

You also say that last week's Intelligence and Security Committee report "confirms Mr. Gilligan's story was wrong." The section of the report you quote does not do so. It states that the intelligence agencies were consulted in the production of the dossier, that the "Assessments Staff" assembled it, and that the JIC endorsed it. All of this is compatible with the dossier being rewritten before publication, and compatible too with the suggestion that some people in the intelligence community were still unhappy after publication as a result of changes in the presentation of the evidence. This is what Andrew Gilligan's source told him and is what we reported. As for your assertion that you know that the source of Andrew Gilligan's information is "not a member of the JIC or directly involved in compiling the dossier" I make no comment. Suffice to say that Andrew Gilligan had discussions with senior BBC colleagues in advance of broadcasting his piece and we are happy about the robustness of his source.

You have now queried our coverage of last week's ISC report generally, referring to "a deliberate lack of clarity." As you will know this coverage was in the hands of reporters other than Andrew Gilligan and it was their conclusion that the most significant areas in the report were the comments on the February dossier rather than the September one - together with the comments about Ministers needing to be better briefed.

You raise a new issue - about communications between yourself and the Intelligence agencies. I have read a number of fairly straightforward scripts quoting Downing Street on this matter which did not repeat the detail of the Sunday Telegraph's version of events. If you feel we got something wrong I would be happy to look into the specific report which gives you concern.

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