

MOD STATEMENT

The Foreign Affairs Committee has said that it seems most unlikely that Dr David Kelly was Andrew Gilligan's "prime" source for his allegations.

As was made clear in our statement of 8 July, the MoD does not know whether Dr Kelly is the "single" source referred to by Andrew Gilligan before the FAC.

The FAC use the phrase "prime" source. Does this mean that the FAC doubt Mr Gilligan's story? If Dr Kelly is not the source, why does the BBC not say so now? The BBC has the opportunity to clear up this issue. Their silence is suspicious. Their appeal to the principle of source protection is clearly bogus in this case, as Dr Kelly came forward voluntarily.

We also note the FAC's view that Dr Kelly has been "poorly treated" by the Government. We do not accept this. Dr Kelly came forward voluntarily with information on a matter of public interest. He has been properly treated in accordance with Departmental procedures. He has expressed no complaint to us or the FAC, who took the initiative to call him as a witness.

15 July 2003