



SECRETARY OF STATE

Copy to
PS/Minister/AF
PS/USofS
DGCC
D News
Sec/Iraq
D News CPC
Special Advisers

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
ROOM 205, OLD WAR OFFICE BUILDING
WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2EL

Telephone 020 721 82111/2/3
Fax 020 721 87140
Email defencesecretary@defence.mod.uk

MO 6/17/15H

3 July 2003

Dear Richard

I was extremely disappointed with last night's decision by the BBC to drop the interview with me from this morning's Today programme. You may be aware that I was asked on the programme to talk about reconstruction in Iraq. I agreed to do this and also asked for the opportunity to reply to the allegation that Andrew Gilligan's story of 29 May was 'checked with MOD'. I understand that, having seen the letter sent to you yesterday evening, the programme decided against an interview with me.

Your refusal to admit that this allegation is untrue is in danger of doing lasting damage to the reputation of the BBC.

I await your response.

Yours sincerely,

GEOFFREY HOON

Richard Sambrook Esq,
Director, BBC News
BBC TV Centre
Wood Lane
London
W12 7RJ

MOD/9/0017