

British Broadcasting Corporation Broadcasting House Portland Place London W1A 1AA Telephone 020 7580 4468



*Handwritten initials: A, W, O, L*

From The Chairman

8<sup>th</sup> July 2003

Rt Hon Geoffrey Hoon, MP  
Secretary of State for Defence  
Ministry of Defence  
Room 205  
Old War Office Building  
Whitehall  
London SW1A 2EU

Dear Geoff

Thank you for today's letter, which I believe you have now released to the press.

I have to say that the offer in your letter seems to be an attempt to force the BBC News Division to reveal the name or names of the source(s) used by Andrew Gilligan on Today and Susan Watts on Newsnight. You will recognise that it is a cardinal principle of good journalism that sources should never be revealed, no matter how intense the pressure may be. As Chairman of the BBC, I support this principle.

In line with this principle, I do not myself know the identity the source(s) mentioned above, so I am unable to accept your offer of confirming whether their name(s) match the person who has come forward at the Ministry of Defence.

I will be releasing this letter to the press.

Yours sincerely

*Handwritten signature of Gavyn Davies*

Gavyn Davies

cc: ~~Ps/PMS  
Personnel Director  
DCB  
BNews  
N=10 - S. Powell  
A. Campbell  
C/o office - Sir D. Owen~~

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