

077 887 2883 420

Mr Gilligan: I am happy to appear before the Committee and I postponed a work trip in order to do so. I want to help the Committee as much as I can but I ask the Committee to accept that there are areas about sourcing where I will be able to add nothing to my previous evidence. Before I gave that evidence to you I carefully considered how much I could tell you about my source. I wanted to tell you as much as I possibly could and yet avoid giving any information which might betray the identity of the source with potentially serious consequences for him. If you look through my evidence you will see that I actually did tell you a fair amount, enough to allow you to make the judgment you did. What I told you on June 19, with respect, really does represent the outer limit of what I am able to say about my principal source. As I told the Chairman and, as I regret, in advance the Committee, I shall not be able to add anything more to that evidence.

Chairman: We hear you.

Q189 Ms Stuart: Mr Gilligan, I did not have the benefit of being here at the last session you gave evidence and I hope you will forgive me if I ask a more general question to allow me to understand more the process by which you put stories together and you source them. It is my understanding that it is quite acceptable for some Sunday newspapers to run more speculative stories sourced just by one, whereas when you talk about television or radio the standards are more stringent. There is a presumption that there are several sources. There is also a presumption that if accusations against government departments are made this is checked. Is that also your understanding of the way stories are put together?

Mr Gilligan: It is my understanding that the BBC does operate more rigorous standards of journalism than a Sunday tabloid and our journalism fell within those standards.

Q190 Ms Stuart: And within that you would always check back with departments information and that kind of thing?