

FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Informal minutes of the meeting on Thursday 17 July at 2.45 pm,
in Committee Room 16

Members present: Chairman, Mr David Chidgey, Mr Eric Illsley, Mr Andrew Mackinlay, Mr Bill Oler, Mr Greg Pope, Sir John Stanley, and Gisela Stuart

Apologies: Mr Fabian Hamilton, Mr John Maples, Mr Richard Ottaway

Sharing of evidence with the Intelligence and Security Committee

1. The Chairman reported that the Secretary of State had asked whether the Committee would agree to the provision of FCO evidence to FAC to the ISC when relevant to an inquiry being carried out by the latter, as a matter of course.
2. The Committee agreed that evidence already received in relation to the Decision to go to War in Iraq inquiry should be provided to the ISC.
3. The Committee further agreed that in general, FCO evidence to FAC should be supplied to ISC without the need for specific authorisation by FAC only if reciprocity was applied (which could be at the discretion of the Foreign Secretary); and that, in the absence of such reciprocity, authorisation should be sought by FCO on a case by case basis.

The Decision to go to War in Iraq

4. The Committee heard evidence in private from Mr Andrew Gilligan, Defence Correspondent, BBC Radio 4 *Today* programme.
5. It was agreed to publish the transcript of Mr Gilligan's oral evidence as soon as possible after the meeting.
6. After Mr Gilligan's evidence, the meeting was suspended
7. On resuming, the Committee considered on the proposal of the Chairman a draft Special Report on matters of general interest to the House and its Committees arising from Mr Gilligan's evidence. The Committee agreed the Report, with an Appendix. It further agreed that this, the First Special Report of the Committee, should be published later that evening. [HC1044]

Steve Priestley
Clerk of the Committee

23 July 2003

(corrected, 30 July—shown in bold and underline)

FAC/1/0059