the great transport department debacle



**Martin Sixsmith**

The former BBC television correspondent joined the DTLR as communications director last November. His experiences have since been bruising, culminating in a false announcement of his resignation by Byers. He says he has been 'stupefied' by the attempts of his detractors 'to exculpate themselves and put the blame on others'.



**Sir Richard Mottram**

He made his name as a career civil servant at the Ministry of Defence, where he was Michael Heseltine's private secretary during the Westland affair. It clearly left him with a nimble turn of political footwork. Now running the unwieldy Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions (DTLR), his initial reaction to the Sixsmith-Moore debacle was 'we're all \*\*\*\*\*'. But he was soon showing his skills at the art of self-preservation.



**Godric Smith**

Urbane, popular, a family man, a Cambridge United fan – nobody had a bad thing to say about the chief Downing Street spokesman until he was accused of not telling the truth in a lobby briefing about Sixsmith's e-mail. A career civil servant, he revealed his pugnacious side by turning his fire on the hapless Sixsmith.

**Jo Moore**

A Blairite stormtrooper in the years of internal party reform, she has never managed the transition from battle fatigues to civvies. Her loyalty was to Stephen Byers and the Labour party (in that order). When asked to make the final sacrifice, and to destroy Sixsmith in the process, she jumped at the chance. Too bad for her that Mottram and Byers made a hash of the coup de grace.

**Alastair Campbell**

The government's powerful director of communications played an observer's role in this affair. His main contribution was to tell Sixsmith: 'What I am concerned about is that the papers are portraying you as the shining example of civil service probity in all this... and people like Jo and me as the dirty, underhand political advisers... so if we announce that you have been exonerated and reinstated it just becomes another excuse for the media to dump on us and on Downing Street'.



**Stephen Byers**

A lawyer by training, the secretary of state for transport, local government and the regions usually has an unflappable manner that can be mistaken for high intelligence and an ability to get things done. His cool departed him in this crisis. Campbell told Sixsmith that Byers was 'very sore'. The wounds are very fresh. He promised Jo that if she went, you would go too. Mottram's verdict: 'Byers is very cunning, or very clever, at least... he never takes responsibility for difficult decisions.' But how long can he survive now after saying that Sixsmith had resigned when this was not true?





Source: Sunday Times  
Date: Sunday 24. February 2002  
Page: 1,2

Circulation: ABC 1366499 Weekly  
Ad Rates: page rate £54,500.00  
scc rate £129.00  
Tel: 020 7782 5000

Harriet Harman

(D1799-1)

Durrants

Page 8 of 8

It was clear that this was their problem and they needed to resolve it.  
For a week, I have done my best to help them do this.  
But I have been stupefied by their attempts to exculpate themselves and put the blame  
on others.

*Martin Sixsmith*

More in sorrow: an excerpt from Sixsmith's statement to The Sunday Times

Source: The Independent  
Date: Thursday 21, February 2002  
Page: 5

Circulation: ABC 223581 Daily  
Ad Rates: page rate £15,000.00  
scc rate £35.00  
Tel: 020 7005 2000

Harriet Harman

(D1799-1)

Durrants

Page 1 of 1

22 FEB 2002

## - DIARY -

THE MAX Mara suit Margaret Hodge, Higher Education minister, was wearing when interviewed by our correspondent this week (see page 2) was bought at John Lewis under its special shopping programme. All you do is ring for an appointment and show up at John Lewis to talk to the fashion adviser. She then rushes around collecting clothes that she thinks would look good on you. This is wonderful for busy ministers and anyone who hates shopping. No time-wasting schlepping about piling up armfuls of clothes that might not fit. "Harriet told me about it," says Mrs Hodge. That's Harriet Harman, former Social Services Secretary. It's good to know Labour women are not wasting their time window shopping. And it's free too.





Source: The Times  
Date: Wednesday 20. February 2002  
Page: 11  
Circulation: ABC 720383 Daily  
Ad Rates: page rate £23,500.00  
scc rate £57.00  
Tel: 020 7782 5000  
Harriet Harman



**Durrants**

(D1799-1)

Page 1 of 1

### **Correction**

Martin Sixsmith, until last Friday director of communications at the Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions, was not, as incorrectly reported on February 15, dismissed from a previous employment as director of communications for Harriet Harman, but left to take up another post. It was his predecessor who lost his job, and we apologise for the error.



# Battle of the 'mods and wreckers'

Blair aims to halt unions' swing to left as election of new leaders rattles No 10

Kevin Maguire

**T**ony Blair is pinning his hopes on two big unions electing sympathetic general secretaries to halt a succession of victories by an "awkward squad" of younger, more militant leaders.

The prime minister has been briefed on the possible succession in the TGWU and GMB unions, amid mounting concern in Downing Street and Millbank over the rise of officials prepared to challenge the government and employers.

Hard-left candidate Bob Crow's comfortable victory last week to become leader of the RMT, the main rail union, rattled the new Labour hierarchy.

Mr Blair is taking a keen interest in union ballots, and No 10 is likely to offer covert encouragement to candidates considered acceptable in an attempt to end the run of leftwing victories.

A Downing Street figure confidently predicted "the new wave will pass" and denounced union opposition to the government's economic policies and drive to involve private firms in public services. "They don't want reform, you have to take on that," said the No 10 insider in an attack on the prime minister's union critics.

Dubbed a confrontation of "mods v wreckers", since Mr Blair's bracketing of hardline union critics with the Tory party, his intervention underlined his private concern despite public denials.

Unions still supply about a third of the party's funds and cast half the votes at the annual conference, as well as providing organisational support.

The succession in the TGWU and GMB, among the most influential unions in the Labour party, is causing concern for the

leader of a party that is £10m in debt and is criticised for accepting funds from business — such as the £125,000 from the Indian steel magnate Lakshmi Mittal.

## Strikes

Opposition is mounting across unions affiliated to Labour to key planks of Mr Blair's agenda, particularly his modernisation of public services, with Unison and the Fire Brigades Union reviewing their links and financial support.

Strikes have been held on the railways and are threatened in Royal Mail. The GMB, under its general secretary, John Edmonds, has decided to reduce funding by £2m over the next four years, and said it would not back Labour candidates in May's local elections who favoured private delivery of public services.

Downing Street is anxious to secure the election of officials more cooperative than Bill Morris, general secretary of the TGWU, and Mr Edmonds, in contests likely to be held over the next 12 months

to find new leaders for the two unions. Mr Morris must retire by his 65th birthday in October next year.

No 10 is understood to be prepared to back Jack Dromey, a TGWU national official and husband of the solicitor general, **Harriet Harman**, if he runs.

But Mr Dromey, who stood unsuccessfully against Mr Morris in 1995, risks a challenge from three other officials of the TGWU: Tony Woodley, Barry Camfield, and Jim Elsby.

Downing Street is keener, however, to see the back of Mr Edmonds, a vocal critic of new Labour, attacking privatisation and manufacturing job losses. He must step down by his 60th birthday in January 2004.

Mr Blair has not hidden his animosity towards Mr Edmonds.

Charles Clarke, appointed party chairman by Mr Blair, sought to wound their foe last week by dismissing him as "not a big figure in the Labour movement".

The fight to follow Mr Edmonds is more

likely to be dominated by personalities than politics. Kevin Curran, the union's northern regional secretary, is favourite, though he may face a challenge from the GMB London secretary, Paul Kenny, and the GMB Scotland secretary, Robert Parker.

Mr Curran would be acceptable to Downing Street.

A Labour MP with close GMB ties said last night: "Curran is seen as no push-over, no patsy, but his style will be very different to Edmonds."

"John has isolated himself with a bonfire of his vanities, burning all his bridges. Kevin will seek to assert influence where he can, instead of trying to write the Queen's speech every week."

## Warning

A contest is under way in Amicus (formerly the engineers' and electricians' union), Labour's biggest affiliate. Its joint general secretary, Sir Ken Jackson, decided to stand again to head off a left-

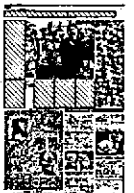
wing legal challenge to his plan to stay on until he was nearly 68.

Any Downing Street and Millbank support for union candidates will be very low key, to avoid it backfiring.

Mr Crow triumphed despite vilification in rightwing newspapers and a TUC official giving advice to his rival, earning the official a written warning for breaching the convention of TUC neutrality in union elections.

Six years ago, Mr Dromey's decision to closely identify himself with Mr Blair's campaign to abolish Clause Four, and the disclosure that he was being advised by New Labour, backfired badly for him in the TGWU. The scale of the backlash was underlined by a warning from Mick Cash, a moderate candidate in a forthcoming RMT election, following Mr Crow's triumph.

"The government and the Labour party need to understand the depth of disappointment our people feel about their policies," said Mr Cash.





Source:  
Date:  
Page:

The Guardian  
Monday 18. February 2002  
6

Circulation:  
Ad Rates:

ABC 413674 Daily  
page rate £16,275.00  
scc rate £38.00  
020 7278 2332

Tel:

Harriet Harman



Durrants

(D1799-1)

Page 2 of 3

## Who's who of the 'awkward squad'

### Dave Prentis, Unison

At 53, and as the leader of Britain's biggest union with 1.3m members, he is the elder statesman of the new awkward squad. Prentis, who overcame a serious illness to succeed Rodney Bickerstaffe, has a £10m strike fund to put his money where his mouth is. A critic of "creeping privatisation" in public services, he did not vote for Tony Blair in the 1994 ballot for the leadership of the Labour party.



### Mick Rix, Aslef

A tough negotiator who has won the sneaking admiration of transport ministers and train company managers, he joined the Labour party after a spell in Arthur Scargill's Socialist Labour party. Aged 38 with a dog called Che, Rix strengthened his position by seeing off rightwing attempts to unseat him. Believes Aslef should use its industrial muscle to improve drivers' pay and improve relations with the RMT rail union.



### Billy Hayes, CWU

Traditional old Labour trade unionist exasperated by New Labour's threat to dismantle Consignia, the public corporation in which the bulk of his 280,000 members work. Aged 48, he was elected general secretary by campaigning against a partnership agreement championed by Royal Mail managers. Threatening to lead postal strikes next month over pay.



### Bob Crow, RMT

Won a postal ballot to succeed Jimmy Knapp and revelled in being dubbed "Public Enemy Number One" by The Sun during a near-hysterical media campaign against him. Tony Blair's idea of a union "wrecker", the former communist is partyless, although backed by the Socialist Alliance, after quitting Scargill's organisation. Crow, 40, will create political problems for Labour as well as industrial difficulties for rail managers.



### Mark Serwotka, PCS

Expelled from the Labour party, the general secretary-elect of the 270,000-strong civil service union is backed by the Trotskyist Socialist Alliance. The former benefits agency worker from Leeds, who beat the sitting PCS leader by denouncing cosy deals with the government, led strikes against the removal of security screens protecting benefit office staff. Serwotka, 38, draws about £30,000 of his £70,000 salary.



### Andy Gilchrist, FBU

Convenor of the left in the unions, Gilchrist, 41, has put securing a big pay rise and fighting privatisation at the top of his agenda. A Labour party member and very good public speaker, he has won a series of local battles, including disputes in Berkshire and Merseyside. The former Luton Town trialist has surprised Home Office civil servants with his grasp of detail.





Source: The Guardian  
Date: Monday 18. February 2002  
Page: 6  
Circulation: ABC 413674 Daily  
Ad Rates: page rate £16,275.00  
scc rate £38.00  
020 7278 2332  
Tel:

Harriet Harman



Durrants

(D1799-1)

Page 3 of 3



**Members of the  
GMB union  
lobbying  
Westminster in  
protest at the use  
of private firms in  
the public sector**  
Photograph:  
Martin Argles



Source:  
Date:  
Page:

Independent on Sunday  
Sunday 17. February 2002  
19

Circulation:  
Ad Rates:

ABC 249182 Weekly  
page rate £15,500.00  
scc rate £35.00  
020 7005 2000

Tel:

Harriet Harman

(D1799-1)

Durrants

Page 1 of 1

## Him'n'her

# When two egos go to war

It was the moment when two egos collided. She was the party apparatchik who wanted to stamp her authority on Whitehall in her role as special adviser to the Secretary of State for Transport, Stephen Byers. He was the tough BBC Moscow veteran determined to maintain his position as head of communications at the Department of Transport.

Even among the party spin doctors, Jo Moore was a special case. "She was a political adviser with a difference. She wanted her hands on every announcement," said one insider. She began her career at Labour's former Walworth Road headquarters as a lowly press officer when Labour was toiling against a hostile media, and Peter Mandelson was in charge. During the 1997 general election campaign, she was ever-present, clipboard in hand, working in Alastair Campbell's shadow. She was sharp, trusted and totally committed to the party. After departing for two years with the lobbyists Westminster Strategy, she returned to the Labour fold, working for Stephen Byers at the DTL.

There were rumours of clashes with civil servants, which grew when she moved with Byers to Transport. It was there that she made her greatest error, e-mailing colleagues on 11 September that the terrorist attacks made

it a "good day to bury bad news". She apologised, but there were still questions about her judgement.

Mr Sixsmith's career should have prepared him for the realpolitik of the department. As BBC correspondent in Moscow, he was used to dealing with the party apparatchiks and keeping his own line on the news. He had a reputation for being wilfully focused.

When he returned to London in the mid-1990s he moved from journalism to being head of communications under Harriet Harman at the Department of Social Security. The job was surreal, for Harman had fallen out with her junior minister, Frank Field. Sixsmith spent much of his time pretending

to the media that their relationship was harmonious, while trying to get the two of them to say as little as possible.

Although he was taken aback by the bitterness of New Labour's infighting and the blurred lines between special advisers and civil

servants (and quit to work in the private sector), ambition brought him back. He joined Transport just days before Ms Moore wrote her memo. The next five months must have made Moscow and the DSS seem idyllic. His turf war with Ms Moore was too damaging for it to continue. They both had to go.

Colin Brown



Sixsmith:  
ruthless



Source: Observer  
Date: Sunday 17. February 2002  
Page: 31  
Circulation: ABC 410700 Weekly  
Ad Rates: page rate £24,235.00  
scc rate £51.00  
020 7278 2332  
Tel:  
Harriet Harman



Durrants

(D1799-1)

Page 1 of 1



# Pendennis

● THE ENCYCLOPEDIA new *Dictionary of Labour Biography* details the diverse personalities of the people's party before they were all cloned into Blair's babes. It reminds us that stout Gaitskellite MP Alice Bacon once proposed that right wingers and left wingers use different lifts when arriving at Labour's Transport House HQ. The tome misses, however, the day that disaster struck the famously parsimonious Miss Bacon in a Commons lift. 'Suddenly, Alice's knicker elastic snapped,' recalls a veteran Labour warhorse. 'This voluminous pair of flannelette drawers fell to the floor. With a cheery smile, Alice just stepped out of them, picked them up and popped them in her handbag.' It would never happen to Harriet Harman.



Alice: Winter draws on.





# Blair grasps second opportunity to bury Jo Moore

## INSIDE WESTMINSTER

BY ANDREW PORTER



**W**HEN they write a book on spin doctoring in the New Labour age the name of Jo Moore will need a whole chapter. The climax will be the events of the past few days: how the special adviser's relationship with Martin Sixsmith, the BBC reporter turned head of communications at the Department of Transport, Local Government & the Regions (DTLR), led to their mutual assured destruction. Both resigned on Friday.

There was something poetic about the timing. The final issue that did for these two was an unseemly spat over whether or not Moore had wanted to usher out a potentially "bad news" rail story on the same day as Princess Margaret's funeral. Downing Street, ironically as it turned out, this time backed Moore's version of events.

Westminster was buzzing with the story. Sources at the DTLR had pointed out that Moore was trying to use the funeral as cover for bad news. Moore, Downing Street and Robin Cook, the leader of the house, called it a fabrication. That only led to more anonymous briefings, thought to have Sixsmith's hand behind them, saying the original story was true. It was clear they had

to go, but would they officially walk out the door on the same day the funeral was taking place? They did.

Six months ago it was all so different for Moore. She was the model special adviser, the official name for these partisan appointees who are so central to ministerial government under Labour. She was rarely photographed and kept out of the limelight. She was impeccably loyal to her

boss, transport secretary Stephen Byers, whom she had followed when he was moved from the Department of Trade & Industry after the election last June.

She was the textbook spin doctor. She knew her market, knew her brief, knew the people she needed to. Not least the prime minister and his closest confidant, Alastair Campbell, Labour's spin-doctor-in-chief. Unlike other spin doctors, notably Campbell and Gordon Brown's former right-hand man Charlie Whelan, Moore was never the news.

Her e-mail written a few hours after the attacks of 11 September, suggesting now was a good time for burying bad news, changed her reputation for ever. It was beyond the pale.

But it did not emerge until after another key event in her and her boss's political

lives: the placing of Railtrack into administration, a good example of the shrewd side of Moore.

This newspaper was aware of what Byers was planning. Moore refused to play ball, though when our story hit the streets she was forced to call round other newspapers to brief them. The plan had been to get the news out on Monday.

It was still a triumph of sorts for her: a plan that had been two months in the making had remained a secret until the last minute. A few days later the e-mail bombshell dropped.

Byers had regarded putting Railtrack into administration as his big redemption in Labour party eyes; now no longer even the story. "Burying bad news" was the issue. Moore was the issue. Byers' plan to show himself as a champion of the left and the backbenchers for consigning failed rail privatisation to history was swamped. Moore's Diana-style show of contrition did little to turn down the heat.

Almost everybody thought she should have been sacked there and then. Even Labour stalwarts who say her biggest crime was getting caught – and that years of life in the New Labour lab had programmed her to give such callous advice – agree she should have been shuffled away from her key position in government. A role at Labour's nerve centre in Millbank, perhaps, with the possibility of future rehabilitation.

Instead Byers, Blair and possibly even Campbell backed Moore, in an incomprehensible display of tribal solidarity. As a result, their collective credibility is now

being questioned. A simple, swift sacking would have probably have sated the press pack's bloodlust. Campbell knows the press usually get their man or woman.

It is what drove the swift response to the Mandelson-Hinduja cash-for-access affair when the Northern Ireland secretary arrived at Downing Street to defend himself only to find the decision to off-load him had already been made. Sentiment, even personal friendship, mattered little; damaging headlines mattered a lot.

Yet that did not initially apply to Moore. One theory is that she was riding shotgun for someone and that she knew a bit too much of the Labour story to be dumped. We will now find out. Moore knows a lot: she rose through the ranks, a key reformer from her days as leader of the National Labour Students to her role at Harringey council and on to her close role at the centre of government.

What if any lessons can Labour learn from this fiasco? Probably none. The party is too immersed in spin to be able to escape from it. We hear that the Committee for Standards in Public Life want to rewrite some of the rules on special advisers. Opposition spokesmen howl that "something needs to be done".

It is likely to come to nought. The tension between civil servants and Labour ministers – a tension that has persisted in many departments since they came to

power five years ago – will increase. It will make ministers even more wary of some civil servants

Yet Sixsmith, the civil servant in last week's spat despite his BBC pedigree, is more the villain in this particular case, though nothing he did compares with Moore's 11 September e-mail. He has been forced to resign for briefing journalists against Number 10. But he has escaped much of the flak despite the fact that Number 10 seem to hold him responsible for the latest and fatal clash at the DTLR.

His reputation for being difficult was one that had grown since he entered the government communications service in 1998.



Source: The Business  
Date: Sunday 17. February 2002  
Page: 21

Circulation: ABC 68721 Weekly  
Ad Rates: page rate £12,500.00  
scc rate £28.00  
Tel: 020 7961 0000

Harriet Harman

(01799-1)



**Durrants**

Page 2 of 2

The former BBC reporter is said to have had "an uneasy relationship" with Harriet Harman, the social security secretary, and his boss at that department. BBC insiders regularly predicted that it would end in tears.

The fact he lasted less than four months at the DTLR will leave a lot of people asking how he came to get such a prominent position in what is a tinder box of a government department.

Expect even more reliance of political appointees in the future and even more dust-ups like last week's.



Source: Financial Times  
Date: Saturday 16. February 2002  
Page: 2  
Circulation: ABC 486366 Daily  
Ad Rates: page rate £57,750.00  
scc rate £96.00  
Tel: 020 7867 0200

Harriet Harman

(01799-1)

Durrants

Page 1 of 1

MARTIN SIXSMITH

## Ex-BBC staffer ended up in one hotspot too many

By Ashling O'Connor,  
Media Correspondent

As a BBC journalist, Martin Sixsmith used to chase bad news. As a press aide, it seems to have followed him everywhere he goes.

The communications chief at the Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions, who resigned yesterday over the "buried news" row in Whitehall, has lurched from one public relations disaster to the next.

Mr Sixsmith, 47, educated at Oxford, Harvard and the Sorbonne, was Harriet Harman's press secretary during a departmental row over welfare reform that claimed both her cabinet career and

the job of her junior minister, Frank Field.

After Ms Harman's sacking, Mr Sixsmith joined GEC, now known as Marconi. The heavily-indebted telecommunications equipment maker recently cut 13,000 jobs after reporting one of the biggest-ever losses in corporate history.

Mr Sixsmith was communications director for two years but left GEC before its first profits warning in June. He joined the transport department last November.

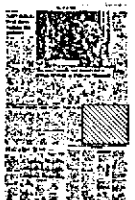
During his 17-year career at the BBC, which he joined as a broadcast trainee, he was at ease in political hotspots. He reported from Moscow during the 1991

coup, as well as from Washington and Afghanistan.

His time in Stephen Byers' department has not been easy. He took up the communications post, on a salary of up to £105,000, within weeks of the revelation that departmental colleague Jo Moore had sought to use the September 11 events as a good time to "bury bad news".

Mr Sixsmith replaced Alun Evans, reportedly forced out of his job at the department after refusing to be a part of a "dirty tricks" campaign to discredit Bob Kiley, the London transport commissioner.

He is also said to have found it difficult working with Jo Moore, although he denied any rift.





# Millbank apparatchik versus BBC veteran

## Profiles Careers in politics and journalism collide at Whitehall

### Jo Moore

Lightning conductor for all the pent up resentment at the black arts of Labour's news management, Jo Moore began in the old party HQ in Walworth Road before working in the Millbank press office in the years up to the 1997 landslide.

Those were the years when the party reinvented political communication as the art of spin. She coordinated announcements, lost difficult stories, and tried to intimidate journalists into writing to the party line.

After the election, she spent two years with the lobbying organisation Westminster Strategy. In 2000 she was recruited back to Labour politics, joining Stephen Byers at the Department of Trade and Industry and working for him and for Lady Jay, the women's minister.

Reports began to emerge of her abrasive relations with civil servants. When Mr Byers was moved to the Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions, she went with him, working two days a week for a rumoured £50,000 a year. Last September 11 she notoriously emailed the press office with advice to "bury the bad news". The email was leaked, the first indication of the mistrust and poisoned relations within the department. Ms Moore's job was saved by an apology, and the

loyalty of her boss.

She was moved out of day-to-day press contact, but the briefing against her, and the leaks, continued in what appears to have been a complete breakdown of internal relations at the department. Colin Byrne, who as Labour's head of press appointed Ms Moore in the 1980s, said last night: "The aggressive style she learned in opposition is not the most subtle one to bring to government." Ms Moore could claim that this time she did nothing wrong. In the old cry, she has been found guilty — but not as charged.

### Martin Sixsmith

In a distinguished career as a BBC television foreign correspondent, Martin Sixsmith was familiar to millions while based in Moscow — for his ears, seen red with cold, and for an eccentric pronunciation of the name of Boris Yeltsin.

Mr Sixsmith, 47, was recruited by Harriet Harman to buff up her image at the Department of Social Security. It

was the start of a prolonged spell of professional misfortune. Although he stayed on after Ms Harman was sacked, in 1999 he departed for the private sector and GEC Marconi. Its share price plummeted.

He returned to Whitehall last November in the first attempt to restore relations between Jo Moore and the transport de-

partment's news section. He replaced the former head of news, Alun Evans, said to have been forced out after refusing to take part in a political smear against Bob Kiley, Ken Livingstone's transport commissioner.

Mr Sixsmith's arrival failed to heal relations. Instead, he went native: until his final minutes yesterday, colleagues defended him and insisted it would be wrong for him to take the blame for internal problems besetting the department.

"He mustn't go," one Whitehall source said. "He supports the civil service ethos. People would be very upset."

On Thursday a bitter and unprecedented war of words broke out between his department and No 10. Mr Sixsmith was accused of misleading a Downing Street press officer, Godrick Smith, over whether an email leaked to the press existed; apparently he was also blamed for having leaked the email, which was sent by him to Ms Moore, Mr Byers, and one other civil servant, warning them — in a final irony — against releasing bad news yesterday, the day of Princess Margaret's funeral, and the day he was forced out of office.

The writing was on the wall when the head of the government's information service gave Mr Sixsmith a public warning of the importance of trust between politicians and civil servants.

### Profiles by Anne Perkins



Martin Sixsmith: BBC veteran  
adopting civil service ethos





Source: The Guardian  
Date: Saturday 16. February 2002  
Page: 13  
Circulation: ABC 413674 Daily  
Ad Rates: page rate £16,275.00  
scc rate £38.00  
020 7278 2332  
Tel:  
Harriet Harman



Durrants

(D1799-1)

Page 2 of 2



**Jo Moore as she appeared on TV last October, apologising for her September 11 blunder** Photograph: Fiona Hanson/PA



# Former BBC man was no stranger to controversy in Whitehall posts

MARTIN SIXSMITH is far from being the only BBC journalist to have crossed the line from reporting to a government or party communications role.

Among his contemporaries, Lance Price became a Downing Street aide in Tony Blair's first term, Emma Udwin now works for the European Commission, and Mark Laity became a spokesman for Nato.

But Mr Sixsmith alone has managed to be in the spotlight and on the defensive on more than one occasion.

His previous job for the former social security minister **Harriet Harman**, before she was sacked, ended in acrimony when the two fell out over the presentation of her public profile. That time the row was contained firmly behind the scenes.

He left to join GEC Marconi, which later saw its share value plunge by billions of pounds.

His appointment as the

**BY DAVID LISTER**  
Media and Culture Editor

director of communications at the Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions (DTLR) was announced in November, within weeks of the disclosure that Jo Moore, the special adviser to the Transport Secretary, Stephen Byers, had e-mailed colleagues on 11 September to say it was a good time to "bury bad news".

He replaced Alun Evans, who was reportedly forced out by Ms Moore when he refused to take part in a smear campaign against Bob Kiley, the London transport chief.

Mr Sixsmith had held a similar role to his brief at the DTLR when he worked at the then Department of Social Security (DSS) between 1997 and 1999, where he had reported to Ms Harman.

A colleague from the time



**Martin Sixsmith: 'Very principled, very stubborn'**

recalls: "Being so close to party politicians is not that comfortable for Martin. There was a big falling-out between Harriet and him. It just got rather less publicity than his present situation. Martin is fundamentally a very nice man. He is very principled and also very stubborn."

Mr Sixsmith, 47, was educated at St Antony's College, Oxford, Harvard University, and the Sorbonne in Paris. He joined the BBC as a trainee in 1980 and worked as the corporation's correspondent in Brussels, Geneva, eastern Europe, Moscow and Washington.

In 1997, he went to Whitehall as the director of communications at the DSS. In 1999, he joined GEC Marconi before he moved to the DTLR on a reported salary of £100,000.

BBC colleagues remember him as an intelligent and effective reporter who was never afraid to speak his mind. But, they say, he was also far more "sensible" than many of his workmates, who spent their evenings living life to the full.

"Martin started a family well before many of us," said one friend, "and his family and his job were of paramount importance to him."







## Falls from grace cushioned by inside knowledge and contacts

**By Greg Hurst**  
Parliamentary Correspondent

JO MOORE endured such infamy after her leaked e-mail on September 11 that she became a tabloid villain. Yet her influence in government and Labour circles means she leaves with massive earning potential.

She has inside knowledge of ministers' plans for public transport, which are likely to be a central issue in the next general election campaign alongside health, education and crime policy.

Despite the controversies and the nature of her departure, Ms Moore, 38, retained the loyalty of Stephen Byers, the Transport Secretary, and the professional respect of oth-

ers who worked alongside her in the Labour Party.

Such detailed knowledge, enhanced by extensive personal contacts within the Government, would be prized by blue chip companies in the transport industry, trade organisations or lobbying firms.

Between leaving the Labour Party after the general election in 1997, where she was chief press officer, and going to work for Mr Byers as his special adviser in 1998, she worked as a lobbyist for Westminster Strategy.

Ms Moore, a mother-of-two who worked part-time at the Transport Department on a salary of £70,000, will not be in the same league as Anji Hunter, Tony Blair's former Downing Street "gatekeeper"

who joined BP last year for some £200,000 a year.

Martin Sixsmith is unlikely to emerge in another job in Whitehall. His tenure at the Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions — which he joined only in November — was his second in the civil service.

Mr Sixsmith, a former BBC correspondent, became the former Department of Social Security's director of information in 1998 where his relationship with Harriet Harman, the Secretary of State, was said to be difficult.

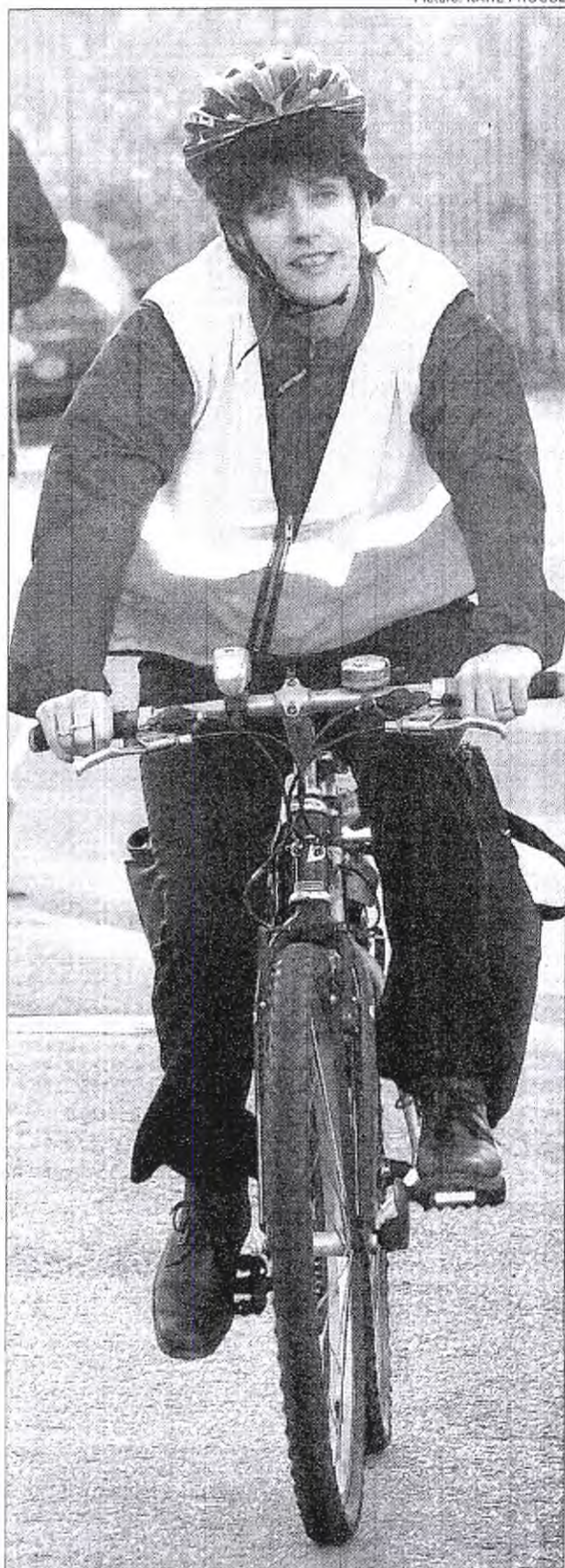
He left the following year to become director of media relations at GEC, which restructured itself to become Marconi, the troubled information technology group.







Picture: KARL PROUSE



Denial: political adviser Jo Moore leaving for work yesterday

## 'Villain' driven by loyalty to Labour

By ANDY McSMITH

JO MOORE has become New Labour's pantomime villain, the cold-blooded female who saw television pictures of thousands of people dying in a terrorist attack and immediately thought about how to turn the tragedy to political advantage.

Eric Forth, the shadow leader of the Commons, pulled no punches as he denounced her yesterday to the Commons. "This dreadful woman has yet again sought to take advantage of the most distressing and appalling circumstances," he said. "We really have heard enough of this woman, I don't want to hear of her, or about her, or from her ever again."

The general view in the Government is that Miss Moore should have resigned on the day her infamous e-mail became public knowledge, as she offered to do. She was saved by her employer, Stephen Byers, who may well have reckoned that he would never find another political adviser to serve him as loyally. She has, after all, immersed her life in the Labour Party since she was at university, and all she has done, for better or worse, has been driven by loyalty to the party and to Mr Byers.

Her friends say she is being pilloried by people whose real target is the Government. Lesley Smith, who worked with her for a time but has moved to the private sector said: "I know how deeply Jo regrets that thoughtless e-mail [on September 11],

which was wholly out of character. It's no exaggeration that her life has been made miserable by people who choose to use this to attack the Government, and in so doing have caused huge disruption in her own and her family's life."

Martin Sixsmith, her antagonist, used to be well known as BBC correspondent in Moscow, doing open air broadcasts in the freezing cold. Sympathetic viewers are said to have posted him muffs after seeing his red ears.

He will not be needing them in the Whitehall hothouse which he entered soon after Labour was elected by becoming director of communications at the Social Security department, at a time when the Secretary of State, Harriet Harman, was losing the fight for her political life.

He went from there to Marconi, whose share price went into freefall, and in November took over as director of communication at Transport in the hope that he would be able to clear up the political mess caused by the crisis on the railways and compounded by Miss Moore's e-mail.

One of his first acts was to block an attempt by Mr Byers to appoint a friend of Miss Moore's, Ann Wallis, to a senior civil servant's post in the department's press office.

After yesterday's fiasco, it is difficult to see how he and Miss Moore can continue to work together much longer.





18 FEB 2002

Source: The Times  
 Date: Friday 15. February 2002  
 Page: 4  
 Circulation: ABC 720383 Daily  
 Ad Rates: page rate £23,500.00  
 scc rate £57.00  
 Tel: 020 7782 5000  
 Harriet Harman



Durrants

(D1799-1)

Page 1 of 1

# No 10 defends Jo Moore as office briefs against her

By David Charter

Chief Political Correspondent

TRANSPORT department officials were briefing journalists against Jo Moore within minutes of Downing Street's robust defence of the beleaguered spin-doctor yesterday morning.

The Prime Minister's official spokesman had given the strongest possible rebuttal to claims that Ms Moore tried to switch publication of rail figures to today to coincide with Princess Margaret's funeral. Potentially damaging information would therefore be lost on a busy newsday — a tactic for which Ms Moore became infamous for proposing with her e-mail calling September 11 a good day to "bury" bad news.

Two newspapers yesterday claimed to know of an e-mail from Martin Sixsmith, head of communications at the Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions (DTLR), rebuking Ms Moore for what seemed like another scheme to bury news. The Prime Minister's spokesman said yesterday: "The e-mail between Jo Moore and Martin Sixsmith does not exist. It is a fabrication."

Soon afterwards, telephones started ringing in newspaper offices and — in a clear sign of the poisoned atmosphere at a bitterly divided department — journalists were assured by officials that Ms Moore had in-

deed proposed putting the information out today.

There was also an e-mail from Mr Sixsmith, the anonymous source claimed, only not in the exact wording used by newspapers. That had allowed Downing Street to issue denials, the official whispered.

When No 10 heard of the counter-briefing, Godric Smith, the Prime Minister's official spokesman who took over from Alastair Campbell after the election, was apoplectic. Yet again, the Government was seriously embarrassed by a row over spin and once more it was Stephen Byers's special

adviser at the centre of the storm. Ms Moore, 38, was brought to the DTLR by Mr Byers when he arrived in June but remained unknown outside Westminster until her now infamous e-mail emerged. September 11 was "now a very good day to get out anything we want to bury", she said, soon after the attack on the twin towers.

Mr Byers stood by Ms Moore and she kept her £70,000-a-year post. Mr Blair stood by Mr Byers's judgment on the matter, but once she was caught in the media spotlight, Ms Moore could not get out of it. The arrival of Mr Sixsmith at the DTLR as head of communications only led to greater unrest, because his appointment was immediately portrayed by some in the media as a demotion for Ms

Moore.

There was already no love lost between Mr Sixsmith and political spin-doctors since he had been sacked from his last post, as media officer for Harriet Harman, after a spinner described him in the media as "dead meat".

Mr Sixsmith began his £100,000-a-year job on November 26, waking up to newspaper interviews with Mr Byers declaring once again his support for Ms Moore. "She has apologised and she has now got to live with the consequences of that terrible thing she did," Mr Byers said. "He (Mr Sixsmith) is not doing the job of special adviser. Jo Moore remains my special adviser."

Mr Sixsmith attended the daily 8.30am briefing yesterday at No 10 for the top PR staff from each department.

When presented with the two newspapers' accounts of his e-mail rebuking Ms Moore for using today to bury more news, he is believed to have explained there was no e-mail in those terms.

Mr Sixsmith was summoned back to Downing Street yesterday at lunchtime as the row over what Ms Moore did or did not propose erupted. No 10 had been caught out denouncing as fiction a story which turned out substantially to be true.

