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the Afghan section of the World Service asking to be interviewed and he was. When British Prime Minister Tony Blair put in his call, reporter Negita Kastradie pulled a 13) Mike Wallace on him. Negita Kastradie (BBC Reporter): I said to him that Afghanistan was used as a battle ground during the cold war and that it was 14) dumped. How can people trust you this time? Interviewer: You gave the Prime Minister a hard time. Kastradie: I don't know, I hope so. Kastradie, who was born in Afghanistan has had her own share of hard times. After she fled Kabul in 1991, her mother, her little brother and her sister were killed in the war. She barely spoke a word of English when she first arrived at Bush House 10 years ago, now she's a World Service star, interviewing a new Afghan leader 15) Hamid Karzai in Tokyo. But when the BBC interviewed Karzai's predecessor, the Taliban's leader Mullah Mohammed Omar, it got scooped. He had already called the Voice of America in Washington. But the State Department stepped in and blocked the Omar interview from being broadcast, because US officials said, it would give a platform to the enemy. Terrace Setton (BBC Reporter): Can you imagine how 16) demoralizing it is for someone who gets this amazing world scoop and then isn't allowed to go on air? Interviewer: It could never happen at the BBC? Setton: No, it would never happen at the BBC. My goodness! If we would have gotten that kind of interview that early in the war with... it would have been plastered right across the BBC. And that it turns out is the most remarkable thing about the Beeb. While it is totally funded by the British government, it has never permitted the government to influence its broadcasting, not

even during the Second World War. Not even by Winston Churchill, who tried often and unsuccessfully to get the Beeb to play down British defeats. John Tuson (Director of Section): If we don't broadcast the truth about the times when we lose, when the victories come, when the tide turns they won't believe us either. So you've got to be consistent. Interviewer: Churchill called you "the enemy within". Tuson: It's quite easy to fall over into that sort of trap for being a bit holier than thou. That's why we, like Churchill and others regarded us as a pain in the ass and then they recover and recognize that it is a pain in the ass worth having in the long run.

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