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Director of Communications and Strategy

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Dear Andrew

I am writing to complain about Andrew Gilligan's irresponsible reporting of what he claims to be information from 'intelligence sources'.

As was clear from his report on the Today programme this morning, he continues to display an extraordinary ignorance about intelligence issues. He said, for example, that the Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC) is a "No. 10 committee" on which the intelligence Agencies are "represented". He should know, because this is public knowledge, that the JIC is a Cabinet Office committee. The current Chairman is a former SIS official. It brings together the Heads of the three Intelligence and Security Agencies (Secret Intelligence Service, Government Communications Headquarters and the Security Service), the Chief of Defence Intelligence and his Deputy with senior officials responsible for policy formulation from the Foreign Office, the MoD, the Home Office, the Treasury, the DTI, the Cabinet Office and representatives of other government departments and agencies. It is part of the Cabinet Office, meets each week in the Cabinet Office, and is under the authority of the Security and Intelligence Co-ordinator. To present it as anything other than the intelligence community is grossly misleading. The role and composition of the JIC would be known to anyone with an ounce of knowledge about their work. Indeed, it was set out in the WMD dossier and has been in the public domain since publication of the Government's "National Intelligence Machinery" booklet in 1993.

Andrew Gilligan also said: "The JIC is the Committee in which disputes between the intelligence services and Downing Street are mediated." This is

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