

*Mr Gilligan:* We do not always do that but we had a position with this particular story where I did not speak directly to Downing Street about it, but that fact has been in the public domain for some time. We did, however, put the issue to the Ministry of Defence. The Ministry of Defence was clearly aware of the nature of the story and Adam Ingram, the Defence Minister, who we invited on the programme the next morning to talk about it and one other story, was clearly well briefed on it because he was able to confirm one of the charges made by my source, that the 45-minute point had come from a single uncorroborated informant. We were also careful to broadcast Downing Street's response to the story. We, in fact, gave, if you like, the defenders of the Government more time on this than we gave, if you like, the attackers, namely, my source.

**Q191 Ms Stuart:** If you were to look back at the last 12 months and the reporting in relation to you as the Defence Correspondent and the *Today* programme, would there be occasions when with hindsight you would now say that actually you were wrong?

*Mr Gilligan:* I cannot think of any. Again, this is not a question I prepared for by looking back through all the stories I have ever done. Nobody in any form of life, I think, would ever say that they were entirely infallible. I made a bad mistake on one story about three years ago which we did correct on air. The idea that we do not correct stories is wrong. When we make mistakes we correct them.

**Q192 Ms Stuart:** May I just talk about one particular story which you may recall? It was reported on the *Today* programme on Wednesday, 24 February, and it referred to RAF planes in Cyprus. You came on to the programme and said that "... (inaudible) .. almost certainly the BBC News has learned that the RAF has in fact managed to get only six fast jets ... (inaudible) ... to the region". Do you remember the broadcast?

*Mr Gilligan:* I do recall that, although not the precise detail.

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