

D:



SECRETARY OF STATE

Copy to  
PS/Minister(AF)  
PS/USoff  
DGCC  
D News  
Sec(Iraq)  
D News CPC  
Special Advisers

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

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

MO 6/17/15C

4 July 2003

Dear Mr Sambrook

Thank you for your letter of 3 July. I am not clear why you seek clarification of the allegation referred to in my letter of the same date. Our correspondence has related to one allegation only and it is highlighted again in the first paragraph of my letter. The allegation is that Andrew Gilligan's story of 29 May was 'checked with MOD.' This is not true.

You say that the BBC wants to hear my views on reconstruction in Iraq. I would welcome an opportunity to discuss this subject and to reply to the allegation that Mr Gilligan's story was 'checked with MOD'. You will be aware that, yesterday evening, the Today programme again asked to interview me about reconstruction in Iraq but withdrew the bid on learning that I would also wish to address the second point.

Yours sincerely,  
Gemma Hartman  
(Private Secretary)

GEOFFREY HOON

Approved by the Defence Secretary and signed in his absence.

MOJ/9/0020

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