

Statement by:  
Major General Albert Whitley CMG, CBE  
Senior British Land Advisor to the Commander the Coalition Forces Land  
Component Command (CFLCC) Kuwait and Iraq from November 2002 to  
May 2003.  
And  
Deputy Commanding General (with particular responsibility for Post  
Hostilities) DCG CFLCC, February 2003 to May 2003.

Caveat

I am currently serving as the Senior British Loan Service Officer (Oman). As such I have no access to the Senior British Land Advisor (SBLA) to the Coalition Forces Land Component Command (CFLCC) reports submitted to PJHQ before midnight (Kuwait time) daily, nor to the SBLA war diary. I have 3 note books which are not diaries but simply contemporaneous jottings as a reminder to frame formal reports or as a reminder for subsequent action. They do not provide a chronology or paint a story and particularly relate to post hostility planning, and hence not subject to the level of classification of the 2 documents produced as SBLA, referred to above. The 'normal' working day in CFLC was from 0430 to midnight. There was operational pressure, intense activity, often working on several matters at once. Certain events stand out with absolute clarity and I am as confident as one can be as to their accuracy, inevitably after such a period of time this statement can only be described as my best effort to be truthful and accurate. It is worth noting that those who served at the same time as me in this theatre (and some after) were asked to submit their evidence in December 2009. This statement has been written in haste. Rather than a coherent description of my involvement and events my evidence is framed by the specific questions set by the inquiry.

Background

I could be considered an operational level planner:

I was the Assistant Chief of Staff (Plans) in the ACE Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC) from May 94 to November 96.

As such I led the team analysing the problems and then drafting NATO plans for Bosnia. They included the military plan for the Vance-Owen Peace Plan, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] and finally for the Dayton Peace Agreement. This latter included the operational plans for the employment

of the ARRC as IFOR and the campaign plan. Higher level Plans (AFSOUTH and NATO) were based on these and received by the ARRC after deployment to Sarajevo.

During my 15 months in Bosnia, the then Brigadier General (BG) David McKiernan US army, became the Deputy Chief of Staff (Operations) and my immediate superior.

On return from Bosnia, on promotion to Brigadier, although I became the Chief Engineer of the ARRC, I was tasked to write and direct 2 annual high level exercises, ARRCADe Fusion, to restore the ARRC's warfighting skills and expertise. This required creating and writing an environment; political, strategic, economic, social and geographic as well as creating an enemy, its composition and its plans. The exercises were run playing plans against a war gaming computer (within the limits of the computer programme) so testing their effectiveness. I believe this gave me a rare understanding of the operational level of war.

BG McKiernan and I became close friends as well as professional colleagues. He had been appointed as Commander CFLCC in the rank of Lieutenant General before my arrival in Kuwait as SBLA.

#### Methodology

For sake of clarity I have split my evidence into 2 parts: My role as SBLA, dealing primarily with UK/US planning and coordination for Phases 1-3 (deployment, force composition, command and control, tactical employment and combat operations) and post hostilities planning and operations. My involvement in both was concurrent but markedly different in nature, the players involved and the levels of preparedness.

### SENIOR BRITISH LAND ADVISOR

Role. I do not have access to the written Job Specification for the role of SBLA. I do attach a short note in which my Chief of Staff and I attempted to capture my role before I left theatre. More importantly to me I was given a verbal directive by the then DCJO PJHQ, now Lieutenant General Sir Robert Fry: My role was to gain as much information as possible as to the Coalition's (US) intentions, preparedness, plans, force flow and report daily. I was not to commit the UK military to anything until so ordered but was to involve myself in detailed planning to ensure, if a decision was to be made, UK forces could dovetail into CFLCC's plans and operations whilst safeguarding UK's interests. I explained my relationship with Lt Gen McKiernan and asked to be allowed to get as close and as useful as possible to him thus increasing my value, influence and, clearly, gain a

greater depth of knowledge. This was supported. I deployed in early November 2002.

Within CFLCC headquarters my role initially was almost purely liaison; garnering and reporting information and acting as a conduit for engagement between PJHQ and CFLCC. Lt Gen McKiernan and I quickly struck up our old relationship and he used me more and more as a sounding board, as a planner and, at times, as a sort of 'company doctor'. In my view, Lt Gen McKiernan was a uniquely able and talented commander. His top level team were outstanding; handpicked 2 star generals. Below that his headquarters was based on a skeleton HQ (ARCENT/3rd US Army) with very considerable augmentation. His HQ was still being formed and needed training. His view was that [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] British Staff Officers were [REDACTED] comprehensively trained and had wider experience and outlook. Examples of my utility to him included, in the absence of a designated corps HQ to plan an attack South from Turkey (whilst this was still an option) he asked me to lead a UK/US team to plan this operation which would be handed to the corps HQ to execute. Initially he asked me to lead within his HQ planning for post hostilities and be his eyes and ears with other HQs and organisations on this subject. He gave me almost unlimited access. In January he asked CJO, now Gen Sir John Reith, for me to be promoted and act as his DCG (Post Hostilities). He already had 2 DCGS: Operations and Support. He understood and wanted a specific focus which would allow him to concentrate on training his HQ, prepare for and run a land war. I became DCG (PH) CFLCC in mid February 2003. I stayed in the dual role of SBLA and DCG (PH) throughout the invasion which included the move of forward elements of CFLCC HQ to Baghdad. I left Baghdad in mid May 2003.

From November 2002 until the deployment of the National HQ under Air Marshal Sir Brian Burridge and his PJHQ team under his Chief of Staff, now Gen Sir Peter Wall, I answered directly to DCJO at PJHQ. Thereafter I reported through AM Sir Brian Burridge co-located with HQ CENTCOM in Doha. I was part of a routine VTC with PJHQ and DCDS (Commitments) MOD and knew that the issues I raised and my information was received and, if necessary, actioned with PJHQ and MOD. I had no visibility beyond conversations about cross Whitehall information flow nor activity and planning. My only contact with DFID verged on unreality. A conference was held in PJHQ (date not recalled) with DFID which I flew back to to brief on Land military plans. During the question and answer session I was asked what we, the coalition

military, were going to do if Basra was attacked by Saddam Hussein with WMD, specifically smallpox. My reply that we were incapable of managing the consequences without closing down the invasion, resulting in the DFID people effectively blaming me for going to war. My riposte that the UK Government decides to go to war or not, that the military simply execute their responsibilities and that the UK Government, not just the military, was responsible for consequence management was greeted with scorn. My overall impression (of which this was an extreme case) was that other government departments did not see this as their business and wished to distance themselves from it.

### US –UK Dynamics

My understanding, then and now, was that there was no strategic direction or planning at all beyond the military invasion. There was no articulated strategic context nor end state. There was no campaign plan. There were high level decisions; driven in the US by conviction [REDACTED] and in the UK by lack of a strategic mechanism (no war Cabinet), lack of understanding of the need for defining strategic objectives, or indifference. At the operational and tactical levels there was precise definition of immediate military objectives – deploy, prepare, attack, defeat the Iraqi forces, secure WMD and so on but no strategic context: why and what for? So for example, the CFLCC mission statement included Regime Removal. The UK land statement was exactly the same: (WMD, secure the population etc) but did not include regime removal. What this meant in theory and practice was a lacuna as to what the period after Phase III (combat operations) was to look like and therefore what military tasks had to be performed. The results were inevitable: the strategic direction for the war (reinforced by decisions on de-Baathification and army disbandment) resulted in the removal of any Iraqi administrative capability but there was no pre-planned or prepared Coalition or UN administration to take on this role. This was absolutely compounded by US and UK decisions to immediately reduce the (already inadequate) force levels at the end of Phase III.

At the highest ministry / Armed Forces levels the UK were unable to influence US decisions. In major part this was caused by the US not using its normal machinery: the Pentagon. There was a high level committee inside the US DOD (the ODA?) normally chaired by Mr Rumsfeld and including Mr Wolfowitz and Mr Feith. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff was present [REDACTED]. The ‘normal’ top coordination between the US and UK is between DCDS (Commitments) and the J5 (strategic plans) in the Pentagon. Yet with the ODA taking all policy decisions the Pentagon

became 'an information addressee'. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] There was also an important direct link between Gen Franks, Commander CENTCOM, and POTUS.

[REDACTED]. These resulted in what appeared to me, a dislocation between the information I was getting and the understanding by UK MOD. Hence DCDS (Commitments) was still talking about 'windows of opportunity', essentially spring or autumn 2003 or spring 2004 with autumn 2003 being most likely, when my information was D-Day was to be 18 February 2003 (subsequently delayed by attempts for a further UN Resolution). There were other examples covered below in the section on Post Hostilities. The converse was true at CENTCOM, CFLCC and MEF levels. We were welcomed, supported and informed. We were 'embedded' at these levels and were trusted and valued parts of the teams. As discussed above, this and the size of our forces did not translate into strategic and political influence. However the 3<sup>rd</sup> party in the Coalition, the Australians, contributed relatively tiny forces [REDACTED]. Overall at the political and strategic levels I believe no real effort was made, and certainly little achieved, to leverage what was for UK a very significant force contribution.

#### The Military Planning

I was involved in planning for UK military action and participation from my arrival in November at CFLCC in Kuwait. I clearly understood that I had no authority whatsoever to make any commitments to this end. I sent back to UK the evolving wishes of what part CFLCC would wish UK military to play (tempering this where necessary by my understanding of the art of the possible) and worked on options, without commitment. What was clear was that the USA was going to war and soon. From mid January onwards, see notes about Turkey below, it became clear that, subject to certain conditions (possible additional UNSCR, parliamentary approval and a decision on legality) UK too would participate. The planning then became much more focused.

There is no question that PJHQ represents an experienced and effective organisation. In the event political decisions were taken just in time to create a force, deploy key elements to participate in preparations and essential work-up exercises. The decision to go to war and so commit forces came very late in the day, almost too late. Significant risk had to be

taken with force composition (placing great trust in the US military – who produced in spades), logistics and force protection. The result was one of the most remarkable military operations ever – but only Phases I to III. The drive to get everything together for combat operations left little spare capacity (including intellectual) for Phase IV.

In general the UK was given every opportunity, and generally took them, to understand US plans in the military arena. Positive response to them remained in the political domain. Constant uncertainties of the ‘will we, won’t we’ type were treated with great patience by the US military – they wanted us on board and we were trusted.

As stated above, UK continued into 2003 to consider an autumn 2003 invasion as a possibility. Within days of arriving in Kuwait I was quite clear that the US intent was already made to invade in spring 2003. This was partly the drive from Washington ‘to get it done’, partly the fact that some US forces had been in the field for some time already (the lead brigade of 3 Infantry Division, the spearhead for the V Corps attack had been in the field in Kuwait for nearly 6 months) and would degrade if kept in the field over the summer; but, critically, delaying till the autumn would render the operational deception plan worthless. This rested on convincing Saddam Hussein that we had to do what had been done in Gulf War One – flow in overwhelming force, get them set and then invade. The element of surprise in this operation was to go with apparently inadequate forces and commit follow-on forces on arrival. There was a possibility that political and practical considerations might force a delay into early summer. On balance it was felt that the coalition would still have a marked superiority and any degradation in performance and increase in casualties due to heat would be offset by the heat of the Iraqi summer making most biological and chemical weapons far less effective. My understanding is that it was Saddam Hussein who needed to be convinced that autumn 2003 was the most likely option.

On the 28<sup>th</sup> December 2002 on the routine daily VTC with all US commands, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] My understanding is that the UK had not pursued independent diplomacy with Turkey on this and had relied on US efforts.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Gen McKiernan and I then discussed this in detail and, in particular, if 1 (UK) Armoured Division was to be available what it could do. With Gen Conway, Commander of the Marine Expeditionary Force, we discussed potential areas of responsibility, tasks, support needed from the US and limit of exploitation. I repeated this verbally to PJHQ and followed it up on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2003 with a short paper: Decision Imperatives (attached). My understanding is that Gen Fry prepared a brief and at sometime in that period briefed the Prime Minister. I understand he was given authority to make all preparations, including preliminary deployment of elements of the force to make this work if there was a decision to go to war. Much work then ensued but in particular the UK National Contingent Command HQ moved to Doha with CENTCOM which not only gave me a superior HQ in theatre [REDACTED]

I was not privy to prior UK planning that had centred on a force based on RN, RAF and RM. By the time I became involved, the discussions were more about a balanced land force based on 1 (UK) Armoured Division that could undertake stand-alone missions and be, relatively, independent. I flew back to Germany in January 2003 to brief the Divisional Commander, now Lt Gen, Sir Robin Brims and his staff on current planning and options. I also made recommendations about tailoring the force to reduce its size and thus make deployment quicker. In particular I recommended that air defence could be cut completely and that there was no need for heavy artillery systems. This was because the Coalition air force already had air superiority and would attain total air supremacy within hours of starting the air campaign.

The UK decision to commit force in the South had effects summarised in paragraph 3 in the attached paper. 1 (UK) Armoured Division made the break-in battle more effective through overwhelming force, secured a significant area and the right flank, removing the burden for US forces and allowing a stronger strike North leading to a faster resolution of major combat operations. If UK forces had not been committed, the campaign would have been significantly slower because 4 ID would not have arrived in time [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The slower an operation is the more time there is for an enemy to react. I do not believe the outcome was in doubt but it would not have happened so quickly and it is probable that there would have been many more casualties.

## Invasion

There was no strategic significance to Basra at all. Baghdad was always the centre of gravity. The factors considered in determining the UK area of responsibility included: distance from Kuwait and the length of lines of communication (the force package on logistics limited how far north the division could operate and the area it could cover), closeness to the sea and ports (there was an amphibious element of the force resupplied from afloat), US forces would not have to pass through the area on their way to Baghdad (any passage of lines is a complicated operation particularly with forces from different nations) and UK control of the ports of Basra and Umm Qasr would be useful (shortening our lines of communication).

As I understand it there was no pressure from Whitehall or PJHQ to influence the timing of the taking of Basra. Gen McKiernan also did not put pressure on Gen Brims to take it early. I was present when he told Gen Brims that he could take Basra when he was ready and it was not a necessary precursor to taking Baghdad. When V corps 'paused' at al Najaf (lack of sleep, shortage of fuel and ammunition completely compounded by a sandstorm where vehicles at the same grid reference by GPS could not find each other) there was [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] From a military view this was nonsense yet the pressure on Gen McKiernan was intense. He asked Gen Brims if he could take Basra to demonstrate success [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] This was very much a request of the 'if you can' variety rather than 'take Basra now' order. Gen Brims agreed to try following the successful tactical techniques used by Brigadier, now Maj Gen, Binns, commanding 7 Armd Bde, in Az Zubayr. These tactics again proved successful and Basra was taken. In the event this happened only days before the successful 'end run' by 3 ID into Baghdad. Gen Brims can better describe if he felt there was pressure on him but I can state that was not the intent from CFLCC.

The broad implications of taking Basra were understood in that I (UK) armed Division would become responsible for it; its security, its people and potentially its management. However they were working in a policy and information vacuum. They had no real idea what ORHA could or would do. Support from UK PLC was nonexistent.



## PHASE IV

### Planning for Phase IV Operations

As already described, Gen McKiernan used me as the lead on Phase IV from an early stage. With the involvement of ORHA and the augmentation of CFLCC by CJTF 7 (an ad hoc HQ completely manned by US tri-service augmentees to help plan and execute Phase IV operations and to form the framework of CJTF Iraq – the undefined HQ that would assume military control of Iraq) he felt it essential that I be given more authority. In agreement with CJO in February I became DCG (PH) CFLCC as an (acting) Major General. My responsibilities were completely directive: 'Do what you can, with what we have and when we can. Produce a plan for CFLCC for Phase IV'.

I have already discussed the lack of strategic direction and clarity. This was further exacerbated by no one being clear who was to be in charge.

CENTCOM was going home. CFLCC had been on operations (including Afghanistan) for too long. [REDACTED] CJTF 7 wanted to be in charge but were led by a US Brig Gen.

Maj Gen Tim Cross has described Jay Garner and ORHA. I totally agree that Jay Garner was a most decent and honourable man who ended up being a scapegoat for DOD. However I absolutely disagree that Garner should have been appointed Viceroy/Proconsul and put in charge. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] it was too small, it came to the party too late and did not have full cross-US support.

I attended (as did Maj Gen Cross) the Garner 'Rock Drill' in Washington. A 'Rock Drill' is US parlance for a complete mission rehearsal which assumes there is a plan – there was not. Instead this conference ranged across US departments describing how they were going to rewrite children's history books, form an Iraqi Fanny Mae, what training for personnel was needed for ORHA, what weapons they would have and so on.

I commend to the inquiry Michael Gordon's and General Bernard Trainor's book 'Cobra II', The Inside Story of the Invasion of Iraq. Michael Gordon was the New York Times' embedded reporter in CFLCC. His chapter 8, 'A little Postwar Planning' describes the situation better than I could. The chapter title is too generous.

I take leave to quote one paragraph which describes my summary of preparations for Post Hostilities succinctly, this occurred post the Rock Drill: "The same day Garner's team arranged a video conference with McKiernan, who was at his Camp Doha headquarters. It was a chance for the military and civilian officials who were planning for the postwar period to put their heads together. Whitley, who participated in the session and was famous for his candor, delivered a discouraging assessment of the state of the administration's preparations. The U.S. agencies were not ready, had no real understanding of what Iraq was like, and did not yet have a coherent plan, he

told McKiernan. There was no clear demarcation between what would be run by the civilians and what the generals would control. The funding for the multibillion-dollar undertaking in Iraq was still up in the air, and it was ludicrous to expect that it would all come from the U.N. There would need to be another United Nations resolution to deal with postwar Iraq. Garner's team needed maps and logistical support. Fuel would have to be made available and another Rock Drill should be scheduled to examine plans to distribute water, food, and fuel, Whitley said. The message was that if the military was hoping that the civilians had Phase IV under control it would be sorely disappointed".

Nothing changed. It is easy to talk about 'the rule of law' but what law? What were the basic parameters for a police force? What currency was to be used (US \$)? What exchange rate? No exchange rate! So all savings in Iraq Dinar to be wiped out at one stroke – that will make us popular. On and on: no strategy, no clear lines of responsibility and no strategic plan.

I have no idea if there were any UK objectives for the aftermath at all. The only US articulation of an endstate was "A country within current borders with a democratically elected government". The only direction I am aware of from the Prime Minister was that 'the behaviour of British Forces is to be exemplary'. Both inadequate.

Before this invasion I made no assumptions as to how long any forces might stay in Iraq. Indeed there was no guidance that I am aware of and since there was little or no military or civilian assistance from the UK I can only assume that such guidance, if it existed, had failed to be turned into reality. Gen Sir Rupert Smith had once told me over Bosnia "Once you have put your fingers into the mangle it is very difficult to get them out". So I concentrated on tasks that could be achieved with military resources.

In my opinion there was no priority given to Phase IV planning at all. There did not seem to be cross government coordination and effort. Funds were largely unavailable and restricted by peacetime bureaucracy (we never went onto war time accounting). There were no national power generating engineers, water supply experts, sanitation and health, railway engineers, local government administrators. I need not go on.

The appointment of Garner and the creation of ORHA provided very clear indications that DOD would take control of the aftermath. This became very clear during the Rock Drill during which the State Department was publicly sidelined. Maj Gen Cross was with Garner from almost the start and he and other UK representatives reported back to UK. I was less sanguine and repeated my misgivings but without any great belief there was anything UK

could do even if it was prepared to get engaged. ORHA from the start lacked clear, practical strategic directions and, above all, resources.

I am unaware of any UK guidance on the state of Iraq and what might happen after the invasion. As the operation became more successful the planning emphasis shifted to recovery of troops from theatre. I do not believe that any assumptions were made about the UN role. I understand that UK were more inclined to see the UN have primacy [REDACTED]

Phases are a very bad description for the layman as they are really a military shorthand to sequence events by forces available to do them. Too many, including some of the military, view them as a sort of railway timetable. Phase IV started the minute we had captured one square foot of Iraqi soil while of course the other phases, deployment, reception, onward movement, shaping the battlefield and defeating the enemy, were going on elsewhere on the battlefield. Formal transition to Phase IV was to be triggered by a POTUS decision. "Mission accomplished" comes to mind. What this meant in practical terms was that Phase IV plans suddenly had to be renamed Phase 3b so that they could be executed in territory we held before Phase IV could officially begin. Occupation, per se, was never addressed. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. Hence my reference above to 'What Law?'

The discussions about law and order are well described in Gaynor's book. It was quite clear (certainly from Bosnia experience) that the military forces available were inappropriate and utterly inadequate for this task. The TIPFDL was already being turned off by the DOD as combat success became more assured. The UK were making plans for the early return of 16 Air Assault Brigade to UK. Further, the further one attacks and occupies territory the more one 'bleeds off' combat troops to guard ones' own locations, lines of communication, prisoners of war, key infrastructure, such as bridges, and, of course, secure the hundreds of sites that, supposedly, held WMD.

#### Post Invasion

My knowledge of The Hague and Geneva conventions was annual military tests on the subject, rereading on occasions and, specifically, several times before the invasion commenced. I did not believe I needed any additional guidance. However, top level engagement on these conventions was absent. During the Garner Rock Drill and subsequently, the US made a distinction between surrender, which made those who surrender all POWs and their treatment subject to the Conventions, and capitulation, which, it was stated, did not. I raised this at the Rock Drill stating that the Conventions made no such distinction. [REDACTED]

I had no input into discussions leading to UNSCR 1483.

I heard about the creation of the CPA sometime after arriving in Baghdad (10 April) and before the end of the month. I had little involvement in it or with them. By that stage I was devoting most of my time attempting to get real things done (sanitation, health, railways, fuel, electricity, rubbish disposal etc). My interlocutors within ORHA disappeared almost overnight. I did brief Mr John Sawyers and his assessment of ORHA/CPA and the state of Iraq at that time is accurate. I handed over my role to Maj Gen, now Lt Gen, Sir Freddie Viggers. I described the ORHA/CPA organisation in their protected palace as [REDACTED] Before the end of our handover Gen Freddie described it far more accurately: it was like a university with groups of well-meaning, intelligent people discussing a series of problems but achieving very little.

I remain unconvinced to this day that the decisions on de-Baathification and the disbandment of the army were made by CPA. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

These decisions had the utmost impact on CFLCC and Iraq, At one stroke it removed all effective administration in all areas. The practical alternatives (and relief for Coalition forces from more routine tasks) of the army (perhaps modelled on Cromwell and his Major Generals – a solution to a similar but simple problem) had also been removed. These decisions turned a really difficult and complex problem into an insurmountable one overnight. The military could only turn to the practical and practicable: do what we could with what we had got.

I, on behalf of Commander CFLCC, led the combined joint planning team producing 'ECLIPSE II'. The plan for the invasion had been called COBRA II: COBRA being the codename for the plan for the Normandy Breakout by Gen Patton's 3<sup>rd</sup> US Army: CFLCC was based on ARCENT / 3<sup>rd</sup> US Army. It is, I think, a fascinating aside that General Patton was relieved of his post for not enforcing de - Nazification! ECLIPSE II was named after the comprehensive plan for Post Hostilities in Germany after WWII. There the similarity stops. It was an attempt to produce some coherence for the military aspects of Post Hostilities and give subordinate commands, responsibilities, direction and tasks.

Col (now Maj Gen) Colin Boag and the tiny planning team within ORHA produced the civil mirror image. I am not sure this was ever read by anyone in authority. Both plans attempted to bring coherence to chaos. Eclipse II had some local practical effect: military teams and locals working on sanitation plants, jury rigging the national power grid, recommissioning power stations, repairing and opening the Baghdad – Umm Qasr – Basra

railway (essential to bring bottled gas from Kuwait into the country so people could cook), hospitals and so on. ECLIPSE II was inadequate and so were the resources available but it did achieve something.

Finally, some thoughts the Inquiry may consider worth pondering:

Our forefathers were not fools:

There is an absolute need ( I would suggest moral imperative) to have a top level body (War Cabinet?) which must include the military, to give national strategic direction to UK commanders. Civil control of the military is an absolute but no strategic direction is an abrogation of responsibility. The make up of Sir Winston Churchill's war cabinet is not a bad guide - they seem to have done rather a good job. They at least realised that after a war the losing country is not in good shape and it takes a national effort to put it right.

Coalition war requires combined planning - this means embedding appropriate people at the correct level as planners - in this case they should have been in DOD not just the Pentagon. Liaison is not enough. In WW II when the leaders met they brought along their military Chiefs of Staff and planners to prepare options jointly for strategy and strategic decisions. There are books and books relating the matters they wrestled with - this time most were not even considered.

It should be a duty for political and civil leaders to prepare themselves to frame strategic direction. How many of them have read our military doctrine, or understood it or even able to define Grand Strategy or Strategy? Perhaps there should be study periods or workshops?

MOD is not fit for purpose if that purpose is to equip, prepare and where necessary direct national forces at war. Maj Gen Cross is, in my estimation wrong about the progress from a War Office to an MOD as his end result is PJHQ. PJHQ is excellent but it is an operational level HQ not strategic. In my lifetime we have gone from a War Office to an MOD to now 'the Department' or 'Head Office'. The mindset and process has followed. It has lost its way. The head of "strategy" in MOD is a civil servant but in this context means business strategy not national military strategy.

Unless it is a pre-planned war, 'just in time logistics' means just not enough and just too late

General Colin Powell was right "if you break it you fix it". Anything else is a punitive raid which rather went out of fashion in the 1920s and 30s. Fixing a whole country is very big business indeed; way beyond the capacity of the military although in the early stages they are the only ones with the command

and control, communications, planning capacity and forces to make things happen. But even before the transition to civil control, resources, money, materiel and expertise must be available in time to have an effect. There is very little time (the honeymoon) after an invasion to persuade the indigenous population you are 'force for good'.

Equally Gen Sir Rupert Smith was spot on with his 'fingers in the mangle' allegory. Unless it is a punitive raid, forces and length of deployment is defined by achieving the desired effect (strategic direction again). All too often has the phrase 'we'll be home by Christmas' echoed through the ages.