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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,

Geoffrey Hoon  
(Private Secretary)

GEOFFREY HOON

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Approved by the Defence  
Secretary and signed  
in his absence.

MOJ/9/0020