

Thursday, 3 December 2009

(9.00 am)

THE CHAIRMAN: Good morning. Welcome to everybody. We have had a day's break in the hearings and it is probably worth reminding everyone what this stage of the public hearings is for.

The officials and military officers appearing before us are being asked to give an account of the way in which policy on Iraq was developed and implemented, outlining the main decisions and tasks that were faced. This will help to give us a clear understanding of the various strands of British policy development and implementation since 2001 right up to 2009.

In the New Year we will begin to take evidence from Ministers. It will be then that we will be hearing about the legal basis for military action among a number of crucial questions, but we will take the opportunity this morning to hear about your involvement in that issue.

The objectives for today are to look at how the United Kingdom's participation in the invasion of Iraq was planned, what options were considered, when the key decisions were taken and how this was linked to the wider diplomatic process.

We will also begin to explore how the United Kingdom

1 planned for after the invasion and what assumptions were  
2 made about what the United Kingdom's military role in this  
3 might be.

4 The session will cover up to the eve of the invasion  
5 and what the United Kingdom thought would happen  
6 afterwards. We will see a number of military officers  
7 directly involved in the planning, tomorrow, for their  
8 perspective on these issues, and next week, we will hear  
9 about the invasion itself from two of the commanders who  
10 led UK forces in the field, Air Chief Marshall  
11 Sir Brian Burridge and Lieutenant General Robin Brims.

12 For many, these questions are at the centre of the  
13 issues facing the Inquiry. There will be a good number  
14 of further sessions with military officers, and others,  
15 where specific questions around equipment and the  
16 preparation of the forces sent to Iraq throughout the  
17 campaign will be examined in detail, but today's session  
18 is about building a clear picture of the military  
19 planning process, how and when decisions were made and  
20 the timescales for preparation.

21 I remind all witnesses that they will later be asked  
22 to sign a transcript of their evidence to the effect  
23 that the evidence they have given is truthful, fair and  
24 accurate.

25 I wonder if I can invite you, Lord Boyce, and

1 Sir Kevin, to describe your role at the time of  
2 2001-2003.

3 LORD MICHAEL BOYCE and SIR KEVIN TEBBIT

4 LORD BOYCE: I was the Chief of Defence Staff, the professional  
5 head of the armed forces.

6 SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: I was the Permanent Secretary of the  
7 department responsible for policy advice, financing  
8 and general management of the department.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. I will turn now to the  
10 questioning. Sir Roderic?

11 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Lord Boyce, good morning. I wonder if  
12 I could start in late 2001 in the period after 9/11?  
13 That was a time when we went into Afghanistan with the  
14 United States and other coalition partners. We had  
15 military personnel attached to the US Central Command,  
16 CentCom in Tampa in Florida.

17 As far as Iraq was concerned, the policy of  
18 containment was clearly beginning to creak, it was under  
19 pressure after 9/11. It had become very unpopular in  
20 the United States. People in the United States were  
21 beginning to talk about doing Iraq next after  
22 Afghanistan, and, of course, the No Fly Zones over Iraq,  
23 north and south, which we were participating in  
24 patrolling, with American aircraft and British aircraft  
25 flying side by side, had become increasingly

1           problematic.

2           Now, at what point in this period after 9/11 did the  
3           Ministry of Defence start thinking about the  
4           contingency -- it was no more than that -- of full-scale  
5           military action against Iraq and discussing it  
6           informally with your counterparts in the United States?

7           So, Lord Boyce, I wonder if you would like to take  
8           that first?

9   LORD BOYCE: In the latter part of 2001, we had also heard  
10           the rumour that there was talk about this from the United States  
11           side, there was talk about Iraq and an effort to try to  
12           tie in somehow or other with Iraq those who had been involved  
13           in Al-Qaeda in the 9/11 bombings.

14           We absolutely did not want to get involved in such  
15           conversations. It was made very clear to the people who  
16           were there - my people, either in Tampa or in any other post - in  
17           their  
18           conversations to tell the Americans that we were not  
19           interested in discussing Iraq, and absolutely no  
20           contingency planning went on in 2001 so far as Iraq was  
21           concerned.

22           Hardly surprising, because from about October  
23           onwards, we were heavily involved in the war in  
24           Afghanistan, and in the late November/December really  
25           going at full speed trying to generate the  
          international security assistance force, which was

1 absorbing any sort of capacity we had, almost, just to  
2 get that underway. So even if we wanted to start  
3 contingency planning, we wouldn't have had the capacity  
4 to do so. But there was no contingency planning or  
5 thinking about Iraq, so far as the MoD was concerned, in  
6 2001.

7 SIR RODERIC LYNE: If we carry that forward into the first  
8 four months of 2002, and particularly after  
9 President Bush's Axis of Evil speech, was this cloud  
10 beginning to appear on the horizon? Were you beginning  
11 to have to think about it a bit more then?

12 LORD BOYCE: Yes, and, of course, Afghanistan itself was  
13 settling down, if I can use that expression, in terms of  
14 getting the ISAF mobilised and in place.

15 I suppose in the sort of spring, around sort  
16 of April time, as one was hearing more and more from the  
17 Americans about their thinking about Iraq, we were  
18 starting thinking about: what happens if they ask us  
19 what, if anything, we can do about Iraq? So I guess,  
20 with a very, very small group, there was something going  
21 on about what our capability was should we be asked  
22 to contribute from low scale, from sort of forces which were  
23 already in theatre, up to something on a larger scale  
24 and that started really around about April 2002.

25 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Yes, Sir David Manning told us the other

1 day that in early March there was in the Cabinet Office  
2 an options paper that was presented to the  
3 Prime Minister that looked at either the option of  
4 continuing with containment in some stronger form or the  
5 possibility of effecting regime change, it looked at  
6 three possible ways in which regime change could have  
7 been effected. That then was followed by his own visit  
8 to Washington then the Prime Minister's important  
9 meeting with President Bush at Crawford.

10 Could you both perhaps tell us how the MoD  
11 contributed to the options paper and the Prime  
12 Minister's briefing for Crawford, what it wanted the  
13 Prime Minister to establish from President Bush at  
14 Crawford with regard to Iraq and the military planning  
15 that you said -- "planning" may be too strong a word --  
16 was beginning to happen in a very small group at that  
17 time.

18 LORD BOYCE: Well, I don't know obviously, I haven't looked at  
19 this. I don't recall the words "regime change"  
20 appearing at that time at all, and, certainly, so far as  
21 I was concerned, the process which we believed to be  
22 absolutely fundamental was that things should be done  
23 through the United Nations and not some sort of separate  
24 coalition effort.

25 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Sir Kevin?

1 SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: Thank you. I think it is fair to say, as  
2 Lord Boyce has mentioned, there was no such thing at that stage as  
3 military planning in the MoD as such. It was clear that  
4 the State of the Union address, the Axis of Evil speech,  
5 meant that we needed to consider the possibility that  
6 the United States might look at the option of military  
7 action.

8 Of course, one appreciated this from one's own  
9 visits to Washington, and I was there in December 2001,  
10 and if one listened to people like Richard Perle, it was  
11 quite clear that there were officials in the  
12 United States from the neo-conservative, crudely  
13 described, wing, who were pushing for this, not just  
14 against Iraq, but against other countries too,  
15 the option of using military force.

16 Therefore, in the papers that were prepared for the  
17 Prime Minister's visit, we needed to consider this  
18 question. I think the line taken in the briefing was  
19 that we should not rule out the possibility that the UK  
20 may be asked to participate in military action if that  
21 was the only way of stemming the tide of WMD and  
22 proliferation and that appropriate options existed at  
23 the time.

24 I think the considerations that were put then by  
25 officials in the various papers, - as I recall it,

1 there were contributions from the Foreign Office, from  
2 the Ministry of Defence and the Cabinet Office and  
3 these were policy papers rather than military planning  
4 documents -.

5 I think the principles that were set out in those  
6 papers were very similar to the ones which persisted  
7 throughout the next year. That is to say that, were the  
8 UK to consider joining something of that kind, military  
9 action, it would need to be only after we had exhausted  
10 the UN arms' control route, only when public opinion was  
behind it and understood

12 the difficulties and dangers, only when there was  
13 a broad coalition of international support for the  
14 action, and only when there was clarity as to what would  
15 happen afterwards.

16 Those principles were pretty well set out in the  
17 documents which the Prime Minister would have seen  
18 before he went to Crawford.

19 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Did the process of briefing the Prime  
20 Minister for Crawford in meetings that the  
21 Defence Secretary would have had with the Prime  
22 Minister, with other Ministers, before Crawford, in  
23 briefing the Prime Minister before Crawford -- was the  
24 Ministry of Defence wanting the Prime Minister to  
25 extract anything specific in terms of Iraq and the



1 possible military angle from President Bush at Crawford?

2 SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: I think that would be going too far.

3 I think we were simply part of a process of underlining  
4 what we saw at the time as being a serious need for  
5 disarmament that, as it were, the containment track had  
6 indeed broken down. We knew the Americans were looking  
7 at other options and it was therefore important for us  
8 to help the Prime Minister to inform his thinking, but  
9 there were no recommendations.

10 SIR RODERIC LYNE: So if the Americans were looking at other  
11 options, we felt that they were well enough informed  
12 about that and plugged into that process since it was  
13 quite likely to involve us?

14 SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: No, that would be going too far, I think,  
15 at that stage, in terms of the official briefings.

16 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Did we want to be better informed about  
17 it?

18 SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: I think one always wants to be better  
19 informed, but these were background papers and these  
20 were, of course, not the only issues that were being  
21 prepared and discussed. There was a whole raft of  
22 issues, but I don't think one should underestimate the  
23 concern that existed in, as it were, the Pol/Mil  
24 community about proliferation, about the difficulties of  
25 containing Saddam Hussein, about his own role in that,

1 in terms of the threat to his people, the threat to the  
2 region, and, more widely, in terms of aspirations that  
3 he had. That was a concern. But there were no  
4 recommendations. I'm describing background material.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: Sir Kevin, just before coming to the  
6 questions, you used the term Pol/Mil, and for the  
7 benefit of the wider audience, can you just explain what  
8 that is?

9 SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: It is that area trying to balance  
10 political considerations and military considerations.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: Who are they, the Pol/Mil?

12 SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: I think you have already taken testimony  
13 actually from Simon Webb, who was the Policy Director of  
14 the MoD and would therefore be regarded as the Pol/Mil  
15 specialist in the Ministry of Defence.

16 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Can I just clarify in terms of this  
17 preparation for Crawford and the Ministry of Defence  
18 contribution to that preparation, were you involved in  
19 that?

20 LORD BOYCE: No.

21 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: When we were saying that we  
22 shouldn't rule out the possibility of being engaged in  
23 military action, had you been consulted on that, not  
24 ruling out a possibility?

25 LORD BOYCE: We had started thinking of what our capability

1           would be. I was not involved in the briefing of the  
2           Prime Minister just before going to Crawford.

3   SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: When the Prime Minister came back  
4           from Crawford, was this the point that a planning cell  
5           was established to take these questions of capabilities  
6           and options a little further?

7   LORD BOYCE: Yes, we started ramping up our sort of thinking  
8           on the whole subject of what we could provide. We were  
9           asked, as I said, from a relatively small-sized  
10          contribution, forces in theatre, leading up to  
11          a larger-scale sort of contribution. That thinking  
12          started in May, but, again, it was constrained to a very  
13          small group of people and it was very much in London in  
14          the MoD, it didn't actually go outside into any of the  
15          outposts, if you like, in the MoD.

16   SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: What sort of people were involved in  
17          this, were these Pol/Mil people?

18   LORD BOYCE: I can't remember who they were, but there would  
19          have been a mixture of people, like, for example, from  
20          the Policy Directors' area, but they would have been  
21          primarily, though, from the Deputy Chief of Defence  
22          Staff (Commitments) area, in other words, people  
23          who look after the high level strategic planning for the  
24          armed forces, which is largely a military staff.

25   SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: You have indicated some of the

1 options going from the rather low level to a much higher  
2 level. We had some indications of these from  
3 Sir David Manning, but perhaps you could amplify a bit  
4 on what these options were?

5 LORD BOYCE: The lower levels were based on what we had in  
6 theatre, really, which was largely special forces and  
7 some naval forces through a middle-sized option, if you  
8 like, which would be a contribution of something of the  
9 order of brigade strength up to what is technically  
10 known as a large-scale operation, which is  
11 a divisional-sized contribution.

12 One of the reasons for looking at that is to see how  
13 quickly one can react if someone was asked to do it.  
14 Clearly, generating forces in theatre doesn't  
15 take long - you are talking about days. Generating  
16 something of the order of a divisional-sized  
17 contribution, clearly would take a matter of months. So  
18 it was getting a feel for how quickly we could do  
19 something if we were asked.

20 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: What sort of criteria were developed  
21 to assess against which of these different options could  
22 be judged?

23 LORD BOYCE: I think it was, it was all part of the  
24 process, you know, about what would the Americans be  
25 looking for in terms of a size of contribution, whether

1 we could actually fill areas in which they had  
2 shortages - not shortages, but where they would benefit  
3 from having our contribution.

4 It was obviously a function of threat assessment as  
5 well, how difficult a task it might be if we were  
6 involved doing those sort of planning functions.

7 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: We just heard that you weren't  
8 directly discussing these questions with the Americans  
9 at that time.

10 LORD BOYCE: We weren't, although we had people in Tampa at  
11 this time, they were there on the Afghanistan ticket  
12 rather than the Iraq ticket, and on this the Americans were  
13 keeping outsiders very clear, because, of course, in Tampa, they  
14 had quite a large number of British people involved in  
15 the Afghanistan operation. They were keeping it very tight  
16 to themselves. Whatever planning they were doing about  
17 Iraq was not being exposed to us.

18 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Where did our ideas about what the  
19 Americans might need come from then? Were these just  
20 supposition?

21 LORD BOYCE: We were exploring a range of options, so we had  
22 something ready to answer with when and if we were  
23 asked.

24 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: What in terms of -- given the  
25 strength of American armed forces, were we aware of any

1           obvious gaps that they had in their capability? Was  
2           there a sense that they really would need us in this  
3           militarily?

4   LORD BOYCE: I think that probably, in the first instance,  
5           the scope of our thinking was probably, if the Americans want  
6           to ask US and, indeed, other potential allies, to get  
7           the effect of having multiple flags on the scene rather  
8           than just having their own, of course, if the Americans  
9           wished to do this on their own, they had more than  
10          enough capability and there is no particular area, other  
11          than possibly some intelligence reports, where we would  
12          be able to offer something which they did not have.

13                 The US size, both in terms of their make-up and  
14                 quality and quantity, was something where they wouldn't  
15                 have a gap that we would make a big difference on, other  
16                 than the fact of actually being bound in. What actually  
17                 happened on the day is a different matter, by the way,  
18                 but this was in the planning process.

19   SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Yes, we are talking about the  
20           planning process, and multiple flags basically means we  
21           are there to provide political solidarity.

22   LORD BOYCE: Absolutely.

23   SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: I think it might be helpful if I made  
24           a general broad point here, because it should not be  
25           assumed that we were looking for the military option at

1 this early stage. I think it is very important to make  
2 clear the difference between military planning and  
3 political planning.

4 For military men to provide an option, a very long  
5 planning process is required. Therefore, it is natural  
6 for the armed forces to want to understand what might be  
7 required of them as early as possible because of the  
8 difficulties of physically generating any option.

9 As you go through this Inquiry, you will find that  
10 political debates can change situations very rapidly and  
11 it is a deliberative process, a diplomatic process.  
12 A force generation process is a completely different  
13 thing, and, therefore, for colleagues like the Chief of  
14 Defence Staff here it would have been necessary to start  
15 thinking about the possibility of military options, even if one  
16 did not hope or even expect to need to use them, because  
17 if one could not begin to start thinking of capability  
18 options, they would not be there should the politicians  
19 decide to avail themselves of them at a much later date.

20 I think that general point is worth making  
21 because it is important not to feel that there was  
22 a military pressure building in the UK for things to happen. That  
23 was never the case.

24 At this early stage, and I think we are still  
25 talking about April 2002, we did not know whether the

1 Americans were going to go for a military option and, if  
2 so, which one. So this was very, very preliminary  
3 ground clearing, and even at that stage, I think the  
4 idea perhaps that there would be an internal uprising or  
5 an uprising instigated by exiles from Iraq, and that  
6 that might have been one of the obvious options, was  
7 very much in the Americans' minds as well.

8 So this was a very open-planning, ground-clearing,  
9 thinking stage.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: We have been having throughout these hearings  
11 a bit of trouble in the microphones and we have got live  
12 transcription going on. It would be a kindness if both  
13 of you could try to speak a little louder and a little  
14 slower. I would be grateful, thank you.

15 They are not only directional, but they are very  
16 distance sensitive. One needs to be at the right point.  
17 You will hear an echo if you are too close.

18 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Thanks very much. At what point  
19 then, during, say, the April to June period, did  
20 these -- the sense that maybe this was more than just  
21 thinking about possible contingencies, but might be for  
22 real, start to influence the planning?

23 LORD BOYCE: I guess it was in late June or July that the  
24 Americans -- well, in discussions that I had with  
25 General Franks and General Myers they agreed we should



1           actually come into their planning cell itself in Tampa, so we  
2           started getting better access to what it is and what sort  
3           of plans that they were developing, which would enable  
4           us to start shaping our potential contribution, again  
5           based on three options, to fit in with their overall  
6           plan.

7   SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: But before that, you didn't really  
8           have any clear sense of the sort of planning that they  
9           might do. Sir Kevin, you were going backwards and  
10          forwards to Washington presumably at this time. Did you  
11          have any discussions with your counterparts in the  
12          Pentagon about this?

13   SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: Not, I think, with the Pentagon at that  
14          point. I think some work was done in the  
15          Ministry of Defence in that closed planning group to  
16          indicate to the Defence Secretary what sort of options  
17          broadly might be possible.

18                 Those were very much against the background of the  
19                 Strategic Defence Review and the sort of options that we  
20                 said British armed forces should be able to manage  
21                 should they be required to act, in terms of how long it  
22                 would take to generate a large-scale operation, how long  
23                 it would take to generate a medium-scale operation and  
24                 what could be done with forces in place.

25                 Those three options were the natural ones that would

1 flow from the Strategic Defence Review. I think  
2 late May would have been the time when the Defence Secretary  
first heard of that sort of preliminary exercise.

4 At the same time, of course, we had  
5 just had another UN Security Council Resolution, so  
6 these were very much twin tracks.

7 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: On the question of force generation,  
8 which you have indicated is one reason why you need to  
9 get this planning started quite early on, thinking about  
10 it early on, did you get a sense from the Americans,  
11 even, say, by May, as to when they were thinking an  
12 operation might take place? Because presumably, given  
13 the long lead times you have talked about, we would have  
14 needed to start getting things moving.

15 LORD BOYCE: Obviously, our contribution would be very  
16 dependent on lead times for the reasons you have just  
17 mentioned, but I don't think -- I suppose it was in  
18 September that they first indicated that the end of the  
19 year, or January, might have been the time we would do  
20 something, and that, of course, would have constrained  
21 us from producing a large-scale contribution, because we  
22 couldn't have generated it in time.

23 SIR RODERIC LYNE: As you rightly emphasise, planning for  
24 all sorts of contingencies and eventualities is  
25 something which defence staffs have to do all the way

1 round the world, it is a core part of their functions,  
2 but at this point, where you did have people now  
3 established working with the Americans in CentCom on  
4 this issue, obviously planning was moving into  
5 a slightly different phase.

6 Sir Christopher Meyer told us the other day that in  
7 this period he had heard from a member of the  
8 administration that we were apparently planning to send  
9 more or less what we did eventually send. That is to  
10 say word had come up to Washington that we were planning  
11 to send a divisional-sized force. That was the  
12 assumptions that the Americans were beginning to make.

13 But this was at a time when our political leaders  
14 hadn't actually taken a decision to do such. Where did  
15 this American assumption come from?

16 LORD BOYCE: There was a huge reluctance by the Americans  
17 throughout the period of July through to March 17th,  
18 2003, to accept that we were not going to commit our forces unless  
19 they agreed to by a United Nations resolution unless we were fully  
20 agreed to go through the United Nations process, and, in  
21 the latter weeks, through Parliament as well. No matter  
22 how many times you said to senior American officers, and  
23 indeed to Mr Rumsfeld, that we were not committing our  
24 forces until we had been through the proper UN process,  
25 and, as I say, in the latter days, had been through

1 Parliament as well, there was a complete reluctance to  
2 believe that.

3 It was a case of, "We know you say that, but  
4 actually, come the day, you will be there", was the  
5 attitude.

6 SIR RODERIC LYNE: But you said we were looking at a number  
7 of different options, different sized packages. Why  
8 were they, right from this early stage, assuming we were  
9 going to go for the largest one?

10 LORD BOYCE: You would have to ask them that.

11 SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: That wasn't my impression, I have to say.  
12 I think we were very conscious -- I'm speaking now  
13 of May/June period into July -- I think we did sort out  
14 the basis of discussions with the American military  
15 during June and I think the initial sort of contingent  
16 planning began at the end of June/early July.

17 However, I think there was a very strong degree of  
18 caution on the UK side, because it was clear to us that,  
19 even at that stage, if one began discussions with the  
20 United States on the military track, albeit without  
21 commitment, it becomes increasingly difficult to keep  
22 options open absolutely completely, and I think we made  
23 it clear to them that our participation in those  
24 discussions was purely to inform British Government  
25 thinking, but there was a dilemma.

1           On the one hand, if one is drawn into discussion of  
2           timescales and details, we might give misleading signals  
3           of support for military action which was not present at  
4           that stage.

5           On the other hand, if we continued to stand aside,  
6           it might be too late for us to influence events or meet  
7           the political requirement which might be placed on us.  
8           That was the dilemma to which we were exposed, and that  
9           was why the movement to talk to the Americans was very  
10          carefully managed, just to avoid giving the sort of  
11          impression you are talking about.

12          I personally was not aware that that was the  
13          American impression at that stage.

14       SIR RODERIC LYNE:  Although, Sir Christopher Meyer reported  
15          this back to London, that didn't reach you?

16       SIR KEVIN TEBBIT:  I wasn't aware of it, no.

17       SIR RODERIC LYNE:  No.  Obviously your people in these  
18          discussions were in a very difficult situation for  
19          precisely the reason you give, because you can't have  
20          a meaningful discussion with your American military  
21          opposite number without the contingency, without the  
22          Americans wanting to know precisely what kind of a force  
23          contribution we might be making and, indeed, as you get  
24          further into it and you start looking at the map, where  
25          it is going to come from.  Are we going to be part of

1           what became known as the northern option or the southern  
2           option or whatever?

3           Now, in order, as you say, Sir Kevin, to make sure  
4           that we are not left out of the possibility of  
5           influencing this, we have to have something to say at  
6           that point. What we say, for the reasons that  
7           Lord Boyce gave, was always heavily caveated right up to  
8           the very last moment. So I think your representatives  
9           must have been in really a very difficult situation.

10           Where did the idea begin to arise, which it  
11           obviously did in this period, in the summer of 2002,  
12           that the British were going to lead on the northern  
13           option, or take the northern option, which means the  
14           part of the plan that at that time said "Come down from  
15           Turkey"?

16   LORD BOYCE: That was a fairly early part of the planning  
17           process, that we'd come from Turkey. We weren't going  
18           to lead it, by the way, we'd have been part of the  
19           American force, probably the American Fourth  
20           Infantry Division, and we'd have come down there with  
21           them. We wouldn't be leading a military operation, and  
22           it remained on the table --

23   SIR RODERIC LYNE: We never talked about leading it?

24   LORD BOYCE: No, and it would remain on the table right  
25           until January 2003.

1 THE CHAIRMAN: Sorry, Lord Boyce, once again, I am afraid  
2 the mic is playing up a bit. A bit further back  
3 perhaps? Thank you.

4 LORD BOYCE: So the favourite option, if you like, was that  
5 we would actually go through Turkey with the  
6 Fourth Division, and so we started planning on that  
7 basis in May and -- I guess it was September/October,  
8 starting that line of planning, but it is important to  
9 realise that when we talked to them about outline  
10 planning, high level planning, I was not allowed to  
11 speak, for example, to the Chief of Defence Logistics --  
12 I was prevented from doing that by the Secretary of  
13 State for Defence, because of the concern about it  
14 becoming public knowledge that we were planning for  
15 a military contribution which might have derailed one thought  
16 it might have stopped or be completely unhelpful in the  
17 activity going on in the United Nations to secure what  
18 subsequently turned out to be UN Security Council  
19 Resolution 1441.

20 SIR RODERIC LYNE: The northern option, was this something  
21 that was attractive to us? Was it actually our  
22 preference to do it, or was it something that the  
23 Americans very much wanted us to do?

24 LORD BOYCE: I think it was probably a bit of both really.  
25 I think that, provided Turkey agreed, it would have been

1 a sensible way of deploying our armoured division to  
2 work alongside the Fourth Infantry Division.

3 SIR RODERIC LYNE: If I can take us now through into June  
4 and July, as Sir David Manning has told us, by this  
5 time, things began to become a bit more specific. The  
6 Prime Minister was aware now that we had this discussion  
7 going on in Florida between our military representatives  
8 and the Americans, and Sir David told us that he asked  
9 for advice from the Ministry of Defence on what the  
10 options might be.

11 Can you tell us how that advice was put together,  
12 what the rationale was for the packages that were  
13 proposed to Number 10 in July of 2002, and then  
14 subsequently developed, so that, by early September, it  
15 had become a fairly concrete set of proposals, options?

16 LORD BOYCE: As I say, first of all, they couldn't be  
17 concrete, they could only be high level, because the  
18 planning team was still very small team located in  
19 the Ministry of Defence. We weren't consulting with  
20 important organisations such as the Defence Logistics  
21 Organisation.

22 Why is that important? Because if you are doing an  
23 armed operation, you are going to have to take up ships  
24 from trade to get your forces out there, you're going to  
25 have a huge amount of logistic planning and to start



1 buying in equipment, which the armed forces didn't have  
2 because they weren't funded to have ourselves the right  
3 level of preparation. So all you can be doing is high  
4 level planning and saying, "This is what we could do, if  
5 and when we get the opportunity, when we get the  
6 go-ahead to start bringing in, if you like, the  
7 Defence Logistics Organisation".

8 SIR RODERIC LYNE: At this point, where Number 10 was asking  
9 the Ministry of Defence for formal advice on what we  
10 might be able to do if we had to take part in a military  
11 action against Iraq, did you have reservations about the  
12 sort of direction that our policy was beginning to take  
13 towards a possible conflict with Iraq? What risks did  
14 you see in the advice that you were being asked to give  
15 on this?

16 LORD BOYCE: Military risks? Obviously yes in terms of  
17 Iraq's capability, are you meaning? Military  
18 capability?

19 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Military risks, risks for our security  
20 position, reservations about whether this was the right  
21 way of dealing with the threat posed by Saddam Hussein.

22 LORD BOYCE: I think that our position remained, certainly  
23 right through until March 2003, that the right way of  
24 doing it was going to be the United Nations.

25 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Did that mean continuing with

1           containment?

2   LORD BOYCE:   Containment, also getting Saddam Hussein to  
3           agree to do what 1441 had asked him.

4   SIR RODERIC LYNE:   What was the rationale behind the idea of  
5           perhaps going for a large contingent as opposed to the  
6           package 2, which was essentially air and maritime, the  
7           large contingent involving divisional-sized land forces?

8   LORD BOYCE:   We felt that the advantage of that in  
9           particular would be that we would have more influence on  
10          the American plan.   If we were producing something of a  
11          large-scale size as opposed to a small-scale or just  
12          medium-scale.

13   SIR RODERIC LYNE:   So by and large, if we were going to go  
14          in, you were in favour of going in with a larger  
15          package?

16   LORD BOYCE:   To do it properly, yes.

17   SIR RODERIC LYNE:   Sir Kevin, do you want to comment on  
18          this?

19   SIR KEVIN TEBBIT:   Back in the politico-military world, if  
20          I can call it that, in terms of policy, at that stage,  
21          I think in early July, we were equally concerned that  
22          the military planning track should not be regarded as  
23          pulling forward before we had established the right  
24          policy framework with the United States, bearing in mind  
25          the points I mentioned at the beginning, the conditions

1       which would need to be met were military action to be  
2       taken. We knew by then that the United States had  
3       intensified slightly its military planning activity,  
4       moving from vague options to looking more seriously at  
5       these things.

6           I certainly felt at that stage that there was  
7       a danger of being pulled into military planning while  
8       there was still something of a policy vacuum in terms of  
9       our perception of what the United States was actually  
10      doing. This was a very difficult period to quite  
11      understand what was going on in Washington, given the  
12      various pressures that existed and which had been  
13      described very well by people before me, including  
14      Sir David Manning.

15           But it was not clear at that point that the  
16      United States itself had a clear rationale that they had  
17      clearly explained their own public opinion, let alone  
18      our own, what the threats and the risks were, what the  
19      legal basis for any action would be and what the end  
20      state might be in terms of what would happen if military  
21      action took place in terms of successor government, in  
22      terms of relations with the Arab world at a time of  
23      tension in Middle Eastern affairs.

24           So I personally was very concerned that there should  
25      be full engagement with the policy machine in the

1 United States, if we were to be going further, as it  
2 were, on the military net.

3 That, I think, was a general feeling in London, too,  
4 and I'm only saying this really to restate the point  
5 that one should not, because you are asking about the  
6 military planning dimension, get that out of the context  
7 of the wider policy picture. I think at that point  
8 certainly I and a lot of other officials were concerned  
9 to deepen our engagement with the United States to  
10 ensure that those conditions which I mentioned at the  
11 outset were indeed seriously being pursued and that we  
12 would continue to push the United States on those,  
13 above all, the UN arms control track, but also broader  
14 planning issues rather than simply be invited to engage  
15 in more detailed military planning, albeit as  
16 a contingent activity.

17 SIR RODERIC LYNE: So in this period -- and as you say,  
18 speaking very much from a political military point of  
19 view, would you concede that the United States  
20 administration was heading more and more in the  
21 direction of seriously considering military action  
22 against Iraq, and, in considering doing so, to change  
23 the regime, which was their policy, not ours?

24 Did you have concerns about this strategic direction  
25 in which we were being taken? Did you feel that we were

1       laying down our own position, our own conditions for  
2       participation, strongly enough in this period?

3       SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: I think that that was indeed the case.

4       Remember, things were being planned very much in  
5       compartments at that stage, we are talking about July,  
6       and it was not entirely evident what was going on  
7       elsewhere. I think everybody involved did do everything  
8       they could to ensure that those conditions that I talked  
9       about were indeed being pursued, but the environment in  
10      Washington at that stage was quite difficult to  
11      influence.

12       I should say one of the factors which made it  
13      harder -- and I had been in Washington at the first Gulf  
14      War, in 1991, as the politico-military  
15      counsellor in the British embassy at that  
16      point; the big difference between then and 2002 was  
17      that the military planning track had moved to being  
18      essentially a dialogue between the Office of the  
19      Secretary of Defence, Donald Rumsfeld himself, and the  
20      CENTCOM planners in Tampa, not the Washington military  
21      establishment. The joint Chiefs of Staff had much less  
22      of a role in the US planning process and,  
23      indeed, the Inter-Agency role was much less than had been  
24      the case in the first Gulf War.

25       The system which we had got used to earlier of very

1 well-structured discussions between State Department,  
2 National Security Council, the Defense Department, the  
3 Intelligence Agencies that had happened in 1990, was not  
4 there again in 2002.

5 So the concerns I think one had were more about how  
6 one actually kept in touch properly with a comprehensive  
7 planning process in Washington and encouraged that  
8 forward than any concerns about the UK side.

9 LORD BOYCE: Just to reinforce that point, the  
10 dysfunctionality of Washington was that the lack of  
11 communication between the State, the Pentagon and the  
12 White House was actually helped by ourselves, where we  
13 had quite a joined up effort certainly the military side.  
14 At my Chiefs of Staff meetings I had very senior  
15 representatives from the Foreign Office, the agencies  
16 and, in fact, from Number 10.

17 I also found myself briefing my American counterpart  
18 on what was going on in the State, rather than him  
19 actually finding out directly. That was the only way,  
20 actually, he found out what was going on. Indeed, to  
21 pick up the other point that Sir Kevin made, he  
22 correctly says Rumsfeld attempted to deal directly with  
23 Tampa, with General Franks. So I was very often keeping  
24 General Myers informed on what was going on in the  
25 defence sector, his own defence organisation, because he

1           wasn't getting it from Rumsfeld.

2   SIR RODERIC LYNE: We put our chips on the table by  
3           signalling, albeit in a heavily caveated form, that he  
4           might be willing to take part with the Americans in  
5           action and starting to plan in a very preliminary way  
6           with them, but what you are saying effectively was that  
7           we didn't actually have much traction despite, having  
8           put the chips on the table, with the people who were  
9           leading their defence effort?

10   LORD BOYCE: We certainly had traction with General Franks  
11           at the military planning, and our advisers, you know,  
12           the British officers on General Franks's staff, were  
13           very much engaged in looking at various options about,  
14           "Should we go to Iraq, how we should actually do that?"

15   SIR RODERIC LYNE: You had a good dialogue with Franks.  
16           What about Donald Rumsfeld?

17   LORD BOYCE: If you were talking to Franks, you were talking  
18           to Rumsfeld anyway, indirectly. But we weren't  
19           engaging that much you'd have to ask Mr Hoon how often he spoke  
20           to Mr Rumsfeld. Certainly I spoke to him from time to  
21           time, but not very much, but it was more of that my  
22           interaction was largely with Franks, but he was on the  
23           phone to Rumsfeld about five times a day, so one would  
24           imagine Rumsfeld was hearing our view through Franks.

25   SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: Can I just add here, I did get the

1 impression by September that these concerns of ours were  
2 indeed getting through in Washington. There were  
3 various conversations, I recall. One was Myers, I think  
4 telling CDS that the UN route was indeed the one that  
5 the United States was now prepared to put forward and  
6 pursue more actively.

7 The Secretary of State, Geoff Hoon, I'm sure will  
8 talk for himself, but he continually emphasised to  
9 Rumsfeld the importance of pursuing the UN route and  
10 that disarmament was the UK objective, not regime  
11 change. We talked about changing the behaviour of the  
12 regime, which, by implication, may well have meant that  
13 Saddam Hussein couldn't stay in those circumstances, but  
14 it was in order to secure disarmament.

15 I think Condi Rice, said to us that US  
16 policy had been transformed by being persuaded to go  
17 down the UN route. One took these things with a certain  
18 pinch of salt, but I think there was quite a lot of  
19 evidence to suggest that we were having an impact in  
20 terms of the advice and the concerns we were expressing,  
21 in parallel with the military planning.

22 This also included, for example, the decision by  
23 the Americans to involve as many nations as possible in  
24 their efforts to persuade them, as it were, to take the  
25 multilateral route in their policy ,which was fundamental to British



1 thinking, rather than any unilateral approach. So  
2 I think we were getting through. The concerns we  
3 expressed in July were beginning to have an impact, but  
4 this was still a difficult structure in Washington to  
5 penetrate.

6 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Let's now take things forward to  
7 September, as you have done. By early September, the  
8 Ministry of Defence has worked up some quite detailed  
9 advice for Ministers on what their options are, packages  
10 1, 2 and 3, set out in quite a lot of detail.

11 Now, the Prime Minister goes to Camp David for  
12 another meeting with President Bush on 7 September and  
13 that's obviously a very important meeting. It is  
14 a meeting which, as we have been told, the Prime  
15 Minister -- well, President Bush very much at the Prime  
16 Minister's wishes, albeit obviously persuaded by his own  
17 people, decides that he is going to go down the UN  
18 route, going to go to the United Nations, support the  
19 idea of the UN Resolution or Resolutions, but at the  
20 same time it is very clear to us by then that he is  
21 under a lot of pressure from other people in Washington,  
22 including Vice-President Cheney, who, slightly to our  
23 surprise, pops up at Camp David, not to do that at all.

24 So we can see that the timetable for action is  
25 shortening, the pace is quickening, but at this stage,

1 you are still in the political vacuum that Sir Kevin  
2 referred to. You have presented options to the Prime  
3 Minister, but you have not had any clear instruction as  
4 to what we are going to do.

5 Where did that leave you? What direction at that  
6 stage were Ministers leaning towards? Did it allow you  
7 with this shortening timetable and your long lead  
8 timings, if you were going to deploy a large contingency  
9 sea force, to get on with the work that you needed to be  
10 doing at this stage?

11 LORD BOYCE: It was very frustrating, and I was not allowed  
12 to do that. Having refined our theoretical strategic  
13 planning one couldn't take the next step, which is how  
14 to start to implement it and start doing the necessary  
15 purchasing, or bringing things forward or getting people  
16 in the right sort of place.

17 This was all very much, as I said earlier on, in  
18 order not to give any signals -- to make any signals  
19 that we were doing overt military planning while the UN  
20 negotiations were going on leading up to the resolution  
21 which happened in November.

22 So my advice was that the longer that I'm held back  
23 from actually allowing, for example, the defence logistic  
24 organisation to start doing the sort of things they  
25 needed to do, long lead items, and the whole time, every

1 day I was held back from doing that was another day  
2 later on which we could actually deploy.

3 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Were you getting indications, at this  
4 stage, that the Prime Minister and the Defence Secretary  
5 favoured one of the three options?

6 LORD BOYCE: I think that by that time we were planning, if  
7 you like, for the most difficult option, we were looking  
8 now probably at the large-scale option.

9 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Rather than the package 2? Because at  
10 some stage they had favoured package 2.

11 LORD BOYCE: I think that package 2 would have disappeared  
12 as being as a favoured option in about September,  
13 because the large-scale option was obviously more  
14 difficult to prepare, so our focus was on that.

15 SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: I think I would only add that, at that  
16 stage in September, it was not entirely clear when the  
17 Americans were hoping or intending or planning to  
18 consider military action. As CDS said, we were seeking  
19 very much the arms control route in the next  
20 Security Council Resolution, but I think the point was  
21 that until about then, if the Americans were going to  
22 try to go early, we couldn't have gone with  
23 a large-scale option. By "early", I mean, by the end of  
24 2002. It just wasn't physically possible for the UK.

25 However, it was clear that US planning assumptions

1 were moving around and that may well have opened up  
2 again the large-scale option which CDS is talking about.  
3 These were discussed in the UK, as he says, by the  
4 Prime Minister and by the Defence Secretary. It was  
5 indeed decided that we would not expose the full  
6 large-scale option to the United States at that point  
7 because of concerns about the UN process, but also because,  
8 actually, lack of clarity at that point, and which  
9 persisted, as to whether the Turks would actually  
10 provide the necessary facilities for the northern option  
11 which was the one mainly under consideration.

12 There were also considerations of the fire strike.  
13 Remember, back in those days Operation Fresco, as it was  
14 called, was still a preoccupation for the  
15 Ministry of Defence, and quite significant numbers of  
16 people had to be held back against the possibility of  
17 being used for fire duties. CDS is perhaps underplaying  
18 the extent of the planning difficulties he faced in  
19 generating forces, if they were required, given the  
20 other pressures on him.

21 I think some very contingent urgent operational  
22 requirement work was authorised by the Defence Secretary  
23 at that time under CDS's pressure, because, if he  
24 needed the option, he had to do work, but those were  
25 very much ones which could be done invisibly, as it

1           were, and not in a way that would disrupt  
2           diplomatic activity. A very limited amount of  
3           preparation.

4   SIR RODERIC LYNE: I recall CDS at the time pointed out  
5           publicly that it wasn't very easy for him to deploy  
6           19,000 troops on firefighting duties if they were going  
7           to be fielded for other purposes. That obviously was  
8           a huge complication for you.

9           If there was this possibility that the Americans  
10          would go early and simply sooner than we would be able  
11          to deploy a sufficient-sized land force as part of that  
12          contribution, did they actually need us at all?

13   LORD BOYCE: As I said before, if they had chosen to go on  
14          their own, they could have done so. They had the  
15          capability and the numbers to do so, and at the early  
16          planning time, yes, they could have done it without us,  
17          but I think they very much wanted to have us there as an  
18          ally, as another flag; and, knowing the quality of our  
19          people, we could actually make a serious contribution,  
20          but if they had decided to go on their own, of course  
21          they could have done so.

22   SIR RODERIC LYNE: From our point of view, if it wasn't  
23          essential for us to deploy a land force of a size that  
24          really stretched our capabilities after the strategic  
25          defence review and with fire strikes to deal with, and

1           we had the option of making a substantial contribution  
2           through aircraft and warships, why were we so keen to  
3           send a division out there?

4   LORD BOYCE: I think it was only by having something of that  
5           particular size that we thought we would have  
6           a reasonable influence on how the Americans were going  
7           to conduct the campaign.

8   SIR RODERIC LYNE: Did we succeed in having that influence?

9   LORD BOYCE: I think we probably did to an extent.

10   SIR RODERIC LYNE: Sir Lawrence?

11   SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Can I just follow this through a bit  
12           in terms of --

13   LORD BOYCE: Can I just add, one of the reasons I think  
14           that, if I may, sorry to interrupt you know, you asked us  
15           about "Did we have any influence?", I think, you know,  
16           if the Americans were minded to go, at one time, by the  
17           end of the year, but they wanted us on board.  
18           Therefore, our protestations that we wanted to go down  
19           the UN route first and foremost, actually, if you like,  
20           did influence their behaviour. So I think we did have  
21           an impact.

22           Whereas, if we were offering a very small  
23           contribution, they probably would have just rolled past  
24           it and it wouldn't have had as much bearing.

25   SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Do you want to come in on this?

1 SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: I would only make the point I have been  
2 making throughout, really, so I apologise if it is the  
3 same old gramophone record, but this was not a narrow  
4 military issue, this was the major political issue  
5 facing the international community, and British policy,  
6 the Prime Minister's policy, was that he was satisfied  
7 that the disarmament of Saddam Hussein was the most  
8 important single thing to do at that point and that it  
9 should be done by the international community as  
10 a whole, that it should be done through arms control and  
11 disarmament, and only if that became impossible should  
12 it be done by the military force, that a build-up of  
13 military force might actually be necessary to convince  
14 Saddam Hussein that we were serious, so there was  
15 a deterrent effect as well as a force threat in doing  
16 what we were doing, that we were very insistent on wide  
17 coalition participation. We were not talking about just  
18 the UK going with the United States. Remember, the  
19 actual planning that was authorised contingently  
20 in June, included the Australians as well, authorised by  
21 the United States, I mean, and other countries joined in  
22 various ways as the process gathered momentum in the  
23 period that you are going to come to.

24 So this was very much a view, I think, that the  
25 Prime Minister and government had, that this was a vital

1 problem for international security that should be dealt  
2 with by the international community as a whole and,  
3 therefore, that Britain should have a full part in it  
4 and that also informed the idea of a large-scale ground  
5 force component.

6 Now, when you mentioned, Sir Roderic, the Strategic  
7 Defence Review, you almost implied it was a limitation.  
8 Actually, that was the general conceptual framework  
9 which would involve a large-scale deployment of the kind  
10 that we finally did indeed send.

11 The problem was, I think, that because of other  
12 commitments, we did not have the full readiness levels  
13 in September, say, to be able to easily generate that,  
14 and this was the big challenge that the Chief of Defence  
15 Staff faced. But the broader context was the one I was  
16 trying to put across. This was not a narrow activity, therefore it  
was

18 very valid for us to seek to make a significant  
19 contribution because it was a contribution, as it were,  
20 to international stability ...

21 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Can we just try to pinpoint this  
22 influence and going back to the things that we have  
23 heard, possibly our peak influence was in the summer of  
24 2002, encouraging President Bush to move to the  
25 Security Council to set in motion the negotiations which



1 led to Resolution 1441. But at that stage, we hadn't  
2 announced -- or made it clear or did anything overt  
3 about having this very large force. So at this moment  
4 of peak influence, that was not the critical factor the  
5 size of our force. Is that fair?

6 SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: I recall that the Parliamentary debate on  
7 the issues surrounding Iraq took place on 25 September.  
8 This was when, I think, British public  
9 opinion, Parliamentary opinion, was beginning to be  
10 engaged and, remember, the dossier was published, the  
11 infamous dossier, on 24 September.

12 So I think by that stage, there was a much more  
13 general sense of these large-scale contributions.

15 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: I am not sure that is actually true,  
16 is it, that a decision had been made on the size of the  
17 force --

18 SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: I'm not suggesting a decision had been  
19 made. I'm suggesting that these were the planning  
20 issues that were being considered.

21 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: By that time, by the end  
22 of September, the President made his commitment, and  
23 then, is it not the case, as we move into October, that  
24 it actually, for the reasons that Lord Boyce has given,  
25 becomes more difficult to take a decision to commit to

1 a large-scale force, precisely because we are into these  
2 negotiations in the Security Council and the  
3 Prime Minister does not want it to appear that we are  
4 directing military discussions. Is that fair?

5 LORD BOYCE: Yes.

6 SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: I'm sorry, I should correct myself. I'm  
7 not sure if I gave the wrong impression. I was talking  
8 about within the UK, why we should consider  
9 a large-scale contribution. I wasn't talking about  
10 publicly announcing one. That was a different point.

11 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: So we are talking about within  
12 government there is a discussion going on about this,  
13 but there is no decision reached in September or October  
14 that this is necessarily the way that we should go.

15 What were the other reasons? Was it only because of  
16 the political perceptions -- the political signals that  
17 the government didn't want to give, the problems of the  
18 firemen's strike and stretch? Were there other reasons  
19 why there might have been reluctance to do more than  
20 option 2, than package 2?

21 SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: Well, I think, the first reason in  
22 addition to what we have said, was the lack of clarity  
23 of the overall plans still at that point. I think the  
24 Chiefs of Staff were very assiduous throughout this  
25 period of always asking whether, in the discussions with

1 the United States, contingent discussions, I repeat, the  
2 US had "a winning concept".

3 I think that was a consideration which the Chiefs of  
4 Staff kept in mind throughout the period. So one point  
5 was that unless and until the Chiefs of Staff were  
6 satisfied there was a winning concept -- and remember,  
7 we were talking about aftermath or the day after as well  
8 as the actual operation itself -- then obviously there  
9 was a reservation.

10 There was also a reservation because we did not  
11 have, at that stage, clarity -- in fact, we never got  
12 it -- as to the Turkish attitude to a plan involving us  
13 in the north.

14 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: I want to come on to that in  
15 a moment. What about cost? Is that a factor or did you  
16 believe that you would have the money to do whatever was  
17 necessary?

18 SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: This is one of my crosses as  
19 Permanent Secretary. I should say two things very  
20 quickly. There was never any suggestion throughout the  
21 operation, planning or conducting it, that the Treasury  
22 was withholding the necessary funding to achieve the  
23 mission.

24 The problem was a different one, which was  
25 withholding the necessary funding to actually fund the

1 MOD as a whole in the normal budgetary planning process.  
2 So there were two very separate issues, but at no stage  
3 did the Treasury deny or withhold funding for this  
4 particular operation. The problem was a more basic one  
5 about the defence budget as a whole.

6 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: So you were allowed to do the  
7 operation, but you had to find the money from your own  
8 resources?

9 SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: Not at all, the money was provided as  
10 additional to the defence budget. It was just the  
11 defence budget itself was too small, but, you know,  
12 I find it difficult to be saying this, but at no stage  
13 did the Chancellor of the Exchequer withhold the  
14 resources necessary to carry out the operation.

15 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: I'm sure that will be fully  
16 reported.

17 Can you say something a bit more about this question  
18 of influence as a factor in British military planning?  
19 Because, is it assumed that if we had just gone for the  
20 package 2, which would have not been a trivial thing,  
21 which would have been quite a substantial commitment by  
22 the UK, that that would not have brought influence?

23 After all, the Australians didn't provide that much,  
24 but they seem to have got a certain amount of influence  
25 and kudos with the Americans from what they did. We're

1 a different sort of power to the Australians, but is  
2 there a direct relationship between the size of force  
3 and the amount of influence?

4 LORD BOYCE: I am not sure the Australians did have any  
5 influence. They certainly got a lot of kudos from the  
6 Americans and they were very grateful for their  
7 contribution. I don't think they were as heavily  
8 involved in the planning process as we were.

9 Also -- although you might say the final outcome  
10 didn't indicate it -- we had quite a lot of influence  
11 with regards to what was called Phase 4, all the  
12 aftermath planning as well, as a result of the size of  
13 our contribution.

14 Another aspect of our contribution, of course, is  
15 that, having something on a large-scale size would allow  
16 us, as it actually happened, to take over a region of  
17 the country rather than being integrated with the  
18 American force in the aftermath process, which is how we  
19 finished up with southeastern Iraq.

20 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: But at the moment -- I want to come  
21 on to that in a second -- we are still looking at the  
22 north.

23 SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: Can I just add there, if I may,  
24 Sir Lawrence, I think we learned in 1990, again with  
25 Desert Storm, that unless and until one had, as it were,

1 to use the crude term, boots on the ground, one did not  
2 have serious influence on American planning.

3 In 1990, we learned that, once we committed  
4 ourselves to a ground force contribution, the planning  
5 process opened completely to us and we were able to  
6 influence it, and that experience, I think, still  
7 influenced the way we thought in the run-up to this  
8 operation, that unless and until we had ground force  
9 commitments, we did not have the inside track on  
10 planning or influence on the day after or the general  
11 conduct of affairs, including, of course, holding the  
12 Americans to a multilateral track and holding them to  
13 exhausting the arms control route and trying to deal  
14 with this through disarmament.

15 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Is it fair to say that throughout  
16 this period -- we are now well into 2002, coming to the  
17 end of it -- that Downing Street was reluctant to  
18 authorise the full planning for the large package?

19 LORD BOYCE: The authorisation for the full package came  
20 once the United Nations Security Council had been passed  
21 in November, mid November. Once that process had  
22 finished and culminated in the successful achievement of  
23 that resolution, then we  
24 were able to go totally overt and get on with starting  
25 implementing the planning.

1 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: That was going overt on the planning  
2 even just in terms of choosing between particular  
3 options. My understanding from the documents would be  
4 that Downing Street's view was that you should certainly  
5 plan and keep the large-scale option in place, talk  
6 about it, but that there was no particular decision in  
7 favour of that as opposed to option 2.

8 Is that fair? Sir Kevin is nodding.

9 SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: I think that's correct.

10 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Thank you. Can I just ask again  
11 a process question? When did the Chiefs of Staff start  
12 to discuss this? Because you indicated to start with,  
13 it was a very tightly held cell. When was this issue  
14 discussed with the full Chiefs of Staff for the first  
15 time?

16 LORD BOYCE: Going into Iraq?

17 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Yes.

18 LORD BOYCE: Right from the very start. The individual  
19 Chiefs of Staff were engaged in this, but only a very  
20 small team outside the actual Chiefs of Staff  
21 themselves.

22 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Was this discussed at the Chiefs of  
23 Staff Committee?

24 LORD BOYCE: I can't remember when it was on the agenda of  
25 the Chiefs of Staff's Committee. It would probably have

1           been in May/June.

2   SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: I have had a privilege of looking at  
3           all the documents on the Falklands. So I have read  
4           Chiefs of Staff's Committee meetings before, and one  
5           becomes aware of different services having different  
6           views on the nature of military operations and the role  
7           that they would like to play in them.

8           Were the chiefs of one mind on this potential  
9           operation or were there different emphases amongst the  
10          chiefs?

11   LORD BOYCE: I don't think anyone was, for example,  
12          suggesting we should only have an air contribution or  
13          only have a naval contribution. It was seen as being  
14          a contribution of land, air and maritime.

15   SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: With the large army option, the  
16          option 3, the divisional option, what was the view of  
17          the army of this? Were they reluctant to be taking on  
18          yet another commitment or were they nervous about being  
19          left out what may be the most important military  
20          campaign of the period?

21   LORD BOYCE: I don't recall there being any reluctance from  
22          the Chief of General Staff notwithstanding the problems  
23          we had with the other two services, by the way, in  
24          delivering the fire-fighting requirement. There were,  
25          of course, sailors and airmen also involved, but I don't



1 recall the Chief General Staff being reluctant to get on  
2 and plan for his contribution to the large-scale effort.

3 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Because it had been the opposite, he  
4 was indeed quite enthusiastic?

5 LORD BOYCE: No, I think it was just a professional  
6 judgment. This was an option which he could deliver.

7 SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: As Permanent Secretary, I attended Chiefs  
8 of Staff meetings. At no stage, frankly, did I feel  
9 that there was an effort, as it were, by the military  
10 establishment to drive the agenda. The only issue was,  
11 as CDS said, that if politicians wanted certain options,  
12 you had to have enough time to prepare for them,  
13 otherwise they wouldn't be there. That was the only  
14 pressure. There was never an ambition on the military  
15 side to actually do more than was appropriate to support  
16 a possible operation. Whether that was the case in the  
17 United States, I can't say.

18 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: So this leads us in, I think, to the  
19 question of the north option, as it were, and its  
20 viability. The idea of coming through Turkey seems to  
21 have been around from quite early on in the process.

22 Where did the idea come from? Was it a suggestion  
23 by the Americans or was it coming from us looking at the  
24 map and thinking, "This is where we would like to go  
25 from"?

1 LORD BOYCE: It was, to a certain extent, American-driven,  
2 but there is a NATO plan to go through Turkey, a dormant  
3 plan, if you like, so I think there was something  
4 already in being which could be dusted off and reshaped  
5 to deal with this particular operation. So, as I said,  
6 the thing was already there from what existed already  
7 in NATO planning.

8 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Could you give us just some  
9 indication of how thinking on the northern option then  
10 developed from quite an early stage in the spring  
11 through the year? What was the American view of the  
12 northern option? Because in the end, of course --

13 LORD BOYCE: The American view, held right until March 20,  
14 was that they wanted the country taking, and it was from the north  
but  
15 we were in total doubt about whether or not Turkey was  
16 going to provide permission to do this, right through  
17 until, finally, I recommended to the Secretary of State  
18 that we should stop trying to get through Turkey, which  
19 was about, actually, the end of the year, in December.  
20 In fact, we were sailing some ships not knowing whether  
21 they'd turn left or turn right when they got into the  
22 Mediterranean.

23 We kept on hoping that Turkey would allow this  
24 option to be allowed to happen, and as far as the Americans  
25 are concerned, as you know, the Fourth Infantry Division

1           was held poised on Turkey right until after the war  
2           actually started - which led, in fact, to the  
3           contribution on March 20 being significantly more by the  
4           UK than America ever envisaged. In fact, crucial to the  
5           start of the war on 20 March. Because the  
6           Fourth Infantry Division had not been allowed to go  
7           through Turkey and then had to be redeployed to come  
8           through the south, which took some weeks.

9   SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: The alternative to the northern  
10           option was the southern option, which was the one we  
11           eventually took. Why were we not just looking at that  
12           during the course of 2002? Was this seriously weighed  
13           as an alternative?

14   LORD BOYCE: We were focused on our contribution which was through the  
15           north. There was, of course, a southern component of  
16           the battle plan, and, of course, we actually executed  
17           part of that ourselves in terms of our amphibious  
18           assault on the Al Faw peninsula. That was in the early  
19           part. So there was always going to be something  
20           happening in the south. It wasn't just going to be  
21           exclusively something done from the north.

22   SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: What were the reasons why the  
23           military advice appeared to be to stressing the north  
24           rather than the south, because this was clearly an  
25           option? Sir Kevin?

1 SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: Are you talking about the UK forces or  
2 the coalition?

3 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: No, from the UK forces.

4 SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: I don't think there was a particular  
5 UK dimension to that, unless -- I mean, it was the case  
6 obviously that this was a very sensitive area in  
7 relation to the Kurds and the Turks and the notion of  
8 fixing, as it were, Saddam's forces moving north and  
9 preventing a humanitarian disaster, which would have  
10 happened if Saddam Hussein had moved his troops into the  
11 Kurdish area again. That was something which the UK had  
12 particular concerns about. I can't recall it informing  
13 as it were, military planning directly, but it was  
14 something which, at the political level, we recognised  
15 very actively.

16 The second point, I think, was that we had been  
17 flying the northern No Fly Zone. Now, we have not talked  
18 about the problems of the No Fly Zones, although there  
19 was a strong military dimension, but in the build-up to  
20 these issues, - the loss of containment, if you will, - there was an  
increased  
21 threat of being shot down, as we flew over the  
22 No Fly Zones, as Saddam Hussein got more clever in the  
23 way he disposed his anti-aircraft capabilities,  
24 so we had an interest there; and, of course, one  
25 was very alive to the fact that the northern oil fields

1 were very vulnerable.

2 Now, of course, there have been some people who have  
3 argued that oil was at the bottom of it all. That was  
4 completely untrue, but it was very clear in planning  
5 that it was important to secure the oil fields both in  
6 the north and in the south, very early on, to prevent  
7 Saddam Hussein firing them and causing an environmental  
8 and a humanitarian disaster, but also to preserve the  
9 resources necessary for rebuilding Iraq afterwards.

10 So there were very strong reasons for a force to, as  
11 it were, fix the north, and strong reasons, therefore,  
12 for the UK to regard that as an appropriate role for us  
13 to help with.

14 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Go through those sort of same issues  
15 with the south. Clearly, the southern No Fly Zone had  
16 been more difficult than the northern No Fly Zone, far  
17 more anti-aircraft activity and politically more  
18 controversial. So part of what you were saying, just to  
19 clarify, is that we were more comfortable operating in  
20 the north than in the south?

21 LORD BOYCE: I think that's correct and it's also true that we  
22 felt we would be more compatible with the  
23 Fourth Infantry Division than with the other American  
24 divisions. So the mix would be better with that  
25 commitment as well.

1 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Clearly there were oil fields in the  
2 south as well as the north. So that factor wouldn't  
3 have been so appropriate.

4 Were there other reasons, more negative, why we were  
5 concerned about going through the south?

6 LORD BOYCE: I think we were concerned about the fact it is  
7 a relatively small area in which to actually insert,  
8 and, of course it obviously, it depends hugely on the  
9 host nation support. The same for Turkey too, for  
10 that matter, which, of course -- Kuwait would only gain  
11 when the time came, but Kuwait is a relatively small  
12 state in which to insert a couple of divisions of armour  
13 and infantry.

14 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: What were the differences in force  
15 generation terms? You said, looking at the documents  
16 from the end of -- late 2002, there is a sort of concern  
17 that it is going to take us much longer to get to the  
18 south. Was that the view -- do you have a recollection  
19 of that view?

20 LORD BOYCE: The force we would have to deploy in the same  
21 way; in other words, by sea, but it would obviously be  
22 quicker to go through the eastern Mediterranean than all  
23 the way round through the Gulf.

24 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Just to conclude, with the -- let me  
25 clarify again on the discussions with the Americans on

1           these different options.

2           The Americans presumably were aware of the potential  
3           problems -- they were real problems, they didn't seem to  
4           be able to make up their mind. So were we concerned  
5           that we had to develop another option? When did we  
6           start looking at the south as an alternative?

7   LORD BOYCE: I guess the latter part of 2002. Certainly we  
8           were developing a southern option and talking over  
9           threats, you know, "If we can't get Turkey, what shall  
10          we do instead?", and that process was starting  
11          in December, at least in December 2002.

12   SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Which was quite late in the day as  
13          things turned out.

14   LORD BOYCE: Yes.

15   SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: I mean, I think the issue of, "Could we  
16          go in through Turkey or not?", was going backwards and  
17          forwards for some time. There was lack of clarity for  
18          quite a long while, mainly because the Turks had had an  
19          election and it wasn't at all clear how the new  
20          Turkish Government would behave and their Parliamentary  
21          processes were just coming into place.

22          So I think during December, as I recall it, the  
23          Chiefs of Staff began looking at, more actively, the  
24          southern option, but it wasn't until early January that  
25          it was absolutely blocked off for us, because I remember

1 visiting Ankara with the Secretary of State for Defence,  
2 with Geoff Hoon to make one final effort to clarify what  
3 was going on, because, of course, it was vital for the  
4 United States as well. They needed rights there, and  
5 even if we were not going to put land forces there, we  
6 needed overflight rights for aircraft and supplies in  
7 any case. So there was a coalition requirement as well.

8 But I think during the course of late November  
9 into December, it became increasingly difficult to rely  
10 on the northern option, and, by the end of December,  
11 I think CDS said he'd decided that he needed to plan for  
12 the other option.

13 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Thank you.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: I think we are heading towards a break, but,  
15 before I do, can I ask my other colleagues if they would  
16 like to ask a question.

17 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: Could I ask a question? Thank you,  
18 Chairman.

19 Sir Kevin, you said earlier that you were trying to  
20 deepen your engagement to influence the United States,  
21 but they were difficult to influence because the States  
22 were rather dysfunctional in terms of laying down your  
23 conditions and so on. But during that process of your  
24 political engagement on policy matters, did you realise  
25 that the USA had taken the conditions laid down,



1 something that was desirable but not essential, and that  
2 they had taken our commitment for granted? Because we  
3 heard from Sir Christopher Meyer that they were hearing  
4 the "yes", but not the "buts". Was that your  
5 understanding when you were engaging with them?

6 SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: Two things, if I may. I think the first  
7 reason certainly for me going in to see them in July was  
8 to be absolutely clear whether they were determined  
9 to proceed on a military track. It was not clear at  
10 that point.

11 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: It wasn't inevitable?

12 SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: "Inevitable" is the wrong word, but until  
13 then, I don't think we were absolutely clear what the  
14 Americans intended to do and how serious they were about  
15 planning for a military operation. That was one of the  
16 reasons for going, to try to satisfy my own mind.  
17 I think at that stage there were others going in there,  
18 too, for the same purpose.

19 The second was, again one has to understand that  
20 there were different groups at work in Washington, with  
21 different views. I think if you were to talk to the  
22 State Department, as I did, to Armitage, he would have  
23 said, "Your conditions are absolutely right. Thank  
24 goodness you have brought them forward. We will help  
25 work with them. You have our full support. Thank you

1 for helping us". I think that was the view of the  
2 State Department right through.

3 I think to the neo-conservatives, who had a great  
4 deal of idealism on their side, they felt that this was  
5 not necessary. They felt that there was  
6 already authority through UN Security Council  
7 Resolution 687 for military action should Saddam fail to  
8 comply. They believed he was not complying. They  
9 believed that he would continue to deceive the arms  
10 control inspectors whatever we did with the new  
11 resolution and that this was not necessary, and that  
12 actually Iraq would fall quite easily because they were  
13 listening very carefully to the exiles, to Mr Chalabi,  
14 to Allawi, who, in their judgment, were indicating that  
15 so long as Saddam Hussein were removed then a flowering  
16 of democracy would occur in Iraq and the exiles would  
17 return and be able to take over government without undue  
18 difficulty.

19 They had a deep faith in the natural democratic  
20 nature of man, which perhaps proved to be a little  
21 over-optimistic.

22 Then there was a third group, perhaps, who felt that  
23 the military act was quite straightforward and one  
24 shouldn't agonise too much over it, and that US vital  
25 interests were so deeply engaged, that was the

1 overriding consideration.

2 I would just reinforce what people  
3 have said earlier in this Inquiry, that the effect of  
4 9/11 was absolutely massive on the American people,  
5 absolutely fundamental. It was worse than Pearl Harbour  
6 in a way, and they felt that never again would they  
7 watch a dictator build up a military capability with  
8 weapons of mass destruction and be able to choose the  
9 timing and the nature of an attack. This was the  
10 pre-emption philosophy, and the American thinking at  
11 that stage was that this was such an overriding concern  
12 they were not prepared to sit back and allow it to  
13 happen. They would take action beforehand.

14 That stream of thinking was very, very strong, so we  
15 were competing with three rather different views:  
16 a rather simplistic military approach, on the one hand;  
17 a deeply ingrained view about the need for pre-emption  
18 and the fact that things had been allowed to go on for  
19 too long already, and that one needed to act militarily;  
20 and the third one was very much in line with our own  
21 views about the importance of exhausting the arms  
22 control track, achieving disarmament through  
23 negotiation, multilateral approaches, and a very clear  
24 view about the effort that would be required after the  
25 invasion to rebuild Iraq. So, in July, one was right in

1 the middle of these issues, and I think the British view  
2 was that we had the opportunity to shape thinking in  
3 Washington in a positive, multilateral direction, and  
4 that we felt that we were making some progress but not  
5 complete progress.

6 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: But my understanding is that we were  
7 sceptical about the role the dissidents would play, we  
8 were more concerned about the aftermath, and against the  
9 background, we were sceptical about the approach and  
10 that they would be trying to influence and lay  
11 conditions.

12 Do you think we concentrated too much on influencing  
13 and not negotiating hard on the conditions?

14 SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: I think that's very difficult to answer.  
15 I think you have heard from others and it could only be  
16 a personal view. I think you have to also -- one also  
17 has to build into the mix the view that certainly,  
18 I think, the Prime Minister felt that, you know, this  
19 was the right thing to do. It wasn't simply a question  
20 of -- certainly there wasn't a question of poodling to  
21 the Americans, but that the importance of disarmament  
22 was paramount, and if it meant one had to take military  
23 action, then so be it, albeit with the conditions which  
24 we imposed.

25 It is very easy to say, with the benefit of

1 hindsight, "Well, perhaps we should have pushed harder".  
2 I certainly didn't have the impression that we weren't  
3 pushing hard. We all were pushing as hard as we could  
4 all the way through.

5 LORD BOYCE: I think, if I may, Chairman, there are two  
6 particular questions I have left hanging. I want to  
7 re-emphasise the efforts we made to try and tell the  
8 Americans that we were not committed until the  
9 UN process had been completed, and then, later on  
10 in March, until the Parliamentary process had gone, and  
11 we must remember that, in context in which we were  
12 operating, we had behind us, if you like, an alliance in  
13 Afghanistan, and the fact that we were working with  
14 American forces in Kosovo and as far back as the first war  
15 in Iraq in the early 1990s; and, as I said earlier on,  
16 when we said, "We will go through the planning, but we  
17 are not committed until we are committed", the shutters  
18 came down. They just did not believe it, because they  
19 did not want to and it wasn't really until about March that  
20 Rumsfeld finally got it, and Myers got it, and he had  
21 that outburst saying, "If you don't want to come, we  
22 will do it on our own", if you recall, and indeed,  
23 having got it, that's when they realised the truth and they'd  
24 only got the Parliamentary aspect of it, you know,  
25 would Parliament approve or not, with Myers was sitting on

1 a phone, with me at the other end of it, waiting for the  
2 outcome of the vote in Parliament on, whenever it was,  
3 17 March. So that's one important point.

4 The other point on influence and aftermath, I had  
5 numerous numbers of meetings with very senior people  
6 in the Pentagon, meaningful people, where we were trying  
7 to stress the importance of actually getting the right  
8 sort of planning in to Phase 4 for the aftermath, and  
9 where, by the way, they had discarded the  
10 State Department's advice, and indeed people, in the  
11 early part of 2003, and I could not get across to them  
12 the fact that this would not be seen that the  
13 coalition would not be seen as a liberation force where  
14 flowers would be stuck at the end of rifles and  
15 that they would be welcomed and it would all be lovely.

16 When I said, "This is not going to happen. There  
17 may be six hours of euphoria, but not much after that",  
18 this was absolutely not accepted, and I think, as far as  
19 the Pentagon was concerned, both the civilians in the  
20 Pentagon and the uniforms, they just thought that Iraq  
21 would be fine on the day, that, having knocked  
22 Saddam Hussein down, that the place suddenly the  
23 following day would be a lovely democracy and everybody  
24 would be happy. It was one of the reasons why they were so  
25 terribly under-resourced in boots on the ground after

1 the victory was achieved.

2 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

3 SIR MARTIN GILBERT: I have a question arising from that.

4 As a result of the UK's expected contribution, from the  
5 United States' perspective, and their knowledge of our  
6 planning, despite the conditions, was there a point in  
7 time before 17 March at which they could not in fact go  
8 it alone?

9 LORD BOYCE: Yes. Well, yes on the day of 20 March.

10 Because of the Turkish situation, the Fourth Infantry  
11 Division was held up in the north, and, on 20 March,  
12 when we finally went to war, by that time our air effort  
13 was totally integrated with that of the American forces.

14 So to have suddenly withdrawn, at that stage, would  
15 have absolutely definitely required a major reshaping of  
16 the air battle plan which was not trivial. I mean, it  
17 would have been a very huge task and would have taken  
18 many days.

19 When we went into Iraq, on 20 March, we had a third  
20 of the armoured power of the invasion force, without  
21 which the Americans could not have invaded on 20 March,  
22 in my opinion, not if they had taken seriously, which  
23 they did the theoretical threat that the Iraqi divisions  
24 posed.

25 So, yes, they could have gone on their own, but it

1 would have taken some time before the Fourth Infantry  
2 Division came down. They would have had to delayed some  
3 days, if not weeks, before they had been ready to go on  
4 their own. They could not have gone on 20 March, is my  
5 very firm view.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: I think that's a good moment to break. We  
7 will break for about ten minutes. So I ask those in the  
8 room, if you do go out, please come back in ten minutes,  
9 because then we will have to shut the door and that will  
10 be it for the rest of the morning?

11 Thank you very much.

12 (10.30 am)

13 (Short break)

14 (10.49 am)

15 THE CHAIRMAN: Can I begin with an apology both to our  
16 witnesses and those in the room. The microphone  
17 problems, we hope they have been somewhat mitigated, but  
18 we will just have to do our best and struggle on, I am  
19 afraid. Thank you for your indulgence.

20 Resuming the questioning, then, Sir Roderic?

21 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Lord Boyce, I would like to take us up  
22 now to the situation, essentially the outbreak of the  
23 military campaign, on 20 March 2003.

24 We had ended up deploying a very large force,  
25 stretching ourselves, as we noted earlier, quite close



1 to our limits and we had had to assemble, equip and  
2 deploy this force in a much shorter timescale than the  
3 Chiefs of Staff would have wished or had originally said  
4 was the minimum necessary period. So that was quite an  
5 achievement.

6 We had also had to make a late change of plan, from  
7 planning to come in from the north to the southern  
8 option, which we have discussed at some length, and as  
9 a result of this, it was all a bit of a rush.

10 For example, I understand that Seventh Brigade  
11 didn't reach full operating capability until 19 March,  
12 the day before things actually started to happen.

13 What were the consequences for us of having to act  
14 in this rush? Were, for example, the command and  
15 control arrangements fully in place? Had they been  
16 fully coordinated with the American commanders? Were  
17 our own commanders entirely clear on their role, on what  
18 they were being asked to do? Had there been time for  
19 our forces to train properly? Had there been time for  
20 them to acclimatise? Were they fully equipped?

21 We have had, as you know, I'm sure, a number of  
22 meetings with families of people who died in the  
23 conflict and some of them have expressed very strong  
24 concerns about equipment; for example, about body  
25 armour. Did our units have sufficient ammunition? Did

1       they have the right boots? Had they, in general, been  
2       given what in MoD parlance I think is called, UORs, the  
3       urgent operational requirements? Had they been given  
4       the modifications that they required to operate in  
5       desert conditions?

6       LORD BOYCE: First of all, in terms of preparation and  
7       readiness in the sort of command and control sense, it  
8       is important to realise that a couple of events happened  
9       in 2001, which significantly helped towards people's  
10      readiness. We had, I think, an exercise called  
11      "Exercise Saif Sareea", which was an exercise conducted  
12      in Oman early on in 2001 before September, which had  
13      given excellent battle training to a large force, which  
14      actually was a desert operation in Oman a desert  
15      exercise in Oman, which involved air and naval units as  
16      well.

17      Secondly, in December of 2002, we had in 2002,  
18      taken part in an exercise which was called "Internal  
19      Look" in Qatar. It was a full-scale sort of  
20      Command Headquarters rehearsal, if you like, where the  
21      Prime Minister said that he was happy for us to go along  
22      and take part in that exercise - again without saying  
23      that we would finally be committed to actually taking  
24      part in an operation in due course - but, by having  
25      actually done that exercise, working alongside the

1 Americans, we had our command and control sorted out and  
2 rehearsed as late as December.

3 The other aspect which you mentioned about, "What  
4 effect did the late change in plan have, as regards to  
5 our preparedness?", one of the conditions - perhaps too  
6 strong a word, but one of the conditions about our  
7 shifting from north to south was that the Americans  
8 pulled out all the stops to help us in the logistics  
9 sense, and in a number of other ways as well, which  
10 would have been difficult for us to drive up to speed,  
11 to get up to the full capability that we would have  
12 liked on our own.

13 So part of the deal, if you like, of coming south  
14 was that the Americans gave us a lot of support that  
15 otherwise we would have had to do ourselves. So I felt  
16 pretty confident in terms of our battle readiness in the  
17 command and control sense, and also, to a large  
18 extent because the lessons that came out Saif Sareea were  
19 enormously helpful in giving us an understanding of what  
20 we should actually be ready for, in terms of a desert  
21 campaign, tied together with the lessons we had learned  
22 from the first Iraq war back in the 1990s.

23 Insofar as the preparedness of the forces, the  
24 British forces, were concerned with the invasion, first  
25 of all, so far as the Air Force were concerned, they had

1           been involved in No Fly Zone operations and had been  
2           doing a lot of operational work for years. So I was  
3           pretty confident about them.

4           The amphibious force was in place as early  
5           as January and reached operational capability  
6           in February, and I was pretty confident about that,  
7           because they were taking on the south-east corner of the  
8           campaign, if you like, on the Al Faw peninsula.

9           So far as the armoured division was concerned, you  
10          are right, they didn't reach full operational capability  
11          until March, but, as I say, because of Saif Sareea,  
12          because of the lessons we had learned from that, because  
13          of what we had done in Internal Look, when they actually  
14          did achieve that full operational capability in March,  
15          I was pretty confident that they were actually ready, in  
16          terms of understanding what they had to do, the job that  
17          lay ahead of them.

18          In terms of equipment, you are absolutely right that  
19          the late stage at which I was finally given authority to  
20          start mobilising the Logistics Organisation to get the  
21          equipment delivered that we needed left us with some  
22          very short timelines, but the force readiness those units which  
23          were going to the front of the front line on 20 March,  
24          I am confident were properly equipped.

25   SIR RODERIC LYNE: Right down to the sort of details

1 I mentioned --

2 LORD BOYCE: Yes --

3 SIR RODERIC LYNE: -- like body armour, boots and so on?

4 LORD BOYCE: -- I'm not familiar with the detail of things

5 such as body armour. The unfortunate thing about going

6 to war is that some people are going to get killed.

7 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Had they also had time to train in the

8 right conditions?

9 LORD BOYCE: As I have mentioned, they had had Saif Sareea

10 anyway, and so there was --

11 SIR RODERIC LYNE: But not necessarily the people who were

12 actually there would have taken part in those

13 operations.

14 LORD BOYCE: I don't know what the numbers were of who had

15 done Saif Sareea, who were actually deployed in Kuwait

16 in 2003.

17 SIR RODERIC LYNE: If I can put it another way, if, in ideal

18 conditions, you were preparing for an operation like

19 this, would you have deployed the land force sooner to

20 give it more time to train on the ground or to

21 acclimatise or to make sure that it had all the right

22 equipment in the right places?

23 LORD BOYCE: My advice was that they had had sufficient time

24 to make themselves ready.

25 SIR RODERIC LYNE: And the equipment was in the right

1 places?

2 LORD BOYCE: Yes.

3 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Sir Kevin, do you want to comment on  
4 this?

5 SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: Perhaps I could. In addition to what CDS  
6 has said -- and I keep referring to him as "CDS" because  
7 we spent quite an intensive time together in 2002 and  
8 2003 -- the process of generating operational  
9 requirements was one which attracted the highest level  
10 of attention in the Ministry of Defence, by which I mean  
11 we put in place a system of tracking the progress of  
12 these 250 different programmes weekly, and this was  
13 overseen by the Minister for Defence Procurement,  
14 Lord Bach, and he personally would chase this through  
15 with these weekly reports, in conjunction with the  
16 Vice-Chief of Defence Staff. So we did put in place  
17 a rigorous system to ensure that these orders  
18 to industry came through.

19 It was indeed a very complex and complicated process  
20 because it was a question of getting them from industry,  
21 getting them into the UK end, as it were, modifying some  
22 in the UK, sometimes having to send them out to theatre,  
23 training the necessary forces and managing a very  
24 complex supply chain.

25 So as far as those 250 urgent operational

1 requirements were concerned, they were actually  
2 basically all completed in time. Some of them were for  
3 follow-on forces which did not need actually to be fitted  
4 and fully trained on day one. A proportion of them  
5 were, as it were, for the later stages, the so-called  
6 day after activities, which helped in a sense in  
7 timescales.

8 Turning to individual items, I have to say the  
9 press almost treated it like a sport, trying to find  
10 reasons for criticism; but enhanced combat body armour  
11 was an issue, and just to give you an illustration, for  
12 example, in the weekly urgent operational requirement  
13 update on 28 February we knew that 25,000 had been  
14 delivered, with deliveries rising to 14,000 a week,  
15 basically we then had something like a target of 33,000.

16 The problem of things like enhanced combat body  
17 armour was that, ultimately, these were judgments made  
18 by the commanders in the field as to what they needed in  
19 order to have full operational capability.

20 They had the role, because only they could finally  
21 judge, as to whether what actually got through to their  
22 forces on the ground was sufficient for them to claim  
23 that they had that capability. It was a bottom-up set  
24 of decision-making which enabled the military commanders  
25 in the end to say they were ready.

1           So on the one hand, there was a very serious  
2           top-down approach, and it was necessary, because not  
3           everything that was said to be there was there. So we  
4           had to keep chasing this through. At the other end, at  
5           the field commander level, there was a judgment as to  
6           what he needed to actually get his troops fully in  
7           position.

8           I recall the biggest difficulty we had with these  
9           issues was actually our NBC protection, nuclear,  
10          biological and chemical protection. We found  
11          some of the equipment was outdated, with expiry dates  
12          and that sort of thing, and we had to put a lot of work  
13          in making sure we got that into place sufficiently.

14          So I mean, I wouldn't want to give the impression  
15          that this was not a very intensive process. It was  
16          indeed, and at the end of the day there was a colour  
17          coding system, red, amber, green and until all the force  
18          commanders on the ground felt that they were green, they  
19          did not have full operational capability and would not  
20          be in a position to signal they were ready to start.  
21          They all did signal that they were ready.

22   SIR RODERIC LYNE: So you are saying it was for the  
23          commanders in the field to decide what they needed.

24          They said that they were ready.

25   SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: Yes, priorities were allocated according



1 to the requirements in theatre.

2 SIR RODERIC LYNE: When they were debriefed after they  
3 completed their tours of duty, were they still saying  
4 that they had had the right equipment at the right time  
5 in the right places?

6 SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: The impression I had was that, overall,  
7 that was the case. That doesn't mean to say there  
8 weren't individual cases where people said they hadn't.

9 I think the biggest problem we had was with the  
10 tracking systems to actually ensure we knew exactly what  
11 was where, when; and that consignments that were sent  
12 actually arrived in time to be fielded properly. That  
13 system was not fully effective.

14 The speed and the volumes involved were massive.  
15 I think the best way of expressing it is that we got the  
16 same amount of equipment into the same theatre as we had  
17 in Desert Storm in 1990 in half the time. So this was  
18 a massive effort and I can't say that everything was  
19 absolutely perfect. It obviously wasn't. But my sense  
20 was -- and I have read some reports since then -- that  
21 selectively you will find complaints and problems, but  
22 overall the force was properly equipped.

23 SIR RODERIC LYNE: So selectively or individually some  
24 complaints and problems. Overall, properly equipped.  
25 Some problems with the tracking systems.

1           Now, did the problems with the tracking systems  
2           mean, for example, that there were types of equipment  
3           that we knew we had in theatre but we couldn't find or  
4           that were not in the same place as the personnel who  
5           needed them? Did that happen at all?

6   SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: I think it must have happened on  
7           occasions, yes. The volumes were extremely high. As  
8           I say, the amount of equipment that went through was  
9           absolutely enormous in a relatively short space of time.  
10          That doesn't mean to say that the troops were not  
11          properly equipped to deliver their missions.

12   SIR RODERIC LYNE: This obviously was an extremely large  
13          operation conducted at much shorter notice than you  
14          wished, so one would not have expected it, perhaps, to  
15          be as good as the picture which you have just given us,  
16          which is a picture in which, overall, you say it worked  
17          extremely well.

18          As you know, one of the main objectives of this  
19          Inquiry is to see what lessons need to be learnt from  
20          Iraq. Did you draw the conclusion from this, both of  
21          you, that our systems had worked in the way that they  
22          were intended to work without any significant problems?

23   SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: No, because there already had been  
24          extensive public hearings about logistics issues arising  
25          from the operation in the House of Commons Defence

1           Committee, in the Public Accounts Committee. So it is  
2           a matter of public record which perhaps we needn't go  
3           over in detail here.

4   SIR RODERIC LYNE: We have read it, but I think it is useful  
5           to embrace it in the record of this. We are being asked  
6           to look right across the board at the eight-year period.

7   SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: My point is only that I haven't refreshed  
8           my memory in complete detail on all of those issues,  
9           but, of course, lessons were learned and our asset  
10          tracking system was not up to the task of coping with  
11          the volume and the variety and the speed in an ideal  
12          world.

13                As I say, that is not the same as saying that the  
14          military commanders did not have all they needed to have  
15          full operational capability. You will, I know, be  
16          taking evidence from the military commanders. So it  
17          will be up to them to give their own views. I think  
18          another calculation, of course, is: how long do you hold  
19          troops in order to ensure that they are absolutely ready  
20          for an operation? It is a combination of a number of  
21          factors which I'm not professionally equipped to judge.  
22          All I would say is that, as the weather gets hotter, as  
23          people trained get stale and need to be retrained, there  
24          are other factors that come into play, as well as the  
25          equipment issues. So it is a matter of judging an

1 all-round readiness state for armed forces, but, as  
2 I say, I'm not a professional expert.

3 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Lord Boyce, looking at another of the  
4 areas in which maybe we need to learn some lessons, did  
5 you feel, as Chief of Defence Staff, that you had the  
6 right form of two-way communication with the political  
7 leadership in this country, with the  
8 Secretary of State for Defence, and, above all, with the  
9 Prime Minister?

10 Did you feel throughout this period that you were  
11 fully and appropriately consulted by the Prime Minister,  
12 that he was open to your advice and listening to it,  
13 that you were given a clear definition of what our  
14 political leaders were asking the forces under your  
15 command to do and that you were given clear decisions  
16 when you needed them?

17 LORD BOYCE: Yes, I was very happy about that. I saw the  
18 Defence Secretary, not only daily, but more often than  
19 daily, certainly as the tension was building up, and,  
20 likewise, the Prime Minister I saw frequently and we  
21 always had a totally open conversation.

22 My job was to present him with what the military  
23 capability was, what was within our capacity to do. He  
24 always listened very carefully, as did the Secretary of  
25 State, and I always felt that he took on board what

1 advice I was giving him. I never felt that I was being  
2 excluded from any particular consultations, as far as  
3 the military end of the operation as far as the military aspect  
4 of the whole issue was.

5 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Within these frank conversations, were  
6 there times when you had to express serious reservations  
7 or warnings to the Prime Minister about the course we  
8 were heading down?

9 LORD BOYCE: I would certainly, on a number of occasions,  
10 have expressed views about, for example, the holding up  
11 decisions to get reserves mobilised, the decision to go  
12 overt or to start allowing the preparations to be made,  
13 and whatever other problems as I saw them, as they came  
14 up, you know, which we would then go about solving.

15 I certainly never had any hesitation in making those  
16 known, and, indeed, was taken aside from time to time to  
17 say, "Can't we make it more of a half-full rather than  
18 a half-empty assessment?", but my view was what I had to  
19 do was provide as realistic an appraisal as possible,  
20 which was what I was being asked to do and I never felt  
21 I was being shut out from doing that.

22 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Lord Butler's report --

23 LORD BOYCE: Not by the Ministry anyway.

24 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Lord Butler's report took issue with the  
25 style of what was called "sofa government", I think,

1           which meant that formal processes of decision-making  
2           were not always being used in this period.

3           Did that bother you, or did you think the Whitehall  
4           decision-making was working well?

5   LORD BOYCE: That was not my problem. I had the ear of the  
6           Prime Minister, the Foreign Secretary and the  
7           Defence Secretary, whether it was on the sofa or whether  
8           it was in the Cabinet room, and I never had a problem  
9           with my communication line. Whether it was a correct  
10          way to do things or not is a matter for somebody else.  
11          As far as getting my point across was concerned, I was  
12          achieving that.

13   SIR RODERIC LYNE: Sir Kevin, did you feel that the  
14          coordination of policy in Whitehall in this period  
15          2002-2003 leading up to this very important decision  
16          worked as well as it should have done from your long  
17          experience of public service in different departments?

18   SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: Thank you. I thought that within the  
19          Ministry of Defence it worked extremely well. I was  
20          concerned that the so-called UK inter - agency process  
21          should work better. I certainly discussed this with  
22          Sir David Manning in September and discussed the  
23          machinery that might be brought into play to manage, as  
24          it were, the wider aspects of UK planning and we --  
25          I recall discussing it with him and the outcome of that

1 was, indeed -- he probably was going to do it anyway --  
2 a Committee structure where there would be an inner  
3 group, as it were, of Ministers, as well as the Cabinet.  
4 There would be what we called the DOPC, the Overseas  
5 Policy Committee, at official level, meeting regularly,  
6 bringing in the various departmental interests,  
7 Foreign Office, Development, Home Office, to some  
8 extent, the Cabinet Office, as well as ourselves and the  
9 intelligence agencies, and also a smaller group dealing  
10 essentially with the more delicate intelligence  
11 dimension which was running.

12 These seemed to me to be working pretty well, but  
13 I was concerned to make sure that they were in place.  
14 I think it was quite difficult for us to ensure that  
15 other government departments were as aware as they  
16 needed to be about their possible role, particularly in  
17 the day after arrangements and that was my main concern.

18 Of course, that concern did continue. The  
19 Foreign Office finally did go into the lead and created  
20 an Iraq Planning Unit, a policy unit, which helped  
21 matters considerably, but I think there was always  
22 a certain concern to get all the departmental interests  
23 fully behind the policy, including the way in which aid  
24 was to be used.

25 LORD BOYCE: Can I just add to that, that in addition something

1 I said earlier on, but I think it is actually quite  
2 important; and that is, in terms of transparency, about  
3 what the military were thinking, is that at my Chiefs of  
4 Staff Committee - which, as, again, the situation built  
5 up was meeting more and more often - sitting at my  
6 table, in addition, obviously, to the Chiefs of Staff,  
7 were very senior representatives of the Foreign Office,  
8 Number 10, Sir David himself would come along, and also  
9 the intelligence agencies and DFID and the Home Office  
10 where appropriate.

11 So the transparency of what the military were doing  
12 was being heard at first hand by representatives of  
13 those different departments, so they could actually take  
14 back to their departments exactly what we were doing,  
15 and, of course, they would input into my meeting  
16 whatever their thinking was at the time, whether it was  
17 the Foreign Office or the agencies or whatever the case  
18 may be.

19 SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: I was going to add that point because it  
20 was a very important way of making sure people  
21 understood the tempo of planning.

22 I think the only other thing I would say about these  
23 issues is that I think by Christmas -- the end of  
24 2002- when it is becoming clear that the  
25 northern option wasn't going to work and we might take



1 a much bigger role in the south, and, therefore, the  
2 stakes for the UK would be greater, at that stage it  
3 wasn't entirely clear whether we were going to achieve  
4 all of our conditions. Things had moved by that stage  
5 to, you know, the issue of the second UN Security  
6 Council Resolution.

7 I certainly discussed these issues very fully with  
8 the Secretary of State for Defence as to whether this  
9 was indeed the right point to take broader stock of  
10 where we were going and make absolutely certain that the  
11 government was satisfied with the course. Not to say  
12 that I wasn't, it is just that I felt it was quite  
13 important for Ministers to be absolutely clear that  
14 planning had moved on very rapidly in the United States  
15 at that stage and we needed to be clear what the  
16 prospects might be.

17 I believe there was a discussion with Ministers in  
18 the middle of January, which I think was very important  
19 in that context.

20 SIR RODERIC LYNE: I know that both that and the aftermath  
21 planning are issues which Sir Lawrence Freedman would  
22 like to discuss in a little more detail in a minute, but  
23 can I just ask, perhaps, a couple of final questions?

24 Lord Boyce, you said at the outset that all the way  
25 through, our policy was geared to going through the

1 United Nations and it was geared, of course, to the  
2 disarmament of Iraq, and that was right up to March of  
3 2003. But in the end, we were in a situation in which  
4 we went into this conflict without the approval of  
5 a second United Nations Security Council Resolution, the  
6 situation Sir Jeremy Greenstock described as being of  
7 questionable legitimacy, albeit he made the distinction  
8 with legality.

9 That certainly wasn't the scenario that you had  
10 envisaged right along this track, as you described. Did  
11 you have concerns at that point about the situation,  
12 that you found yourself in, as Chief of the Defence  
13 Staff and that our forces were being put into? At what  
14 point along this track did you feel that we had passed  
15 a point of no return?

16 LORD BOYCE: Obviously, the propriety and/or the legality of  
17 what we were about to do was obviously a concern of  
18 mine, not least of it, since, somewhat against my better  
19 instincts, we had signed up to the ICC. I always made  
20 it perfectly clear to the Prime Minister face-to-face,  
21 and, indeed, to the Cabinet, that if we were invited to  
22 go into Iraq, we had to have a good legal basis for  
23 doing so, which obviously a second resolution would have  
24 completely nailed.

25 When did I think that we were committed? I think

1 I don't know, I can't remember when it was - about the  
2 11th or so of March, when it became clear that we were  
3 not going to achieve a second resolution, because  
4 I think it was one of the countries, maybe France, who  
5 said, "Whatever is put on the table, we're going to say  
6 no to". I felt that that was at a time we were actually  
7 going to be committed to military action.

8 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Had we not already, long before then, got  
9 ourselves so hooked on to an American policy that we  
10 couldn't have unhooked ourselves?

11 LORD BOYCE: I was absolutely prepared to unhook ourselves.  
12 As I said to you earlier on, up until 17 March and the  
13 decision taken, you know, the debate in Parliament,  
14 which was to say whether or not we should get engaged.  
15 I was perfectly prepared to give an order saying, "We  
16 will not go further. We will stop where we are".

17 SIR RODERIC LYNE: So you could have had your forces  
18 deployed out there but you would have said, "They are  
19 not going to cross the start line".

20 LORD BOYCE: Absolutely.

21 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Would that not have been very  
22 humiliating?

23 LORD BOYCE: We are a democracy. If Parliament said we were  
24 not to engage, we would not engage.

25 SIR RODERIC LYNE: What would it have done for our relations

1 with the United States, including our very important  
2 military relationship with the United States?

3 LORD BOYCE: Pure speculation.

4 SIR RODERIC LYNE: It must have been a matter of your  
5 calculations, surely?

6 LORD BOYCE: As I said earlier on, we kept on saying to the  
7 Americans all the way through that there were provisos  
8 about our commitment, and, towards the end, one of those  
9 provisos was that Mr Blair was going to put this to  
10 a full Parliament.

11 They understood absolutely that if Parliament had  
12 said no, we would not be going, and what contingency  
13 planning they were doing, if that were to happen, I have  
14 absolutely no idea.

15 SIR RODERIC LYNE: What would your view on that be,  
16 Sir Kevin?

17 SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: Sorry, on?

18 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Did we have the option of pulling out  
19 in March, late March, 17 March? What would have been  
20 the consequences for this country, for the matters you  
21 put talked about earlier, our relationship with the  
22 United States, our standing in the world, if we had at  
23 that point said, "We are deployed, but we are not going  
24 to cross the start line"?

25 SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: I think it would have depended on the

1 circumstances in which we decided we couldn't go  
2 forward, and I think those circumstances were not  
3 absolutely clear right until the last minute. I think  
4 we made it very clear how important we regarded the UN  
5 framework.

6 I put it that way because it wasn't necessarily  
7 a second Security Council Resolution in all  
8 circumstances. We wanted one if we could  
9 possibly get one, and if we couldn't get one, the  
10 reasons for failure had to have been clearly  
11 unreasonable behaviour by other members of the  
12 Security Council rather than a lack of general support,  
13 but I think -- I think it was, you know, very clear  
14 by January, that sort of time, that we had to recognise  
15 that, if we were not to go to war, then there could be,  
16 in certain circumstances, serious damage to the  
17 bilateral relationship, not just because of the  
18 bilateral relationship, but because of the multilateral  
19 approach to solving international problems as opposed to  
20 unilateral approaches, and that did seem an important  
21 consideration., but these were views which I'm sure all  
22 the individuals may have held, and they may have held  
23 different ones. But the decision was to go forward, for,  
24 reasons which were very clear to the  
25 government and they did proceed.

1           But right up until the end, as CDS said, we were  
2 making it clear to the Americans how important the  
3 UN framework was and how absolutely vital the Houses of  
4 Parliament vote was and the Parliamentary position was,  
5 and that these were indeed vital steps for us to go  
6 through before we could join, finally, the operation.

7           So in fact, it was not agreed until right at the  
8 end, even though there would be serious consequences of  
9 not proceeding.

10 SIR RODERIC LYNE: You said earlier that the Prime Minister  
11 felt that it was the right thing to do and he said that  
12 many times himself in public.

13           Do you feel that the relationship with the  
14 United States was of such overriding importance from  
15 a politico-military point of view that we more or less  
16 had to stick with the United States, right or wrong,  
17 through this exercise?

18 SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: I don't think that would be a fair way of  
19 putting it. I think that the question was how we could  
20 influence events and play our role in international  
21 management and the aftermath of this particular event,  
22 and I think there was a judgment there, as to whether it  
23 was better to actually continue to do that side by side  
24 with the United States or whether to watch them go on by  
25 themselves and face the consequences internationally of

1           that happening.

2   SIR RODERIC LYNE: Now, with the luxury of hindsight,  
3           looking back on it, do you feel that that was the  
4           correct judgment, that the benefits of going along with  
5           the United States outweighed the drawbacks?

6   SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: I wouldn't put it in that narrow context,  
7           I think it was much more a question of the importance of  
8           the issue itself and the overall question of  
9           proliferation. This was the absolutely vital issue at  
10          the centre of it all.

11           I might say -- I was looking at my own notes and  
12          found that I had gone to Washington in November and  
13          couldn't see very much about Iraq there. In fact,  
14          I recall now that I went there for another proliferation  
15          reason which was very, very engaging, very important,  
16          very vital. I can't talk about it here, but the point  
17          is that these questions of weapons of mass destruction  
18          and proliferation were right at the top of the  
19          international agenda. So that was the overriding  
20          concern that was involved here.

21           Working very closely with the United States, that is  
22          my background. I mean, I have spent much of my career  
23          doing so. So clearly I was the sort of person to talk  
24          about the importance of these things. But in terms of  
25          the final decisions, I don't think they were absolutely

1           decisive. I think the decisions were taken because the  
2           Prime Minister believed this was the right thing to do  
3           in terms of his own interests and his own influence on  
4           events.

5   SIR RODERIC LYNE: Thank you.

6   THE CHAIRMAN: Just before we move on to Sir Lawrence's  
7           lines of questioning, turning to the legal issue, you  
8           asked for, and got, a certificate from the  
9           Attorney General that it was lawful to go forward. It  
10          is in the nature of legal opinions that is they tend to  
11          be complex, they tend to be caveated, there tend to be  
12          arguments, but you needed a black and white certificate,  
13          you asked for it, and you got it. That was it?

14   LORD BOYCE: Yes, and that wasn't new it was something which  
15          I had told the Prime Minister that I would need at the  
16          end of the day, long before March. This is back  
17          in January when we started to commit our forces out  
18          there, and, as you say, I received that assurance this was an  
19          important issue particularly because of the speculation in  
20          the press about the legality or otherwise and, as far as  
21          I was concerned particularly for, my constituency, in other words,  
my  
22          soldier, sailors and airmen and their families had to be  
23          told that what they were doing was legal. So it formed  
24          the first line of my Operational Directive which  
25          I signed on 20 March, and it was important for me just



1 to have a one-liner, because that was what was required,  
2 as far as I was concerned, from the government Law  
3 Officer, which, as you say, I received.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Sir Lawrence?

5 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Just following on that question  
6 quickly, Sir Kevin, what was your view on the importance  
7 of the legal side? Lord Boyce has indicated that this  
8 was not a sudden last-minute issue. When did it enter  
9 your thinking as being important?

10 SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: I recall writing to the Cabinet Secretary  
11 in early March saying that, at that stage, it wasn't  
12 possible to be precise about exactly what scenario might  
13 arise, because, at that stage, we didn't know how the  
14 second UN Security Council Resolution would go, you  
15 know, whether it would fail to get the votes necessary,  
16 whether it would be vetoed but would otherwise have  
17 succeeded, whether there would be no vote, whether we  
18 would get a successful second vote.

19 It wasn't clear at that point, when I wrote, what  
20 the outcome would be, but I felt that things were coming  
21 to a head sufficiently for me to register the  
22 point, as CDS has sort of made, that we would need  
23 a ministerial meeting which had the essential engagement  
24 of the Attorney General -- I think I described that as  
25 being crucial -- through which CDS received his legal

1 and constitutional authority.

2 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: What was the Cabinet Secretary's  
3 response?

4 SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: I assume he was going to do it anyway,  
5 but, anyway, it happened.

6 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Can I go back a bit into the  
7 decision-making? You mentioned, Sir Kevin, that there  
8 were meetings in mid-January, where these issues were  
9 thrashed out. The Secretary of State for Defence  
10 announced to Parliament on 20 January that we were  
11 sending land forces. So when, before that, was the  
12 actual decision taken to send land forces before Mr Hoon  
13 announced it?

14 SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: I think -- I'm trying to recall back from  
15 my reading of the papers. I think we were looking at  
16 early January in terms of -- I think the policy  
17 objectives the government had were set out to Parliament  
18 on 7 January, which made it clear that the prime  
19 objective was to rid Iraq of weapons of mass  
20 destruction, according to the Security Council  
21 Resolutions, and that 1441 gave Iraq a final opportunity  
22 to comply and that military action may be necessary to  
23 enforce compliance if that did not occur. So I think  
24 that was the main sort of public signal.

25 I think at that stage we had still not finally

1           decided on precisely how that military involvement of  
2           our own would take place and I think the announcement of  
3           the actual package came out on 20 January.

4   LORD BOYCE: I think, to help a bit, I think it was back  
5           in November that the Americans made a formal request for  
6           our Option 3, our large-scale contribution.

7   SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: At that stage, as we have discussed,  
8           we were still thinking about going through Turkey, so --

9   LORD BOYCE: Oh, yes.

10   SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: And we have now decided that, if we  
11           are going to contribute, it will be through the south.  
12           Just to refresh memories, it does seem that there was  
13           a meeting on 15 January to make decisions on which  
14           options we were going to actually follow. Would that  
15           sort of seem right to you?

16   SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: That seems right, as I say, for the  
17           announcement to be made on the 20th.

18   SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: So this was really quite a momentous  
19           decision. Can you just give me some indication of the  
20           sort of preparations that and briefings that would take  
21           place so that the Prime Minister and other Ministers  
22           were ready to make that decision?

23   LORD BOYCE: We had already started exposing the fact that  
24           we may not be able to go through Turkey and our  
25           alternative option was a southern option, and that

1 particular decision was made on 8 January, with the US  
2 saying, "Take the southern option rather than the  
3 northern one." But it wasn't a sort of cold shock for  
4 everybody on 8 January. The Prime Minister, the Cabinet  
5 and clearly the Secretary of State for Defence had, as  
6 I say, been exposed to the planning we were doing --  
7 provisional planning -- contingency planning we were  
8 doing, should we have to go south.

9 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: So, when you met with Ministers on  
10 15 January -- and again I have in mind, because I have  
11 seen the papers, the comparable decisions with the  
12 Falklands. There were quite extensive options papers  
13 and a discussion of the operational risks, the things  
14 that could go wrong. Were Ministers given a paper or  
15 a briefing of that sort?

16 LORD BOYCE: That's a continuous process really. Certainly  
17 as far as the defence ministers were concerned, they  
18 were aware of what our plans were and what the pluses and  
19 where might be the pinch points on any plan and what we  
20 were doing to ensure those were mitigated as far as  
21 possible.

22 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Sir Kevin?

23 SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: Yes. I think there was detailed  
24 submissions going at that stage from the Chiefs of Staff  
25 to the Secretary of State and from the Secretary of

1 State to the Prime Minister, and that would fit in with  
2 that timeframe, and I think ministers would have  
3 discussed this during the 16th and the 17th. I haven't  
4 got the precise details but that would be consistent  
5 with the advice that was going forward.

6 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: How would you have described to  
7 ministers the risks that our forces might be taking,  
8 given that they have recently discovered, ministers,  
9 that, instead of going through the north, we are going  
10 through the south: this is a different sort of  
11 operation, different types of Iraqi forces that might be  
12 faced; the north is an area where the Kurds are  
13 semi-autonomous, the south is not, an area still more  
14 under regime control; there have been concerns about  
15 chemical and biological war fare.

16 So how were these risks described to ministers at  
17 this period? How serious were they shown to be?

18 LORD BOYCE: Well, it would have been done in the normal  
19 sort of way. You would have done threat assessments,  
20 worked out what the potential opposition forces might  
21 be, their dispositions, what our capability was matched  
22 against that. Some of the risk, if you like, was  
23 mitigated by the fact that we were going to be operating  
24 in our own area, looking after the southeast of the  
25 country while the American forces drove for Baghdad. So

1 we had a very clearly defined objective in terms of an  
2 area of operations.

3 There were additional problems like, for example,  
4 the importance of making a very fast entry to secure the  
5 oil fields, to ensure that they were not sabotaged,  
6 creating some environmental problem or otherwise. That  
7 was certainly one of our main thrusts, if you like, in  
8 the very early days, which were different than we had in  
9 the north.

10 It is a normal part of the planning process: doing  
11 threat assessments, working out what the potential  
12 dangers might be and then mitigating accordingly.

13 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: But ministers, presumably, would  
14 have liked some sense of potential casualties, for  
15 example. What numbers were we putting at risk? Were  
16 they told this sort of thing?

17 LORD BOYCE: Part of the briefing process would have  
18 included casualty assessments, yes.

19 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Can you recall what it was?

20 LORD BOYCE: I don't now remember what the numbers were.

21 All I know is they were a lot less; what actually  
22 happened at the end of the day was significantly less  
23 than what we actually thought might have happened,  
24 particularly since part of our casualty assessment  
25 process was that we thought, in fact we were completely

1 convinced, that we would meet at some time or other  
2 chemical and biological warfare, and indeed, as you will  
3 have seen from the reaction of our force on the ground  
4 in Kuwait, on 20 March, when the Iraqis fired missiles  
5 at us in response to the initial bombing, the first  
6 reaction of everybody was to don their special  
7 protective equipment; and we had various lines on the  
8 map in Iraq at points where we thought that we almost  
9 would certainly meet some sort of chemical or biological  
10 resistance. And one of the reasons why our casualty  
11 assessments were significantly lower at the end of the  
12 day, of course, was we never actually met any chemical  
13 or biological weapons in reality.

14 SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: I think I'm being a little reticent on  
15 this because I'm never quite clear how public public  
16 hearings are, and one is discussing details which I  
17 suspect have never been revealed publicly before.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: Can I set your mind at rest? We have the  
19 opportunity of private hearings if there are matters --

20 SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: I don't think there is anything  
21 particularly; I'm just trying to phrase this in general  
22 terms. I think, as far as casualties are concerned, the  
23 assessment was that they would not be any higher than we  
24 faced in the Gulf war 12 years earlier. So the figures  
25 were relatively, I might say, modest. In the event,

1           they were even lower than that. The uncertainty was  
2           indeed the possible use of chemical/biological weapons  
3           against us. I think the original assessment was that  
4           Saddam was unlikely -- but we couldn't rule it out  
5           militarily -- unlikely to use them early because that  
6           would weaken his image, as it were, internationally, but  
7           he might use them, and we expected him to use them, as  
8           a matter of last resort, which, of course, informed the  
9           nature of military planning. It was one of the reasons  
10          for speed and to get to places very rapidly, which might  
11          be the sources of these types of things.

12                 I think on other aspects there was full briefing  
13          provided to ministers as to whether there was indeed  
14          a winning concept now, and I think that judgment was  
15          that there was indeed a winning concept, subject still  
16          to questions of clarifying the legal base, to questions  
17          of how, after the initial event, things would be  
18          managed, and, of course, it was still contingent on the  
19          political decision. I need to reinforce that point.  
20          I know it has been made before.

21                 But I think the advice that went to ministers was  
22          that, you know, although time was short and we couldn't  
23          be sure what the timeframe would be -- and of course we  
24          were still at that stage politically seeking a longer  
25          timeframe in terms of the UN process. But though time



1           was short, it was an acceptable period for us to be able  
2           to engage in military action; and I seem to recall the Prime  
Minister  
3           himself asking questions at that stage about minimising  
4           risks to civilians and how that could be managed in  
5           terms of targeting, and in terms of a number of other  
6           points.

7           There was concern at that stage whether there  
8           would be intensive fighting within Baghdad, for example,  
9           and whether "fortress Baghdad" was going to be an issue  
10          or not. So these things were considered very carefully  
11          at the time, and, as I say, I don't feel entirely  
12          comfortable about going through all of the details. But  
13          what Saddam would do, predicting Saddam, was an issue  
14          which was considered very carefully at that stage. As  
15          I said, I think it came out, as I have suggested, that  
16          there would be a high risk he would use weapons of mass  
17          destruction but not in the initial phase.

18          And I think we still were looking for more clarity  
19          about US intentions after the event at that stage. But  
20          with those sorts of caveats, we got the authorisation,  
21          as it were, to go forward on planning, still subject to  
22          a final political decision -- and to announce that.

23   SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Just a final question on that: we  
24          heard last week that intelligence had been received,  
25          just a few days before the final decision, that if

1 chemical weapons did exist, they didn't appear to have  
2 been assembled or ready for use. Did that percolate  
3 through to you?

4 LORD BOYCE: As far as the military planning was concerned,  
5 we were operating on the basis that we could encounter  
6 chemical and biological weapons.

7 SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: I heard that and I rushed back to look at  
8 my notes to see whether I had any evidence of it and I  
9 don't see anything there.

10 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Can we move to the question of  
11 aftermath planning? You have both stressed the  
12 importance of this quite a bit. We have heard quite  
13 a lot about concerns about American aftermath planning.  
14 I would be interested to know a bit more about our own.  
15 What did we expect to be doing? And I would like to  
16 take this back a bit into 2002, before we go right up  
17 to March. We had a lot of experience of various  
18 operations, where we had found out that, once you went  
19 into a particular country that had suffered humanitarian  
20 distress of some sort or another, it was quite difficult  
21 to get out. Was that a concern of ours in thinking  
22 about this operation as well?

23 LORD BOYCE: Certainly, and I think it is probably fair to  
24 say we spent as many hours working on our Phase 4, on  
25 aftermath planning, as we did actually on the actual

1 main battle plan of winning the war, and one of our  
2 great concerns was to ensure that we retained as far as  
3 possible infrastructure and also such things as the  
4 Iraqi army. And indeed, you know, part of the battle  
5 plan was that we got messages - if I can be as vague as  
6 this - messages to Iraqi formations that if they did  
7 certain things and looked the other direction, we would  
8 walk past them, because I saw - and we saw - the  
9 importance of actually maintaining the Iraqi army as  
10 being the infrastructure to maintain sensible good order  
11 once the country had been defeated and indeed also  
12 keeping professionals, such as people who subsequently  
13 we have not been able to use who were Ba'athists, given  
14 the fact that everybody had to be a Ba'athist to be  
15 a professional; you had to be a card carrying member.  
16 And also not trashing the joint, if I can use that  
17 expression. In other words, our entry into Basra was  
18 very carefully calibrated to ensure that the  
19 infrastructure was left as far as possible and it was  
20 planned in a very sensible and orderly way, rather than  
21 just running through and making it a pile of rubble.

22 So a huge amount of effort went into trying to see  
23 how we could actually make sure that in the aftermath of  
24 the actual campaign having had the victory, actually having  
25 defeated Iraq, whether we could actually then move

1 reasonably seamlessly into a situation to allow a society to  
2 re-establish itself using the infrastructure of the society  
3 itself to re-establish itself.

4 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: But in terms of the troop numbers  
5 that were involved, what were our assumptions about the  
6 sort of force levels that would be required --

7 LORD BOYCE: I think, as far as our own area of operation  
8 was concerned, we felt that probably we were about okay,  
9 but I was always extremely concerned about the anorexic  
10 nature of the American contribution, and not just  
11 because the Fourth Infantry Division was taking a while  
12 to get there, but because it was Rumsfeld's view of and of that the  
13 Americans, certainly at that particular stage that they, were very  
14 much, "We are here to do the war fighting, not the  
15 peacekeeping." And combine that with the obsession that  
16 Mr Rumsfeld had with network-centric warfare and  
17 therefore to prove that you could minimise the number of  
18 your troops, in particular, because you had clever  
19 methods of conducting warfare, other than using boots on  
20 the ground, meant that, in my view anyway, we were  
21 desperately under-resourced in terms of boots on the  
22 ground so far as those forces going towards Baghdad were  
23 concerned.

24 So, once the battle had been won, we didn't have the  
25 boots on the ground to consolidate. I think that we

1           were in a less parlous condition in the south-east of  
2           the country, in our area of operations around Basra.  
3   SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: But we were planning to slim down  
4           our own forces as well; we were not expecting to  
5           maintain the same force levels with which we had gone  
6           in.  
7   LORD BOYCE: Ultimately, no, but the initial expectation was  
8           that we would be there for a while, without defining  
9           exactly what it was. But we certainly weren't  
10          expecting, the day after achieving success, to start  
11          drawing down our numbers; we were expecting to be there  
12          for a considerable period of time.  
13   SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: When did you expect to be drawing  
14          down your numbers?  
15   LORD BOYCE: My own personal view: I thought we would be  
16          there for three or four years at least, and said so at  
17          the time.  
18   SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: But the planning was not that?  
19   LORD BOYCE: The theoretical planning against the defence  
20          planning assumptions is you don't do this sort of  
21          operation for an extended period longer than about  
22          six months. But it never seemed to me very likely that  
23          we would be out there in six months.  
24   SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: But the assumption was that we would  
25          go down to about 8,000 thousand troops.

1 LORD BOYCE: Brigade level.

2 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Brigade level.

3 LORD BOYCE: Medium-scale.

4 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: But although that assumption was  
5 there, you were doubtful that it would be realised?

6 LORD BOYCE: For the job that we would have to do in the  
7 Basra area, it might have been that a brigade size might  
8 have been sufficient, as conditions pertained in the  
9 middle of 2003. What happened after that, I'm afraid I  
10 cant' comment; I wasn't there.

11 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Sir Kevin, do you want to comment on  
12 this?

13 SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: Just a few points to reinforce that.  
14 Firstly, when I talk about an acceptable political  
15 policy framework, what happened afterwards was central  
16 to that. So that was always upfront in the planning  
17 papers and the recommendations we sent to ministers.  
18 The governance framework after the invasion, or the  
19 liberation, whichever phrase you wish to use, was  
20 absolutely crucial, and of course we saw the UN as  
21 playing a central role in that, and a lot of the  
22 discussions between us and the United States in the next  
23 three months, from the beginning of year, as it were, up  
24 until the start of operations, was about the importance  
25 that we attached to instituting a UN framework at the

1 earliest possible opportunity.

2 The second point, I think: within the UK  
3 we couldn't start planning really until we knew what our  
4 area of operations might be, and that wasn't clear  
5 until January. Remember, we were still, until then,  
6 planning to be in northern Iraq/southeastern Turkey.  
7 So, until one had an idea of where we would  
8 be, we couldn't do detailed planning.

9 The third thing I would say is in terms of UK  
10 plans; I think, not just us -- I mean, it is very  
11 difficult to unlock the two because we were very  
12 concerned to be part of the total plan for Iraq, not  
13 just looking after our UK sector, because the success of  
14 the policy was, obviously, the success of Iraq and the  
15 Middle East.

16 I think, in terms of the wider plan, there was  
17 a general expectation that we would have a massive  
18 humanitarian problem on our hands from displaced people  
19 and that sort of thing and that the governance issues  
20 would not be quite as huge as indeed they became. So  
21 I think both we and DFID -- and I know Clare Short was  
22 writing a lot about this -- were very worried about  
23 humanitarian disaster and we were trying to put all our  
24 effort into how that might be handled and managed. But  
25 we were having even greater difficulty in

1 coming to agreement with the United States and  
2 understanding ourselves the details of the governance  
3 arrangements which would come into place immediately  
4 afterwards. I don't know how far you want me to go into  
5 all of that but that was a major area of discussion  
6 between us and the United States.

7 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: I would like to spend a little time  
8 on that, yes.

9 LORD BOYCE: Can I, if I may, just quickly, Sir Lawrence,  
10 say something else about our own drawdown. A factor regarding  
11 the number of people we would keep in theatre, a very  
12 serious factor, was the contribution of other allies in  
13 the aftermath of the actual victory, and of course that  
14 is actually what happened. So a number of allies  
15 started contributing reasonably serious numbers of  
16 people to operate in our sector, which would have  
17 allowed us to draw our own people down as they came in.

18 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: How much were questions of just  
19 rotation of forces also a factor in our drawdown? We  
20 didn't have an awful lot to spare.

21 LORD BOYCE: As I say, we had help in that our situation was  
22 alleviated by the fact that other countries were  
23 producing up to brigade-size, if I recall correctly,  
24 formations, which allowed us to get a focus on things  
25 like rotation and indeed drawing down our overall



1           divisional size strength.

2   SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:   Just a final bit on our own  
3           planning: how good was the interagency coordination on  
4           this question?  Were you happy with the relationships  
5           with DFID, for example?

6   LORD BOYCE:  No, not particularly.  I thought that DFID were  
7           particularly uncooperative, particularly as led by  
8           Clare Short.

9   SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:  Would you like to elaborate?

10   LORD BOYCE:  Well, you had people on the ground who were  
11           excellent operators for DFID, who were told to sit in  
12           a tent and not do anything because that's the  
13           instruction they had received and I actually met  
14           them.

15   SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:  How did you address this in problem  
16           within Government?

17   LORD BOYCE:  Well, I passed it up my command chain, if you  
18           like, and I expressed my concerns to the  
19           Defence Secretary.  But that's about all I could do.  
20           Indeed, a lot of the activity that went on on the ground  
21           was done by members of the division without the support  
22           of the DFID that they might have actually hoped for.

23   SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:  Sir Kevin, would you like to --

24   SIR KEVIN TEBBIT:  I think we got there in the end but it  
25           was hard pounding.  I think the problems DFID faced

1 were, firstly, that they felt that a second  
2 UN Security Council Resolution was absolutely essential  
3 before they could agree to do anything, and therefore  
4 that the UN framework they required was absolute, and  
5 that meant, of course, that it was only late in the day  
6 that we were able to get them fully engaged.

7 I think the second thing was that their focus on  
8 poverty relief, rather than backing a strategic  
9 objective of the British Government, meant that they  
10 were not sure at first that the Iraqi people were quite  
11 poor enough to deserve major DFID aid. I remember  
12 saying at one stage to them, "If you wait a bit, they  
13 certainly will be, if you don't come forward."

14 The amounts of money which they were envisaging  
15 allocating to our area, if you like -- I call it that  
16 once we had an area of operations, the four southern  
17 provinces -- I thought was very small. That, eventually,  
18 was increased, but I think it did take a meeting chaired  
19 by the Prime Minister to finally hammer out the terms of  
20 proper support. This was in the immediate phase, after  
21 the military operations, where essentially it is our  
22 armed forces that would have to administer the direct  
23 humanitarian assistance.

24 That, as I say, was hammered out, I recall,  
25 in March, not until quite close to the invasion, by

1 the Prime Minister personally presiding over a meeting.  
2 If you want me to look at my notes, I might be able to  
3 tell you what the outcome was, but it was basically  
4 satisfactory and DFID came on board. But it was very  
5 late in the day.

6 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: So not only were the Americans  
7 having trouble coming to a common view on this, we were  
8 also having trouble coming to a common view.

9 SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: The American issues were of a completely  
10 different order. The American issues were -- firstly,  
11 planning in the United States for this moved through  
12 three different phases. There was a lot of work done by  
13 the US State Department during 2002 of a broadly  
14 conceptual nature, and it sort of stayed there as  
15 conceptual planning, academic work really, on the nature  
16 of Iraqi society, and it never really, as far as I could  
17 see, amounted to anything real.

18  
19 Then the National Security Council appeared to be  
20 put in overall control of formulating the Phase 4 work.

21 Then it seemed to be taken away from them and went  
22 straight down to the military planning track, and  
23 Donald Rumsfeld secured control of it, and basically,  
24 I think, with the support of the Vice-President,  
25 insisted on doing it very much as a military controlled

1 activity, through the creation of ORHA, the  
2 Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance,  
3 under a retired general, who had been involved in Iraq  
4 before., and that meant that it was quite difficult to  
5 chase it round.

6 The second problem was, as I say, that there were  
7 strong feelings in the United States that you didn't  
8 need to do too much, and so we were engaged with the  
9 Americans in some detail on precisely what was required  
10 by way of aftermath planning, and I recall that we set  
11 out a number of issues to them on areas of disagreement,  
12 where we wanted to achieve resolution, centring  
13 basically on the role of the UN, which we saw as vital  
14 in the immediate aftermath period.

15 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: We have talked about our feeling  
16 that we could look after our sector in the south, as it  
17 were, but it is still part of a larger country. So at  
18 what point did these concerns about American planning,  
19 or the lack of it, translate into an operational risk  
20 for British forces? At what point do you start to worry  
21 that, if this isn't sorted out, there really could be  
22 quite serious trouble after the war?

23 SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: The first thing I would say about  
24 that is that nobody, I think, expected, including the  
25 Iraqis themselves, frankly, the level of violence and

1 internecine strife which finally emerged  
2 I think everybody, totally, was surprised at  
3 what happened eventually. I don't think anybody was  
4 prepared for that. I think there were  
5 obvious concerns that these were, to some extent, risks,  
6 but the scale of violence that finally emerged, I think,  
7 surprised everybody.

8 I think we were certainly aware that we would be  
9 required to be responsible for an area which, on the one  
10 hand, should be relatively calm because it was a Shia  
11 area and the Shia, after all, you know, had been  
12 persecuted by Saddam and therefore we had reason to  
13 suppose, or to hope, that we would not have insuperable  
14 problems. I think, as I said, at the same time we were  
15 conscious that we needed to be part of the total  
16 management arrangements of Iraq, not just, as it were,  
17 confined to our specific area, not least because we  
18 wouldn't have the resources to do it all ourselves. As  
19 CDS has said, we would need allies and other resources  
20 too.

21 I have mentioned the role of the UN, which we  
22 thought was vital, vital because that would bring in the  
23 UN agencies quickly, vital because we would need the UN  
24 weapons inspectors back in to complete their work,  
25 because it again would bring major resources, because it

1 would confer additional legitimacy in the eyes of  
2 international opinion, including the Arab world, and it  
3 would also provide a framework for the exit strategy  
4 much more easily than were there not to be a UN  
5 framework. So that was a major issue that we were  
6 expecting.

7 I think one of the consequences of the way in which  
8 the United States finally decided to go about things,  
9 with ORHA then being succeeded rapidly by a sort of  
10 viceroy, Bremer, is that decisions were taken on certain issues -  
11 de ba'athification and on the removal of senior military  
12 officers right down the military chain to quite low levels, - in a  
way that  
13 was not consistent with British thinking. We  
14 felt that, in doing that, a huge problem was being  
15 created.

16 There were also problems, when it came to  
17 it, about how much of the Iraqi administration would be there  
18 to resume activity and how they would be funded.  
19 We found a problem eventually  
20 between what was going on in Baghdad and what we could  
21 do in the southern area. But I'm moving ahead.

22 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: You are moving ahead, which is all  
23 relevant and important and we will be exploring more in  
24 the coming days. Can I just ask you one final question,  
25 though, about this, but also for Lord Boyce as well.

1           When we have heard descriptions already of people's  
2 views about what went wrong, the inability to impose law  
3 and order quickly and the inability to secure arms dumps  
4 have been mentioned. This is basically put down just to  
5 a lack of troops, so that in some ways one of the  
6 problems that could have been foreseen, and indeed was  
7 foreseen, was that the small forces that, as Lord Boyce  
8 as mentioned, Donald Rumsfeld was very keen to show that  
9 he could take Iraq with, were never going to be  
10 sufficient to cope with potential instability  
11 afterwards.

12 LORD BOYCE: That is so, and it was certainly pointed out in  
13 discussions with the Americans but, as I say, their  
14 attitude of mind was that the coalition forces would be  
15 seen as a liberation force and that the day after the  
16 victory everybody would be very happily moving to  
17 a quiet and well ordered society, a democratic society,  
18 and that the coalition forces would be seen as great  
19 heroes.

20 SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: Yes. As I say, we expected there to be  
21 a vetting policy. We were pressing for a vetting policy  
22 which didn't remove as much of the Iraqi armed forces  
23 and the Iraqi authorities as was eventually the case.  
24 We expected them to do a certain amount of  
25 self-policing, for example, and self-management. That

1 proved to be unattainable but I think we never made  
2 a secret of the fact that we also knew the US armed forces  
3 had been asking for more troops and that they did not  
4 get agreement to provide them.

5 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: It is a truism of war that the  
6 unintended consequences can be as important, if not more  
7 so, than the intended. Were you warning that there was  
8 a risk?

9 LORD BOYCE: Yes, and I think that that was  
10 also accepted by a number of American generals, who  
11 frequently said they wanted more troops on the ground  
12 and Mr Rumsfeld said no, as I understand it.

13 SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: Yes. I'm not sure how much directly we  
14 tried to insist that the Americans should have more  
15 troops. I think that would have been very difficult for  
16 us to advance as a UK position. We certainly encouraged  
17 them to have a maximum coalition effort, and that  
18 perhaps is the way round it. But I recall, for example,  
19 that we pressed our views about managing  
20 Phase 4, as it was called, on the Americans several  
21 times. I remember, when Geoff Hoon went to Washington  
22 in the middle of February, he went with a brief which  
23 emphasised the importance we attached to a mandate from  
24 the UN to justify continued occupation, to putting in  
25 place a transitional administration which got the Iraqis



1 involved as early as possible, to a vetting policy of  
2 former people that didn't completely remove the  
3 structures, as well as things like oil and national  
4 governance and economic policy, security sector reform  
5 and humanitarian relief.

6 So we were going through these issues in  
7 considerable detail with the administration beforehand  
8 and emphasising our views.

9 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: But this perhaps was an area where  
10 our influence just wasn't sufficient?

11 SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: We thought we made quite a lot of  
12 progress actually and we thought we made a lot of  
13 progress over involving the UN. We never quite got them  
14 to a point where they would accept immediate UN  
15 authority, but I think we did get the Americans to  
16 a point where they would accept involvement and  
17 engagement with UN organisations very early on. Sadly,  
18 the bombing of the UN office pretty quickly on in 2003  
19 was a serious blow to all that, but I think we did shift  
20 the American position on engagement with the UN quite  
21 considerably. As you know, there was quite a lot of  
22 anti-UN feeling still in Washington at that time.

23 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Thank you very much.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: We have only a minute or two to go. Are  
25 there any final questions from my colleagues?

1 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: Could I ask one brief question, if  
2 I may? Sir David Manning told us that the US military  
3 saw peacekeeping and policing as not their  
4 responsibility. Were you aware of that?

5 LORD BOYCE: Yes.

6 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: At what stage did you become aware  
7 of that?

8 LORD BOYCE: I was always aware of it. It was very much an  
9 attitude, "We are war fighters, we are not  
10 peacekeepers." Obviously, that has changed some time  
11 down the track after 2003. But certainly, leading up to  
12 that, they saw their job as actually winning the war.  
13 So, combined with the feeling that they would be seen as  
14 liberators and that everybody would be very happy in  
15 Iraq - the Iraqis would be happy to see them there - was  
16 the fact that they didn't see a role of peacekeeping  
17 afterwards.

18 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: But did you make the Prime Minister  
19 and the ministers aware of that?

20 LORD BOYCE: Yes.

21 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: And what was done, because you were  
22 talking earlier about the winning concept, and the  
23 winning concept, was it about the removal of Saddam or  
24 was it about the end state?

25 SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: The winning concept was a combination of

1 things but it included, as I said before, a satisfactory  
2 end state -- that was absolutely vital -- which included  
3 disarmament, which why I have mentioned bringing the UN  
4 early into that.

5 You recall that, even before we got there, there was  
6 talk of our regarding our area of operations as an  
7 exemplar. Now, this may sound rather arrogant but at  
8 the time the UK felt that if we could get there and use  
9 our skills, which at that stage were well ahead of the  
10 Americans -- they caught up subsequently very rapidly,  
11 two or three years later, but in 2003 we were the people  
12 who were best at converting war fighters into  
13 peacekeepers on the same day and doing stabilisation  
14 activities and working with the local population, and we  
15 did have a genuine feeling in the UK that if we could do  
16 a good show, as it were, in our four southern provinces,  
17 that would help, as it were, with the way in which the  
18 Americans approached the rest of it. That may seem  
19 rather wishful thinking but at the time that was  
20 certainly part of our concept, and we had reason to  
21 believe we did have a chance there because, of course,  
22 as I say, with the Shia area we were facing slightly  
23 different levels of opposition than was the case in  
24 Baghdad, and indeed, when I visited myself in the middle  
25 of 2003, with the then Chief of Defence Staff, we could

1 drive through the centre of Basra in unprotected  
2 vehicles with the people two inches away from us.

3 So there were reasons to suppose and to expect that  
4 we could help in that context as well.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: Martin?

6 SIR MARTIN GILBERT: I have a governmental structural  
7 question with regard to aftermath planning which perhaps  
8 can help us in our lessons learned.

9 You mentioned that the Prime Minister had to preside  
10 over a meeting to get DFID on board. This seems rather  
11 a drastic spur to cooperation. I wondered what you  
12 could say from the MoD perspective about the structural  
13 system with regard to other departments concerned and  
14 interdepartmental planning.

15 SIR KEVIN TEBBIT: Well, the so-called comprehensive concept  
16 did exist in Whitehall, the idea that we needed to have  
17 integrated planning to bring all the instruments of  
18 government to bear on the issue, and I think that was  
19 definitely there and we certainly had transparency, but  
20 I think these things are actually very difficult to  
21 achieve and we are still groping, both nationally and  
22 internationally, with those concepts. One is dealing  
23 with very different cultures across departments. You  
24 can't simply create a committee and then achieve  
25 everything you are seeking to do.

1 I always felt that we could not quite get other  
2 departments to share the urgency that we felt in the  
3 Ministry of Defence in terms of their own planning with  
4 us, and I think this is still a problem that the  
5 international community is confronted by, actually. It  
6 has not gone away, it is still there.

7 THE CHAIRMAN: I think that brings us to the close of this  
8 morning's session. Tomorrow, Friday morning, the  
9 Committee will be hearing from Lieutenant General Sir  
10 Anthony Pigott, who was Deputy Chief of Defence Staff  
11 for Commitments at that time, and from Major General  
12 David Wilson, who was the United Kingdom's senior  
13 military attache to Central Command in the US in 2002.  
14 These hearings will help us further develop the picture  
15 of the military planning we have been hearing about  
16 today and the British perspective on the US planning.

17 Tomorrow afternoon we are going to hear from  
18 Dominic Asquith, who served as both the head of Iraq  
19 policy in the Foreign Office and then as the  
20 United Kingdom's ambassador in Baghdad between 2004 and  
21 2007.

22 So, with that, I thank our witnesses for your  
23 evidence this morning, Lord Boyce and Sir Kevin, and to  
24 those of you who have attended throughout this morning's  
25 proceedings.

1           The next hearing will start at 10 o'clock tomorrow  
2           morning, and with that I close this session.

3           Thank you.

4           (12.05 pm)

5           (The Inquiry adjourned until 10.00 am the following day)

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