

Stephen Mitchell

From: Patricia Lodge
Sent: 25 June 2003 06:25 PM
To: Stephen Mitchell & Asst
Cc: Peter Roberts
Subject: BBC response to Alastair Campbell's evidence to the Foreign Affairs Select Committee 25.6.03

FYI

BBC response to Alastair Campbell's evidence to the Foreign Affairs Select Committee 25.6.03

We do not feel the BBC has anything to apologise for. We regret that Alastair Campbell has chosen to accuse Andrew Gilligan and the BBC of lying. We have always been clear in our reporting. Our senior and credible source told us that he and others in the intelligence community were unhappy that real intelligence based on a single source was given undue prominence in the dossier of September 2002. That the dossier was transformed. Subsequently a number of other journalists have been similarly briefed. The context was one of general disquiet about the government's presentation expressed to us by other members of the intelligence community. We have reported statements from Downing Street on these matters and various Ministers have been on our programmes to discuss the issues raised. It remains unclear why the assertion that Iraqi weapons of mass destruction could be ready within 45 minutes, based on a single source, was given such prominence.

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