

say that with my authority". Then the Prime Minister had to come out of the breakfast with the Polish Prime Minister; he was about to do a press conference about the Polish EU referendum campaign and, of course, the British media are all asking about this lie, which is what it was.

**Q1008 Mr Pope:** On the 45 minutes, what you have refuted up until now is the allegation that you inserted the 45 minute claim into the dossier and I am trying to make a different point which is that there is an allegation not that you inserted it but you gave it undue prominence; that this was a background piece of information; it was based on a single piece of uncorroborated intelligence advice and yet it was given undue prominence. It is mentioned in the foreword by the Prime Minister and it is mentioned three other times throughout the document and it is a chilling allegation - that our troops in Cyprus or our troops perhaps if they went into Iraq could face a 45 minute threat of the deployment of a chemical attack?

**Mr Campbell:** Well, it is true that when the BBC representative came to the Committee last week he claimed that all he had ever alleged was that we had "given it undue prominence". I am afraid that is not true. What he said last week was not true. It was a complete backtrack on what he had broadcast and written about in the *Mail on Sunday*, *The Spectator* and elsewhere. Now the reason why I feel so strongly that we, the government, from the Prime Minister down deserve an apology about this story is it has been made absolutely clear not just by me - you can put me to one side and I am well aware of the fact that I am defined in a certain way by large parts of the media, but when you put in the Prime Minister, the Foreign Secretary, the Chairman of the Joint Intelligence Committee, the Head of the Secret Intelligence Service, the Government Security and Intelligence Co-ordinator all saying emphatically "This story is not true" and the BBC defence correspondent on the basis of a single anonymous source continues to say that it is true, then I think something has gone very wrong with BBC journalism.

**Q1009 Mr Pope:** Are you saying that he lied not just to the Committee but on the radio? I have the transcript of the *Today* programme of 4 June. He said, "The reason why this story has run so as long" - and this is a direct quote - "is nobody has actually ever denied the central charge made by my source".

**Mr Campbell:** The denial was made within an hour of the lie being told on the radio. Now, I am not suggesting that he has not had somebody possibly say something to him but whatever he has been told is not true, and I think in relation to the briefing paper, when that mistake was discovered, we put our hands up and said "There is a mistake here" and we found out where it happened and we dealt with it, and I would compare and contrast with an organisation which has broadcast something - not just once but hundreds of times since - that is a lie.

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