



# THE BLAIR YEARS

Extracts from

# THE ALASTAIR CAMPBELL DIARIES

THE BLAIR YEARS is the most compelling and revealing account of contemporary politics you will ever read. Taken from Alastair Campbell's daily diaries, it charts the rise of New Labour and the tumultuous years of Tony Blair's leadership, providing the first important record of a turbulent decade in our national life.

Here are the defining events of our time, from Labour's new dawn to the war in Iraq, from the death of Diana to negotiations for peace in Northern Ireland, from Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq, through to the Hutton Inquiry of 2003, the year Campbell resigned his position at No 10. But above all here is Tony Blair up close and personal, taking the decisions that affected the lives of millions, under relentless and often hostile pressure.

Often described as the second most powerful figure in Britain, Alastair Campbell is no stranger to controversy. Hated and admired in equal measure, he was pivotal to the founding of New Labour and the sensational election victory of 1997. As Blair's press secretary, strategist and trusted confidant, Campbell spent more waking hours

alongside the Prime Minister than anyone. His diaries – at times brutally frank, often funny, always compelling – take the reader right to the heart of government.

THE BLAIR YEARS is a story of politics in the raw, of progress and setback, of reputations made and destroyed, under the relentless scrutiny of a 24-hour media. Unflinchingly told, it covers the crises and scandals, the rows and resignations, the ups and downs of Britain's hothouse politics. But amid the big events are insights and observations that make this a remarkably human portrayal of some of the most powerful people in the world.

There has never been so riveting a book about life at the very top, nor a more human book about politics, told by a man who saw it all.

Alastair Campbell was born in Keighley, Yorkshire in 1957. He worked for Tony Blair from 1994–2003, first as press secretary, then as official spokesman and director of communications and strategy. Since 2003 he has been engaged mainly in writing, public speaking and working for Leukaemia Research, where he is chairman of fund-raising. He has continued to act as an adviser to Blair and the Labour Party, including during the 2005 election campaign. He lives in North London with his partner of 25 years, Fiona Millar. They have three children: Rory, 19, Calum, 17 and Grace, 13. His interests include running, triathlon, bagpipes and Burnley Football Club.

Three years ago Alastair Campbell asked Richard Stott to help edit his diaries.

Richard Stott is an award-winning journalist who twice edited the DAILY MIRROR. He writes a political and current affairs column for the SUNDAY MIRROR.

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