

Rt. Hon. Geoffrey Hoon MP.,  
Ministry of Defence,  
Room 205,  
Old War Office Building,  
WHITEHALL,  
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9 July, 2003

Dear Geoff

Thank you for the opportunity to meet yesterday. I am sorry, in the light of subsequent events, you felt unable to be entirely frank with me.

Stephen Whittle has now finished looking at the issue of what advance warning the Today programme gave the MoD about Andrew Gilligan's story.

The position is unchanged since my last letter to you. Our team genuinely believe they outlined some details of the allegations but do not have written notes to back that up. Your team, I am sure genuinely, believe insufficient detail was given.

As you know the BBC Governors statement on Sunday evening, which received widespread and detailed public attention, acknowledged that the programmes record keeping should be better and that we could have put the allegations to Downing St. Since then I have written to you to apologise for any misunderstanding - a letter I am quite happy be put in the public domain. However as there is still a difference of view about what was said which has not been reconciled we are not prepared to broadcast an apology.

Best wishes,

Yours sincerely

Richard Sambrook

CAB) 1/0410