

**Written evidence submitted by The Sunday Times Insight Investigations Team
[WCB0006]**

1. Background

1.1 When we appeared before your committee in July this year in response to your request for evidence regarding our Fifa Files investigation, you asked us to make further submissions in writing if we uncovered additional information in the future on the subject of corruption in the 2018 and 2022 World Cup bidding contest which we considered to be of relevance to your work.

1.2 The Sunday Times has spent more than four years investigating the bidding process for the hosting of the 2018 and 2022 Fifa World Cups. This year, we have published evidence from a cache of hundreds of millions of documents passed to us by a whistleblower from inside Fifa. Those documents – the Fifa Files – show that the bidding process was corrupted in favour of Qatar’s campaign to host the 2022 tournament by a string of illicit payments made by the country’s Fifa vice president Mohamed Bin Hammam to football officials around the world. The Qatar 2022 bid committee deny that he was working on their behalf.

1.3 To our surprise and dismay, Fifa’s investigator Michael Garcia did not examine our evidence before submitting his final report on alleged corruption in the 2018/2022 bidding process to Judge Hans-Joachim Eckert, the chair of Fifa’s adjudicatory chamber, in September. Instead, Garcia responded to the first publication of our stories based on the Fifa Files in June 2014 by announcing the next day that the evidence-gathering phase of his investigation was at an end.

1.4 We have therefore long held grave doubts about the efficacy of Garcia’s work. Those doubts were compounded when it was announced that neither his report nor the 200,000 pages of supporting evidence would ever be published. They were confirmed when Judge Eckert published a summary of Garcia’s findings earlier this month which cleared the winning Qatar 2022 and Russia 2018 bids of all wrongdoing. Garcia disowned this summary as containing “numerous materially incomplete and erroneous representations of the facts,” and many of its conclusions are plainly contradicted by the documents in our Files which were not examined as part of the inquiry. We believe that there is a large amount of evidence in existence that Garcia failed to consider during his investigation. We therefore believe that the findings of this inquiry are without credibility, and that further investigation is required independently of Fifa in order to get to the truth about the awarding of these two World Cup tournaments.

2. Reasons for this submission

2.1 We are writing to inform you that sources have told us that England's failed bid to host the 2018 World Cup compiled a database of intelligence containing evidence suggesting serious corruption in the bidding process. That intelligence was not shared with parliament during the inquiry by your committee into football governance in 2011 or with the independent review of allegations relating to the World Cup bidding process by James Dingemans QC. Neither was it discussed with Garcia by former officials from the England 2018 bid when they were interviewed during his investigation.

2.3 During your 2011 inquiry into football governance, you heard evidence from the then Football Association (FA) Chairman Lord Triesman who made allegations of serious misconduct against four named members of the Fifa executive committee in relation to the World Cup bidding process. As a consequence, the FA commissioned an independent review of the allegations by the QC James Dingemans which was sent to Fifa. In that review, the bid's chief executive Andy Anson signed a sworn statement that: "I am ... not aware of any further evidence, written or oral, which implicates members of Fifa, either on the executive committee or otherwise, with being involved in any corrupt activity in relation to the Fifa World Cup bidding process". The Dingemans report specifically addressed the allegations raised by Lord Triesman, and did not examine any of the further intelligence relating to corrupt activity in the bidding process which sources tell us exists within the England 2018 database. Sources say that Anson did not disclose that intelligence to Dingemans, in his interview with Garcia or to your own inquiry because he considered it unproven and feared that the individuals it implicated could take legal action against the bid over the allegations it contained.

2.4 There is widespread public concern in this country and around the world about the way that football is governed by Fifa and the disintegration of the Garcia investigation has proved that the organisation is incapable of investigating itself adequately. A recent poll by Opinium published in The Sunday Times found that 80 per cent of the British public believe the FA should take the lead in holding Fifa to account within Europe. It is therefore of concern to us that members of the England 2018 bid team have apparently held back intelligence suggesting serious corruption.

2.5 We believe that it is strongly in the public interest that the intelligence gathered by the England 2018 bid is fully investigated in a public forum. We therefore hope that your committee will mount an inquiry into this matter and take evidence from those involved. While we have made efforts to corroborate the information that follows, it has been impossible to verify many aspects of the intelligence which we are told the England 2018 team compiled independently. We do not have the power to compel witnesses or

demand full disclosure of evidence, and without access to the full set of intelligence gathered by England and all its supporting material we cannot properly test its truth or reach conclusions. We do however strongly believe that this information warrants serious consideration and further inquiry. To this end, we are providing you with all the information that we have in our possession relating to the intelligence gathered by the England 2018 bid.

3. Sources

3.1 The Sunday Times has spoken to seven well-placed sources about intelligence gathered by the England 2018 bid during and after the bidding process, three of whom were members of the bid's controlling board of directors. The sources said the bid and its associates had commissioned high-level intelligence-gathering and surveillance on the other countries bidding to host the 2018 and 2022 World Cups.

3.2 Those sources have asked to remain anonymous, but we will characterise them as follows. The *government source* is a government insider who was closely involved in overseeing England's bid to host the 2018 World Cup. The *ex-MI6 source* is a former MI6 officer who was involved in gathering intelligence on the rivals of the England 2018 bid. The *FA source* is a senior official in the Football Association. The *first England 2018 source* and *second England 2018 source* were senior executives of the England 2018 bid with close knowledge of its intelligence-gathering operation. The *third England 2018 source* and the *fourth England 2018 source* were a director and a high ranking employee of the bid who were aware of the intelligence gathering operation.

3.3 The following information has been supplied by some or all of our seven sources, with the exception of references to documents from the Fifa Files which are included by way of context and/or corroboration.

4. The intelligence-gathering operation by England 2018

4.1 Senior England 2018 sources have told The Sunday Times that the bid paid private companies and individual consultants to spy on its rivals in the run-up to the vote in December 2010. Non-disclosure agreements were signed with each of the individuals and companies who were paid to gather intelligence, the sources said.

4.2 Senior England 2018 officials said they were advised to set up a "network of information" by Lord Coe and fellow executives from the successful London 2012 Olympic bid, who said such an intelligence gathering operation on lobbying activity and voter intentions had been a key part of their own campaign. The third England 2018

source said Lord Coe had advised the bid that *“it would be a good idea to have a source of some information. That information needed to have the smallest possible circulation ... There needs to be a small inner sanctum who have all the relevant campaigning information. It must be a small group. That small group must not share it anywhere else.”* The sources did not suggest that the London 2012 bid had received any intelligence related to corruption in that process.

4.3 A consortium of sponsors and associates of the England 2018 bid hired one private intelligence agency with close links to MI6 to conduct surveillance on the eight other bidding nations soon after the official bid committee was formed in late 2009, sources say. That agency carried out its operation throughout the bidding process and continued investigating evidence of corruption in rival bids until mid-2011, with a particular focus on Russia 2018. The agency provided a series of dispatches and reports on its work throughout that period. The ex-MI6 source said the consortium *“was committed to the England bid and wanted to better understand what they were up against, and what they were up against was a completely alien way of doing business”*. He said: *“The sponsors were quite close to the England camp during that period, because they had committed quite a lot of money and prestige to it. It was undoubtedly the best bid.”* He went on: *“There was more than one client... The people who were committed to the bid at the time were quite close to each other, like the sponsors and others and the bid itself, and worked quite closely together.”*

4.4 We are informed that a second report was commissioned from Hakluyt, the elite private intelligence agency run by former MI6 officials, during 2010. Sources say that report examined the activities of the other bidding countries and assessed England’s chances of victory. The ex-MI6 source said: *“My impression was that Hakluyt were brought in ... possibly because of some personal ties between someone on the FA and someone in Hakluyt.”* The government source said: *“A report was commissioned from Hakluyt into the bidding process by someone close to the board of the England 2018 bid.”* The government source said the report warned that England would only receive two or three votes ahead of the secret ballot of Fifa executive committee members on December 2 2010.

4.5 Sources say the England 2018 bid was supplied with intelligence dispatches on the rival bids from British embassies around the world. The first England 2018 source said: *“How else do you get the information unless you enlist the help of your own intelligence services or the services of specialist companies out there?”* He added: *“Certainly embassies were helping.”* The intelligence gathered from embassies is said to have concerned the activities of particular members of the Fifa executive committee, including Jack Warner (Trinidad and Tobago) and Chuck Blazer (US), and tracked the

movements of the Russia 2018 bid team as they travelled around the world lobbying voters.

4.6 We are also told that England 2018 bid ran its own intelligence gathering operation, collating and triangulating information gathered from within the bidding process by its own officials. The first England 2018 source said: *“A lot of it was just outlandish stuff you hear on the circuit ... It was just write it all down and put it into sections and headings. Qatar, Russia, Blatter whoever it might be. To put it into some kind of order. Whether it was worth taking time to prove, disprove, what the implications are for the England bid.”*

4.7 We are told that intelligence from the operations outlined above was drawn together into a database which could be accessed only by an “inner sanctum” of senior figures in the England 2018 bid. The Sunday Times is informed that the database is stored on an encrypted memory disc. The first England 2018 source said the aim of the operation *“was to collect all rumours and intelligence and put it into somewhere you could triangulate whether it was true or not true. Yes, it was written down ... I hope it’s still in a form that is searchable. It’s on a disc. Literally we wrote everything down”*.

4.8 The intelligence gathered included a substantial amount of information which sources say related to corruption in the bidding process, and in the winning Russia 2018 and Qatar 2022 bids. The ex-MI6 source said: *“We did have intelligence that states paid bribes to Fifa members ... The [England] bid was never going to win because of the corruption on the other side. It was the scale of the defeat that was the shock.”*

4.9 The England bid sources revealed that their own spying campaign against their rivals was matched by similar tactics by the Russia 2018 bid. The sources said they had received assistance from Britain’s official security services to set up surveillance countermeasures because they feared Russia was spying on them when they met with voters to ask them to back the England 2018 bid. The security officials had advised them to lock their phones in lead boxes during such meetings and swept the rooms to make sure they had not been bugged. England 2018 also paid private security companies to sweep its own offices regularly for bugs after being informed that Russia had installed a permanent surveillance unit in London to spy on its activities, the sources said.

5. The decision to withhold the intelligence

5.1 The first England 2018 source said the information in its database was never made public or handed over to parliament or the Dingemans inquiry because it contains sensitive source material much of which could not be proven. He said: *“We gathered*

stuff from all sorts of people ... It was gathered confidentially. I wouldn't want to burn sources. It was all sourced." He said that although the information was "fascinating" it was just intelligence and therefore not enough to prove corruption conclusively on its own. The second England 2018 source said that the bid could not disclose the work done by private companies and individuals because it had signed non-disclosure agreements. That source said the information was "incendiary" but that there was nothing in it that the bid thought would be "legally credible".

5.2 Sources said England bid officials did not discuss the intelligence in the database by Garcia because he had refused to offer them indemnity against legal action by any individuals they accused of corrupt activity in in giving evidence. The second England 2018 source said Garcia's investigation "was totally undermined" because the bid officials "could not give him anywhere to investigate. It's just too risky". The third England 2018 source said the bid was not prepared to volunteer information because: "Fifa would not give us witnesses any legal protection, and it would have been so easy for them to do that". He said that the Thai voter, Worawi Makudi, had a "track record of taking legal action" and "many of the people we would have named have a similar track record". He explained: "We were given literally no protection from the laws of defamation under Swiss law when we gave our evidence. So our evidence was not going to get the benefit of any privilege. There was no guarantee we were given of any protection from anyone who we named taking legal action against us ... We asked for it, we didn't get it. We were all given legal advice about the way we should conduct our evidence and we were clearly told ... if you answer Mr Garcia's questions to the best of your knowledge and ability, you will be protected under defamation. If however you volunteer information, you may not necessarily have that protection. Therefore ... I made it clear to Mr Garcia that I would answer any question that he asked me, I would not volunteer information. It was not our job to think of things that Mr Garcia should be asking us about. It was not our job to do the investigating for him. And in fact this goes to my general point about the limited powers that he has. Other people took this to a different extreme. Russia destroyed their computers. [Angel Maria] Villar Llona refused to cooperate both individually and as a [Spanish] football association - in other words, they chose not to cooperate in any way. We cooperated, we answered any question that he had ... We were very, very careful because we were given no legal guarantees whatsoever by Fifa, but it was not our job to think about areas that he might be interested in asking us about. He had lots of material to go on, he had access to all our emails, he had all our files ... so it wasn't for me to say 'Do you know what Mr Garcia, here's an area of interest-, would you be interested to know something that you might not have found already? ... That's the way we did it. We fully were open, but we were absolutely-, it was clear to all of us that because we would be giving evidence about named individuals that unless we got an absolute guarantee of confidentiality, which we

got, then we were very, very vulnerable to potential legal action. I don't have hundreds of thousands of pounds. I have a family that I am the complete breadwinner for ... and I can't afford in order to help Fifa get themselves out of a mess on a corrupt process, to expose myself to legal action. It is my duty to give factual, correct, transparent answers to any questions I am asked, which I did." He added: *"We're all trying to be as helpful as we can here in a world in which we have zero trust in Fifa. And whilst we want to be helpful, ultimately what this is is an attempt by Fifa to get itself out of a mess and I'm not going to put my family at risk by doing that."*

5.3 The FA said in a statement to The Sunday Times: *"The FA can confirm the England 2018 bid engaged with a number of parties around the world to provide general and background information on the progress of the bidding process within different countries and perspectives. These were media and corporate affairs consultants engaged on a confidential basis to gather intelligence. The fact the bid team had taken advice on intelligence gathering was referenced to Mr Garcia as part of the investigative process. The FA reiterates that it has fully complied with all disclosure requests made by Mr Garcia."*

5.4 A source close to the bid told The Sunday Times that although the England 2018 officials who were interviewed by Garcia had not volunteered their intelligence to him, an unidentified person within the FA had later told the investigator that some intelligence work had been done. The source said the encrypted database was stored on the servers of the England bid, to which Garcia had access.

6. The intelligence relating to Russia 2018

6.1 We are told that intelligence operatives surveilling the rivals of the England 2018 bid gathered significant information which sources believed suggested corruption in the Russia 2018 bid. *"We were obviously focused on Russia,"* the first England 2018 source said. The alleged corrupt activity was believed to have begun after Vladimir Putin, then the country's prime minister, took a personal interest in the running of the bid in mid-2010. The ex-MI6 source said: *"Putin was a pretty reluctant backer of Russia 2018 but it got to the point where the country faced serious humiliation. Putin does not like football. He was the prime minister and not president at the time of the bid. He was involved in the Sochi Olympics bid and turned up and lobbied people, but he was a reluctant backer of 2018. The key thing with Russia was six months before the bid, it got to the point where the country feared the humiliation of being beaten and had to do something."* He went on: *"There was a bit of a panic in mid-2010 when Putin dragged in all sorts of capabilities ... They suddenly woke up to the fact that this wasn't going well and they had to do something about it. And that's when ... the operation was cranked up into the*

operation which turned it round ... Prior to that [Vitaly] Mutko [Russia's Fifa executive committee member] had been allowed to get on with it... But thoughts of legacy kicked in. 'I can't lose the World Cup. I can't watch it happen. I've got to do something about it'."

6.2 Sources said Putin was understood to have summoned a select group of oligarchs and tasked them with doing whatever was necessary to ensure the victory of the Russia 2018 bid, including striking personal deals with voters. The ex-MI6 source said: *"What you need to remember about this is the way this was done in Russia is that nothing was written down. Don't expect me or anyone else to produce a document with Putin's signature saying please X bribe Y with this amount in this way. He's not going to do that."* He explained: *"Putin is an ex intelligence officer. Everything he does has to be deniable."* He said that the deals with voters *"would have been strategic level but not state to state because of the need for deniability. That's why the oligarchs were brought in"*. He added: *"Sochi was a complete pigs' trough in terms of corruption and the World Cup is five times as big."*

6.3 We are told that intelligence gathered from the period after Putin was understood to have taken charge of the bid highlighted a suspected trade of votes between Russia and Qatar, seemingly brokered through a major bilateral gas cooperation agreement under the auspices of Putin's deputy Igor Sechin. The ex-MI6 source said the intelligence centred on a visit by Sechin to Qatar in April 2010 to discuss joint projects to develop gas deposits on the Yamal Peninsula in the Russian Arctic. The source said: *"At the time [Sechin] visited Qatar before the bid ostensibly to discuss gas issues and particularly LNG [liquid natural gas] issues. But we always suspected and I think there were indications that there were other items on the agenda of which the World Cup was one."* He later confirmed: *"We got something from a source saying that this was significantly related to the World Cup,"* adding that his informant was: *"extremely well-placed"*.

6.4 The ex MI6 source said Sechin was selected to join the World Cup effort because he, like Mutko, was a trusted member of Putin's clique. *"Mutko, Putin and Sechin were all part of the same St Petersburg set. Mutko was quite close to Putin and had a senior job in St Petersburg in the early nineties. Trust is the rarest commodity in Russia. Putin's administration is all about a clique of people who worked with him in St Petersburg in the early nineties and who have the resources because they are running ... all these companies."*

6.5 The Sunday Times's Fifa Files reveal that in the same month Sechin visited Doha, the Russia 2018 bid delegation were also in Qatar visiting Mohamed Bin Hammam. In a letter to the Qatari the following month, Mutko wrote: *"Allow me to thank you for the*

most cordial welcome of the Russia 2018 Bid delegation in Doha this April. I was told about the friendliest and most candid discussion which you had with my Bid colleagues. I am happy that leaders of our countries enjoy very good relations. I wish Qatar Bid all the best and hope to reciprocate your remarkable hospitality in Moscow.” Bin Hammam immediately forwarded Mutko’s letter to Hassan Al-Thawadi, the chief executive of the official Qatar 2022 bid committee, by email.

6.6 The Yamal Peninsula project was jointly announced by Russia’s energy minister and his Qatari counterpart Abdullah bin Hamad al-Attiyah the week after Sechin’s visit. The Fifa Files suggest that this was not the only occasion when al-Attiyah appears to have been involved in attempting to use Qatar’s status as the world’s biggest exporter of liquid natural gas to influence the World Cup voting process. Correspondence from the Files shows that Bin Hammam personally arranged talks between al-Attiyah and a representative of Worawi Makudi, the Thai executive committee voter, to discuss relations between the Thai and Qatari football associations alongside a major liquid natural gas deal between the two countries in August 2010. In an email to al-Attiyah after the meeting, Makudi’s chief advisor Joe Sim wrote: *“My team, sincerely, would like to thank your royal highness for all your kind supports in promoting the bilateral co-operations in soccer developments and activities between the Qatari FA and the Thai FA. With your excellency granted permission, I will liaise with the CEO of Qatargas ... for a meeting to conduct all the follow up actions on the LNG [liquid natural gas] sale.”*

6.7 By April 2010, Mohamed Bin Hammam already held sway over a substantial bloc of votes on the Fifa executive committee as part of his campaign for the Qatar 2022 bid, and he was known to be willing to trade with countries in the race for the 2018 tournament. His main allies were the Thai voter Worawi Makudi and the Egyptian Hany Abu Rida. Despite a widely-acknowledged vote-swap between Qatar and Spain-Portugal’s 2018 bid, sources say the England 2018 bid had intelligence which led them to believe Bin Hammam had pledged the support of his voting bloc to Russia in the second round of the secret ballot. The first England 2018 source said: *“Spain were never going to win so the deal probably was we will get you through the first round and we will switch it to Russia.”* The ex-MI6 source said *“there were blocs of votes”* and that *“Our conclusion was that if there was collusion [between Qatar and Russia] it was done through the energy sector. Gas deals. Igor Sechin went just before the vote.”*

6.8 The Fifa Files reveal that Bin Hammam was invited to Moscow by Mutko at the end of October and start of November 2010 to meet Putin and discuss *“bilateral relations in sport”* between Russia and Qatar. Arrangements for his private jet travel show he was due to be accompanied by the Egyptian Fifa official Hany Abu Rida who was a key member of his voting bloc. While arrangements for the visit were being made, The Sunday Times published its first “World Cup votes for sale story” which raised serious

concerns about collusion between bidding countries. Emails in the Fifa Files show the Russian officials arranging Bin Hammam's visit became concerned about how it might be viewed if it became public knowledge. In an email to Bin Hammam's assistant, the Russian bid advisor Marcus Siegler wrote: "Referring to our phone conversation an hour ago I just wanted to confirm that my inquiry was only about the possible visit of Mohamed ... Therefore it has nothing to do with the Qatar bid".

6.9 Days later, on November 2, Qatar's Emir visited the Kremlin to discuss the joint projects to develop gas deposits on the Yamal Peninsula. Also under discussion was an invitation from Qatar to Russia's energy giant Gazprom to cooperate in projects to extract and produce liquefied natural gas (LNG). In letters exchanged ahead of the the meeting, published on the Kremlin website, Medvedev wrote to the Emir: *"I am very pleased to have this chance to meet and hold full-fledged talks. Russian-Qatari relations are showing steady growth and have become more dynamic and unquestionably more mutually advantageous of late. Today we will discuss our economic ties."* Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, then the gulf state's ruling Emir, replied: *"We are also interested in developing economic cooperation between Qatar and the Russian Federation. I have already had interesting meetings on this subject yesterday and today, including with the Prime Minister [Vladimir Putin], and with Gazprom CEO [Alexei] Miller."* The Fifa Files reveal that a briefing note prepared by Bin Hammam's staff ahead of the visit to Moscow had advised him: *"Most of the bid committee are former Gazprom officials. Gazprom is the largest extractor of natural gas in the world and the largest Russian company."* Gazprom is a sponsor of the Russia 2018 World Cup.

6.10 We have been told that the England bid received intelligence suggesting the Russian bid gave expensive artworks from the country's state art collection to Fifa voters in return for pledges of support. One source said: *"there was a lot of noise about the Russians raiding their archives to give art to Fifa Exco members"*. Some reports suggested that the artworks came from the vaults of the State Hermitage Museum in St Petersburg, while others suggested they were taken from the Kremlin archives.

6.11 We have been told that the database held by the England 2018 bid contained intelligence that the Russia 2018 bid had lobbied for the support of Michel Platini, the Uefa president and voter, by giving him a painting believed to have been a Picasso. The painting was believed to have been given to Platini by Viacheslav Koloskov, a former Russian executive committee member working for the 2018 bid. Both the government source and the ex-MI6 source confirmed that the intelligence had been received from well-placed informants within Russia, and the first England 2018 source confirmed it was fed into the bid's central database. The government source said he understood

there had been some indications that the painting may have come from the vaults of the State Hermitage Museum in St Petersburg, which houses numerous works by Picasso. The second England 2018 source also understood the painting to be a gift from the Russian state. *“Apparently it was Putin, yeah, who made a significant gift,” the source said. “A Picasso painting.”* Platini denied that he had received any painting from anyone associated with the Russia 2018 bid when questioned over the alleged gift by The Sunday Times.

6.12 Sources say the database also contained intelligence that Koloskov had given a valuable painting to Michel D’Hooghe, the Belgian executive committee member, in exchange for his support. The intelligence was contained in reports by private security operatives working for the England 2018 bid, sources say, and was later confirmed by D’Hooghe himself when he told bid officials over dinner that he had received a *“very nice”* painting by Koloskov which he was keeping on his landing of his home in Bruges. He was reported to have said: *“My friend Koloskov gave me this very nice painting which is on the landing.”* D’Hooghe has confirmed that he received a painting from Koloskov, but denies that it is of any value. He told The Sunday Times: *“I refused to go to the invitation of the Russian prime or vice prime minister. And then they call me. Koloskov called me. Koloskov was my colleague on the executive committee for 20 years, His wife Tatiana and my wife are close friends, born in the same month of the same year. He said if you don’t want to come to Russia, may I come to visit you in Bruges? So he was welcome. We had lunch in Bruges in a restaurant. When he left and he went to his car he gave me a package in a brown paper and said this is a present from Tatiana and me, because I leave the international scene of football, for you and your wife. I thought it was a photograph of the four of us and I would have appreciated it. I came home and there was a painting in it. I found it ugly. Absolutely ugly ... A landscape painted on hard paper ... I have a friend ... I asked him has it any value, because otherwise I would have-, and he said no, it has no value. I said to my secretary, ‘Can I give it to you? ... she said ‘Do you not have something better for me?’ So I put it on my attic with all my souvenirs of football.”* He added: *“Firstly, I never promised nothing to nobody, secondly I never voted for Russia, and third I never received fine Russian art. I hope it is still in my attic. If I hang it on the wall in my house, I think I will have a divorce.”*

6.13 Roman Abramovich, the owner of Chelsea FC, was understood by sources to be one of the oligarchs personally tasked by Putin with using his wealth and status in world football to bring the 2018 World Cup to Russia. The ex-MI6 source said: *“When Abramovich turned up in South Africa and started glad-handing people, that was a turning point.”* He added: *“Abramovich got dragged into it quite late. I don’t think he was heavily involved till mid 2010. There was a change of gear in the operation in about May*

2010.” The first England 2018 source said: *“You could never put your finger on any of the Russian stuff. They were much cleverer, it was conducted at such a high government level ... Roman [Abramovich] was absolutely integral to the Russian bid. I remember seeing him attending private meetings with Sepp Blatter in South Africa and thinking to myself we don’t do that, so we are fucked. It was after the bidders’ fair before the World Cup and just after the Fifa convention ... As it was all breaking up I saw Roman walking out of the hall with Blatter and going upstairs to some private meeting and I thought to myself: we don’t do that. Roman was very visible. Any suggestion that he paid money, I don’t know. The way he operates you’d never find out. There was a suggestion that he was using his private plane to ferry people in and out ... Roman funded the Russian football union. It was his job as oligarch. You support Russian football and you are left alone. He was the logical person to do it given his connections with Chelsea.”* A spokesman for Abramovich said that there was nothing untoward about his involvement in the Russia 2018 World Cup bid and that it was entirely natural for him to support his country’s campaign as a football lover and patron of the game.

6.14 Sources say England bid officials were informed that Sepp Blatter and Vladimir Putin jointly *“hit the phones”* to drum up votes for Russia on the eve of the secret ballot in Zurich on December 2 2010. They heard that the Fifa president was *“working very closely”* with Putin and was *“absolutely committed”* to the Russian bid.

6.15 We are told that the England 2018 bid had intelligence that two consultants Andreas Abold and Fedor Radmann, were soliciting payments in connection with the vote of Franz Beckenbauer, the then German executive committee member. Abold and Radmann are known associates of Beckenbauer. They were understood to have communicated to a number of bids that Beckenbauer’s vote would be guaranteed if they were hired as consultants for a fee of millions of pounds. The two consultants worked for the Australia 2022 bid, and intelligence received by England 2018 suggested they were also working for Russia. The first England 2018 source said the intelligence suggested Beckenbauer was: *“The most corrupt of the lot”* and was *“completely in on the Russian bid”*. He said Radmann and Abold had been touting themselves as consultants who would write the official bid books for various countries, and promising that they would deliver Beckenbauer’s vote in return for the engagement fee. The source said: *“Where [Radmann] is working is where Beckenbauer is. And you know about Andreas Abold? ... The [bid] report will cost a fraction of what the hiring fee is. That’s how the vote is procured.”* Another source said Radmann *“controlled Beckenbauer’s actions”* and had told bid officials that *“you English haven’t got a chance, you English aren’t going to play the game”*. Radmann and Abold both denied that they had offered to deliver Beckenbauer’s vote in exchange for their consultancy fees, and said he had not received any portion of the money they were paid by any bid. Beckenbauer is one of three serving members of Fifa’s executive committee who is

under investigation by Garcia over his conduct during the World Cup bidding process and is believed to be facing questions over his relationship with Radmann and Abold. His spokesman said: *“We ask for your understanding that Franz Beckenbauer is unable to make any statements or give any interviews regarding the topics “2018 and 2022 World Cup bidding”, while the proceedings are still pending”*. Beckenbauer has always denied that his vote was unduly influenced.

6.16 The Russia 2018 bid committee has always maintained that it abided by Fifa’s rules at all times during the bidding process.

7. The intelligence relating to Qatar 2022

7.1 Senior England sources say their intelligence led them to suspect that Qatar was using its sovereign wealth to secure key votes.

7.2 The Hakluyt report is understood to have identified investments made by a Qatari sovereign wealth fund into real estate companies developing holiday resorts in Thailand which were owned by Worawi Makudi, the Thai executive committee member. *“That was how they bought his vote,”* the government source said the intelligence had suggested. Makudi, who owns several real estate companies in Thailand, did not respond to questions from The Sunday Times. He is one of three serving members of Fifa’s executive committee who is under investigation by Garcia over his conduct in relation to the World Cup bidding process, and is believed to be under scrutiny over his financial relationship with Qatar.

7.3 The first England 2018 source said he had received intelligence that Qatar had done a £27m land deal with Marios Lefkaritis, the Cypriot executive committee member. A piece of land understood to have been owned by the Lefkaritis family was sold to the Qatar Investment Authority for £27m – a sum believed to have been way above its actual value – the year after the World Cup vote, his intelligence suggested. The first England 2018 source said: *“He is a fascinating guy to be looking at ... because he in the oil business and he is meant to have done a big property deal in Cyprus with the Qataris. I know who told me ... Someone who is close to Uefa.”* Lefkaritis told The Sunday Times: *“I strongly deny any suggestion that my vote for 2022 was influenced in any way whatsoever by any commercial consideration.”* He said: *“As far as the transaction mentioned in your email is concerned, please be informed that all related information is fully transparent and available for inspection through the District Land Registry in Cyprus, the Registrar of Companies in Cyprus and the Cyprus authorities in general.”*

7.4 We are told that the Hakluyt report contained intelligence suggesting that Michel Platini was under intense political pressure from the then French president Nicolas

Sarkozy to vote for Qatar because he believed it would benefit France commercially. *“He was ... under political pressure from Sarkozy. We knew he was going to vote for Qatar,”* the government source said.

7.5 The England 2018 database also contained intelligence picked up by members of the bid team about Qatar’s relationship with Fifa’s South American voters, according to sources. The first England 2018 source said it related to: *“Why the South Americans were supporting Qatar in terms of the government to government deals that had been [done].”* He went on: *“So there were two big rumours at the time. One that the Qatari government, Qatari companies whatever it might be, had agreed to underwrite the losses of the Argentinian Football Federation which had done a rights deal, a domestic rights deal, and because of the Argentinian economy there had been a shortfall. The Qataris had decided to meet that shortfall in some way. And the second one was that they had agreed to meet any deficit on the cost of the infrastructure spending in Brazil. Now, it may not be quite as broad as that. It may be one particular aspect of it, one particular stadium. But that’s the government to government level activity which is how they secured [Julio] Grondona [Argentina’s voter, now deceased] and [Ricardo] Teixeira [Brazil’s voter], both of whom were corrupt.”* Teixeira could not be reached for comment but has always denied any wrongdoing.

7.6 The fourth England 2018 source said that senior members of the team have chosen to stay silent about allegations of corruption in the Qatar 2022 campaign despite regarding the official bid committee’s claim to have no connection with the country’s disgraced football chief Mohamed Bin Hammam as an *“outright lie”*. The source said: *“The one that is unbelievable to me is that the Qatar bid have been trying to reject that Bin Hammam was ... part of the bid team. The comment, I think Hassan Al-Thawadi made that Bin Hammam was no way officially or unofficially a member of the bid team. At that point in time Andy [Anson, chief executive of England 2018] and I were chatting, I said my goodness we’ve all stayed off the record partly because there are a lot of mouthpieces out. I know for myself you don’t want to be another mouthpiece if it isn’t actually going to affect change or if it isn’t going to have the impact it needs to, which is to stop people being able to get away with this level of corruption and duplicity ... Actually when we read that comment a few months back, I said to Andy is this the time we come forward and should everyone do it at the same time? Because that is an out and out lie. Everyone working on any bid team during that two year knew that Bin Hammam-, and of course we all knew.”* However, the bid team decided to remain silent.

7.7 The Qatar 2022 bid committee has always categorically denied any wrongdoing and insists that it abided by Fifa’s rules throughout the bidding contest.

8. Evidence related to Sepp Blatter

8.1 The Hakluyt report contained an analysis of *“how [Sepp] Blatter makes his money,”* according to the government source. *“He forges alliances between Fifa and big corporates, and get richer each time a deal is done,”* the source added.

9. Intelligence about collusion between the bidding counties

9.1 England 2018’s database contained intelligence about several collusion deals between bidding countries. The decision to run the contest to host the 2018 and 2022 tournaments concurrently created the opportunity for countries bidding for either event to trade votes, but the practice was strictly banned by Fifa’s rules.

9.2 The England 2018 database contained intelligence relating to a widely acknowledged vote-trading deal between Qatar 2022 and Spain-Portugal 2018, sources say. The first England 2018 source described a note that he said had been passed from Angel Maria Villar Llona, the Spanish voter, to Bin Hammam during an executive committee meeting and intercepted by the US member Chuck Blazer. He said: *“The note outlined how many votes Qatar had got from the Spanish caucus which included the South Americans and Chuck Blazer intercepted it and they all tried to make light of it and make a joke about it. But actually it was genuine. If ever there was any evidence that Bin Hammam was working for the Qatar bid is when you are talking to your fellow Fifa Exco member about how many votes you are trading. So it was a vote trade between Qatar and Spain or Spain-Portugal as it was. It showed that there were seven votes for Qatar which were the Asians plus the South Americans ... If you are trading votes you are therefore working for the bid, right? As opposed to this thing that ‘He had nothing to do with the bid, he’s just a Qatari. Of course he supports our bid because he’s one of us but he wasn’t actively doing stuff on behalf of the bid.’ But if you are trading votes you are doing ... The deal between the Spanish caucus and the Asians, Qatar, I always felt when I heard that story it confirmed a lot of what we had heard during the World Cup. I thought they were unbeatable five or six months before the vote. It was like a comic scene. It was amateurish beyond belief. Villar Llona has written a note and it has been passed along the chain of people in the meeting. It gets to Chuck Blazer and he thinks ‘I’ll have a look at this’. Of course, he’s American so he has a vested interest in finding out what the Spanish and Qataris are up to. He opens up the note and it says ... something like ‘It’s all sorted, we’ve got this one this one and this one.’ And Blazer came out of the meeting and started telling people about it which is how it eventually got back to us. And then it was written about, it was dismissed as high jinx and laughter within the Fifa Exco but it clearly wasn’t. Clearly it was evidence of collusion.”* He added: *“I certainly remember coming away from the World Cup [in Johannesburg] and thinking the Qataris are formidable. And then when I heard that I thought ‘It’s done’. Seven votes. You are almost there to be honest. Once you have seven in the first round, you are only going to collect votes to be honest.”* Sources say

they later learned that Mohamed Bin Hammam had pledged his vote to Russia in the later rounds of the ballot after Spain had dropped out.

9.3 The England bid picked up intelligence that Michel D’Hooghe, the Belgian Fifa Exco member, traded votes with Junji Ogura, the Japanese Fifa Exco member. Under the deal, sources say D’Hooghe voted for Japan in the 2022 ballot and Ogura voted for the Holland-Belgium bid for the 2018 tournament. D’Hooghe and Ogura had not responded to questions at the time of writing.

9.4 Email exchanges in the Fifa Files suggest that Mohammed Bin Hammam had previously asked his fixer Amadou Diallo to talk to the Holland-Belgium bid about a possible collusion deal with Qatar. After meeting Christian Karembeu, the former French international football player who was employed as a special adviser to the bid, Diallo reported back that the Belgians had discussed deals with two of the 24 Fifa Exco voters. A translation from his email in French says: *“The Belgians have confirmed that which I knew already: The Belgians have offered Jacques Anouma [the Fifa Exco voter for Ivory Coast] a collaboration within the scope of security and training. For example it is expected that the first module of training for the referees and coaches will be from the 31-01 to 5-02 in Abidjan ... Oceania: The Belgians have proposed to Temarii [the Fifa Exco voter from Tahiti] through Louis Michel, former commissioner for Development at the European Union, a collaboration in the development, as Temarii has high political ambitions”*. Diallo also revealed that Holland-Belgium had offered him a success fee if the bid were to win which would have been a breach of Fifa’s rules because he was a paid assistant to one of the voters, Bin Hammam. Diallo wrote: *“In the personal case of Diallo: the Belgians have proposed to me with Karembeu a premium in case of victory but I have said to them that I must ask you permission!!! What do you say?”*. There is no record of Bin Hammam’s response. Alain Courtois, a Belgian politician who headed the Holland-Belgium, later said no deals were offered to any executive committee members of Fifa. He said Temarii did ask whether contact could be made with the European Commission over a possible joint sporting development scheme with Tahiti and Courtois said he did try and help identify possible contacts at the commission, but no meeting was arranged. He said no assistance of any kind was offered to Anouma and there was no proposed collaboration as described in the Diallo email.

10. The England bid’s collusion deal with South Korea

10.1 Two senior England 2018 sources and the FA source told The Sunday Times that England had agreed a collusion pact with the South Korea 2022 bid on the eve of the secret ballot, in a breach of Fifa’s rules. They say South Korea’s voter Dr Chung Mong-Joon was to vote for England 2018 in exchange for the vote of Geoff Thompson, England’s voter, for South Korea. Thompson therefore voted for South Korea as his first

choice to host the 2022 World Cup ahead of candidates such as American and Australia. However, Dr Chung is understood to have reneged on the pact, despite personally assuring David Cameron that he intended to vote for England in a private meeting. He is believed instead to have voted for Russia. The FA source said: *"We did a deal with the South Koreans whereby we would vote for them and they would vote for us and they then didn't vote for us."* He went on: *"I mean it tells you all about the English bid doesn't it. We even fucked up fiddling it. Even the illicit bit was a fuck up because they didn't vote for us. They knew the next day ... So David [Dein] goes up to the South Koreans and says 'Why didn't you vote for us?' and the bloke said, 'That's football'."* The first England 2018 source said that South Korea's Dr Chung had held a private meeting with David Cameron on the eve of the vote in which he had promised England his support after doing a deal with Thompson. But he said: *"Chung definitely did the dirty on us. I saw him have breakfast with Mutko. I was sat in the breakfast in the Baur au Lac watching what was going on. All of the Exco were there. Mutko and Chung went off to a discreet table at the back. Chatted. Stood up. Shook hands and went off. I thought, he's just fucked us. He's going to vote for Russia."* Geoff Thompson has declined to comment and Dr Chung had not responded to questions at the time of writing. There was no suggestion from any of our sources that David Cameron was aware that the promise of Dr Chung's vote had been secured in exchange for Thompson's.

10.2 Senior sources at the England 2018 bid said they did not consider vote swapping to be an ethics violation, and that most of the other bidders were doing it. *"I know you think that's illegal ... But it wasn't illegal. It was what everyone was trying to do. Spain did it with Qatar. Russia did it with everyone. We did it with Dr Chung but it didn't work. Russia must have done a deal with Chung because he definitely voted for them,"* a source said.

11. Conclusion

11.1 We believe that the intelligence understood to have been gathered by the England 2018 bid, some of which has been set out in this submission, should be fully investigated. We further believe that officials from the England 2018 bid should be called upon to explain fully why they have not previously provided this evidence to Parliament. They should also face questions over whether they entered into a collusion deal with South Korea in breach of Fifa's rules. We hope that your committee will take steps to ensure that these questions are answered so that the public interest in getting to the truth about the awarding of the 2018 and 2022 World Cups is served.

Note: This submission has been updated from an earlier version to reflect additional information received from sources close to the Football Association who contacted The Sunday Times latterly to say that Garcia had been told that the bid had taken advice on gathering intelligence, and that the database was stored on the servers to which he was given access as part of his investigation.

***Heidi Blake and Jonathan Calvert
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