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CABINET OFFICE

Security & Intelligence Co-ordinator & Permanent Secretary

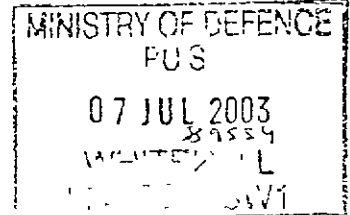
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5 July 2003

Sir Kevin Tebbit KCB CMG
Permanent Under-Secretary of State
Ministry of Defence



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ANDREW GILLIGAN AND THE SINGLE SOURCE

Thank you for your letter of Friday afternoon. I discussed the contents with Jonathan Powell, David Manning and John Scarlett that evening. We recognised that at least part of the explanation of the Gilligan story could rest on the discussion he had had with the official who has now come forward. At the appropriate point it would be incumbent upon us to inform the FAC (and the ISC) so that they were not placed in a false position. But we also noted your caveat about the need to be more certain of the facts before reaching any firm conclusion, given certain apparent discrepancies. The Prime Minister subsequently saw your letter and spoke to Jonathan Powell, and as I relayed to you, he agreed that as you had recommended no immediate action should be taken to try to correct the record with the FAC or with the BBC until we were more sure of our ground.

The Prime Minister asked for a deeper analysis of what the official has actually said, read against the account Gilligan himself has given the FAC and other statements by the BBC. You agreed to put this in hand, in the light of the record being prepared by Richard Hatfield. When we spoke later yesterday evening, we recognised that it might be necessary for the individual to be re-interviewed on Monday.

Your follow-up letter on Saturday has also been seen by the Prime Minister, who was grateful for the further information in it. He discussed the options with me on Sunday morning. I was able to pass on to him the view of the Foreign Secretary, relayed to me by the FCO Resident Clerk on Saturday evening, against any immediate action with the FAC in advance of the publication of their report on Monday (their Report is complete and some members of the Committee are now

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