

**SIS1**<sup>1</sup>

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Good morning and welcome.

**SIS1:** Good morning.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Do take your coat off if you want to.

Welcome again and thank you for coming along, [SIS1]. This session is being held in private because we recognise that much of the evidence on the areas we want to cover will be sensitive within the categories set out in the Inquiry's protocol on sensitive information, for example on grounds of international relations or national security. In particular, we will want to use this session to explore issues covered by classified documents, and we will apply the protocol between the Inquiry and HMG regarding documents and other written and electronic information, considering whether and how information given in relation to classified documents, and/or sensitive matters more widely, can be drawn on and explained in public, either in the Inquiry report or, where appropriate, at an earlier stage.

If other evidence is given during this hearing which neither relates to classified documents nor engages any of the categories set out in the protocol on sensitive information, that evidence would be capable of being published, subject to the procedure set out in the Inquiry secretary's letter.

Now, we recognise that witnesses are giving evidence based on their recollection of events, and we of course

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<sup>1</sup> This officer is referred to as SIS1 throughout the Inquiry's documentation.



Sir Martin Gilbert to begin.

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** Can I just ask one question? Is your past affiliation now something that is in the public domain?

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED].

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]?

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED].

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** [REDACTED].

**SIR MARTIN GILBERT:** If I could start with the period when you were [REDACTED], the point we would like to look at is what proportion of Service effort was dedicated to counter proliferation, and to what extent had producing intelligence on proliferation and WMD, and on the WMD performance of countries of concern, become a higher priority for SIS during this period?

**SIS1:** It was a high priority. The requirements relating to counter proliferation were category 1. There were four countries from memory, perhaps five, in particular which were at the top of our concerns, and they included Iraq. But Iraq was by no means the most important at that period. The others were the Axis of Evil countries, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED].

So in that period, which was after all a very short

period that I was [REDACTED], only one year, they were high priority targets. The Service inevitably had a number of competing requirements and had to decide where to put those chips, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

So I would say that it was one of the Service's highest priority requirements, and in that period, I would say sort of mid-1990s onwards, we were getting used to the fact that there were not these geographical blocks which had absorbed the Service's attention up to the end of the Cold War. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] But WMD/counter proliferation was one of the top priorities of the Service.

**SIR MARTIN GILBERT:** In terms of Iraq itself, what was the view of the particular threat posed by Iraq, and in the context of the containment policy of that time, what was intelligence reporting with regard to the efficacy or otherwise of containment?

**SIS1:** We knew more about Iraq than other countries because Iraq had used WMD, and the [REDACTED] enabled us to get a much clearer idea of how Iraq was, as we thought, continuing to bring in materials and develop a capacity to have a WMD programme.

The context around Iraq was more highly developed. The intelligence picture, well placed sources inside the programme, was not highly developed. We had sort of

pinpoints of light, and I think this is a point that might apply to some of the other issues which you will be asking about.

The picture on Iraq was patchy. I think there was a presupposition of what it was, and the intelligence illuminated different parts of it in a way that seemed consistent with that picture.

As far as the containment policy was concerned, it's like playing British bulldog against impossible odds. It's a big country. You can fly in and out. It has sea ports, porous borders, and what we saw was that the Iraqis were using ingenious and sometimes pretty crude methods to bring in stuff which was embargoed. Stuff which was embargoed, but even stuff for programmes which they were allowed to have. So they had a lot to hide.

The inspection programme we know -- we knew at the time and it was subsequently verified -- was a threat to them because they didn't want to be found having stuff which they had smuggled in, even though it was for a programme that they might have been allowed to have.

There were a number of successful interdictions by sea,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

So that built up a sense that this was in the long term not a sustainable defence against Iraq not acquiring the

programmes that we supposed that it was trying to develop.

**SIR MARTIN GILBERT:** During this period, 2001, who were your main interlocutors in the United States?

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]?

**SIR MARTIN GILBERT:** [REDACTED].

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**SIR MARTIN GILBERT:** How did the CIA's assessment of Iraq's weapons programme mesh with our intelligence?

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**SIR MARTIN GILBERT:** [REDACTED]?

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**SIR MARTIN GILBERT:** [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]?

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**SIR MARTIN GILBERT:** [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]?

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**SIR MARTIN GILBERT:** And how was this disseminated through Whitehall? To what levels did these assessments go?

**SIS1:** It was done on a limited basis. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] and from memory, I think -- and this would be the normal procedure -- there would have been a letter from possibly the chief, or the relevant director, to the Foreign Office, and then onward distribution would be a matter for -- I can't remember in this case whether it was a letter to the private secretary to the Foreign Secretary, but that would be the sort of level that this would have been disseminated.

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] It was handled in the same way that a lot of the correspondence on Iraq was handled, Manning, Condi Rice, by letter, by memo.

**SIR MARTIN GILBERT:** Thank you.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Before moving on, I think Sir Roderic has got a question.

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** I want to come back on one question on containment. You said, as others have said, that in the long term it didn't look like a sustainable policy, as it was at this time, sort of 2001 pre-9/11. But up to that point, just based on what was known at the time, rather than with the benefits of hindsight, it was assessed that Iraq had been prevented from developing its nuclear programme. It wasn't actually moving forward on the nuclear front really in a significant way. There were questions about procurement, but that was about it. So we weren't very worried about the Iraq nuclear programme. We had questions about BW and CW, but they weren't of the first order of magnitude.



So there were some who were arguing, certainly pre-9/11, that while containment was leaky, politically unsatisfactory because of the effects of sanctions, that it actually had been a fairly effective policy. It was expensive. And that therefore it could be sustained, but it needed hard work to keep it up. It was not just containment. It was, as it were, sanctions plus deterrents, and it needed reinforcing, and that was where the emphasis of the work was pre-9/11.

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]?

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** So it wasn't a strict either/or option. The thing is broken, we have got to do something more dramatic --

**SIS1:** Before 9/11, no. 9/11 changed the picture.

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** It changed the context?

**SIS1:** Yes.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** I would like to come on to the pre-conflict intelligence in Iraq, but as a preliminary, the category "Weapons of Mass Destruction" is really established, as I understand it, by international agreement almost. But it covers a very wide range from the nuclear at one end down to battlefield chemical weapons per se at the other end. Perhaps hardly mass destruction, unless used on a mass scale.

Did that categorisation mean that SIS had to pay attention to the full range of WMDs with equal attention, or was the nuclear seen as something really separate and much

more important potentially?

**SIS1:** If we are talking about Iraq, I don't think that the nuclear threat was significant. But having even an embryo nuclear research programme would have put Iraq in clear breach. So there was an element of trying to look for something that would be a clear breach, the so-called silver bullet, but I don't think anyone supposed that that was the most pressing military threat, military capability that Iraq might have been trying to find.

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** Just on that, one of the issues we have discussed, which is relevant to the dossier, is this idea that if Iraq got hold of fissile material, that it would be able to short circuit -- all the problems would be resolved, put together in the warhead. This was put as a conjecture.

Was there any evidence that you saw of Iraqi attempts to get from [REDACTED] or whatever nuclear material?

**SIS1:** There was a supposition that that might be a route, but I saw no evidence that that's what they had done, nor any evidence of serious operations to do so.

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** So were you confident in that -- you couldn't argue necessarily with the proposition, but there wasn't any evidence to back it up?

**SIS1:** No, but it had to be part of any serious Counter Proliferation effort. Smuggling from [REDACTED] [REDACTED] was often exaggerated. There were all sorts of scams, red mercury and stuff, and people trying to rip other

people off with promises of fissile material. But we know from our own research establishments that even a small amount of fissile material can have a devastating impact psychologically, you know, could close the channel tunnel for quite a considerable time. So in the hands of terrorism -- I say again that that's the thing that gave this legs -- in the hands of terrorists who were prepared to kill themselves in the process, even small amounts of fissile material, provided by a state that thought that it was in their interest to do so, would cause a disproportionate amount of damage, though, of course, as you know, the evidence for Iraq's links with AQ are pretty slim.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** It seems more credible in the States than here.

**SIS1:** Yes. The States were paranoid about any threats at all, and their national security doctrine after 9/11 basically said it would be irresponsible to allow threats to fester. We must go after them before they become real.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Coming to the pre-conflict intelligence, obviously we don't want to get anywhere near source identities, but you have got one very important source, [REDACTED]. It would help us, I think, to know something about how long you had been running him, what was the motivation, reliability [REDACTED]. [REDACTED].

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

[illegible]

[REDACTED]

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** This was, I take it, stuff that, because it's [SIS] reporting, goes into the Assessment Staff, and therefore the JIC [REDACTED].

Did the impact of his reporting on WMDs in particular show any particular expertise on his part, or was he relying on things he was picking up, hearing, getting from conversations with others?

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** [REDACTED]?

**SIS1:** [REDACTED].

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** [REDACTED].

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]

SIR JOHN CHILCOT:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]?

SIS1:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

SIR JOHN CHILCOT:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED].

SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]?

SIS1: [REDACTED]?

SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: [REDACTED].

SIS1:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED].

SIR JOHN CHILCOT: Very much

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] as far as, I think, we remember from the Butler Committee and the rest, but you have also got [REDACTED] as another important source.

Can you give a thumbnail sketch in the same way, how you find him, up to how reliable was he, was he tough --

SIS1:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Yes. He had some, as it turned out with hindsight, not entirely reliable subsources.

**SIS1:** Yes. He was the source of the 45-minute report.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Yes. There was an issue here, looking back into this country. You have got [REDACTED] reporting coming in, turned into [SIS] reports like the rest. These go, inter alia, to the Assessments Staff. Because they are [SIS] reports, they do have some account of the sourcing, don't they?

**SIS1:** Yes, in terms of reliability, frequency of contact and so on.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** One of the questions we have been looking at is how far the JIC and the Assessments Staff under the JIC had or accepted or saw themselves as responsible for any of the validation process.

Now, because the [SIS] reports do have some degree of source material in them, they are not, as it were, totally sealed off -- that's "they", the JIC, the Assessments Staff. They're not sealed off from the process of collection entirely, but we have had very clear evidence that it was not seen as their responsibility in any sense to perform a validation function.

**SIS1:** Validation, true. Validation of the source, true. Validation of the intelligence, that's obviously a different

issue.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Yes.

**SIS1:** And, of course, a good relationship with the Assessments Staff involves briefing them on what lies behind the rubric, which can sometimes appear a little opaque to those who don't understand the jargon, the terminology.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Yes. Would there have been dialogue between - thinking of you as [REDACTED] - between your people and people in the assessment staff?

**SIS1:** Daily.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** As the stream of reporting came through?

**SIS1:** Yes. So a report that was considered to be important, particularly if it was going to be used in an assessment, there would be conversations and a kind of horse trading about how much can be put in and whether there was anything about the source that could help to understand the intelligence better.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Yes. You mentioned 45 minutes. There was a gossip bit going around that it was a Jordanian taxi driver who dreamt this one up. Can you tell us any more about the actual sourcing of that report?

**SIS1:** It was, again from memory, a subsource who we understood to be [REDACTED].

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Yes.

**SIS1:** And subsequently the information did not stack up. But the 45-minute report contained a number of unconnected bits of information, of which the 45 minutes paragraph was



perhaps one of the more vivid.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** It's probably not entirely a question for you, but I'll try it anyway. We have been told that the Assessments Staff and the JIC would have understood thoroughly well what 45 minutes meant, as it were between quite forward deployment and then putting it into the hands of -- it was a range of times, 20 to 45 minutes, quite realistic. Whether it was understood, was it, by ultimate consumers in that sense?

**SIS1:** I think it was. I mean, it made reference to chemical and biological weapons. The biological reference was less convincing, and I think I saw comments from the DIS to the effect that this doesn't make as much sense, and I think that whole process of working through the intelligence, it's not holy writ. These are human processes. You are looking down a very, very long tube at a very small part of the picture, and you have to understand that in transmission the intelligence can be misunderstood. So you have to interrogate back down the tube to make sure that you have got it right.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** As indeed do, or should or need to do, ultimate consumers as well.

One other case, the [REDACTED] source.<sup>2</sup> That was in your time as --

**SIS1:** Yes, although it didn't come under my direct responsibility.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** So I understand. But it's fair to ask,

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<sup>2</sup> Reporting from this source was withdrawn by SIS in July 2003.

perhaps, who did have the responsibility. You would have been familiar with the sourcing and so on.

A lot of confidence seems to have been placed on the [REDACTED] material at the start.

**SIS1:** Yes. I think it was based in part on wishful thinking.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Yes.

**SIS1:** SIS was under quite extraordinary pressure to try and get a better view of Iraq's WMD programme, and I think we marketed that intelligence -- I think this is not original comment -- before it was fully validated.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** And there were doubts in SIS's collective consciousness even before March 2003, I think. Is that right, from memory?

**SIS1:** Well before that. Even while it was still going on. Here was a chap who promised the crock of gold at the end of the rainbow. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Now, you have got to go for those, because sometimes that can be just what you are looking for.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** But that puts a huge strain on the validation process and the way in which it is reported.

**SIS1:** Well, there wasn't much to validate. What he was promising had not arrived. That was the point.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** In effect it was the promise that there would be.

**SIS1:** The promise that there would be, and I think that that created an expectation which could not be fulfilled,

not only on the part of those who were briefed on it at quite a senior level in the UK [REDACTED].

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Yes. It goes in our system right up to the top policy making levels and to the PM indeed.

**SIS1:** Yes. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED].

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED].

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** Was he the reason for the belief that there was a growing threat?

**SIS1:** No, because, again, there wasn't much to go on.

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** But did he actually influence actual assessments?

**SIS1:** No, he didn't influence assessments. He influenced expectation on the part of people who were concerned, are we going in the right direction. I think that was where it was marketed before --

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** David Omand gave us this comment that SIS over-promised and under-delivered.

**SIS1:** If he was referring to that, I think he's right. But

I would hate it to be the epitaph of the whole period. If that was the suggestion, that's completely untrue.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Sir Lawrence's question, the growing threat, I think, probably cross-refers to the Prime Minister's foreword in the dossier, the September dossier. Of course, "growing" has two senses: a growing sense of threat or a threat that is in itself growing. If it's the former, you can explain it.

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** Just to be strictly accurate, "growing" was in what he said in the House of Commons, not in the foreword. There were slightly different words in the foreword leading in the same direction.

**SIS1:** Was there a question about "growing" and ...

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** Just I asked whether, given the things he had suggested you were going to get encouraged the view --

**SIS1:** I don't think that that was responsible for a sense of growing threat in the sense that the threat was getting worse, but our improving understanding of what that threat was.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Yes. Just briefly, other sources. Can you bundle them up? It was not a long list of sources.

**SIS1:** It was not a long list, true.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** CURVE BALL I'm not sure we need to ask about. I think that's a source that is well documented.

**SIS1:** The other one of significance that we had indirect access to was [REDACTED]. He

was a significant genuine and valuable source, but our access to him was more limited.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Yes.

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** [REDACTED]?

**SIS1:** [REDACTED].

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** [REDACTED]--

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Yes. Okay. I have just got a couple of --

**SIS1:** There were others, but those were the two most significant.

**SIR MARTIN GILBERT:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]?

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Is the picture and the prospective picture following an imposed regime change by military action, about what the reaction of different factions and different elements in Iraqi society would be, was that an SIS subject of interest?

**SIS1:** It was, but extremely difficult to get at, and not necessarily a subject for intelligence collection.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** John Scarlett says the same thing: not a natural target for SIS, secret intelligence sharing.

**SIS1:** You really want somebody who has lived in Iraq and understands the way the society works, and in particular the makeup of the tribal structures and how leadership and authority and -- because it's those structures that would come to the fore once the heavy lid of the regime was removed, and we didn't understand that very well.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Sure. Just pursuing this one more step, because it was not a natural target for SIS, this particular theme, you wouldn't have been [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Yes. I think we would like to come on to that a bit later, actually.

The last thing from me on this, the last but one. Iraqi infrastructure, as opposed to social structures and vulnerability, great surprise at how run down it all was. That should have been more amenable, if not to intelligence gathering, at least intelligence observing.

**SIS1:** In what way?

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** The rundown of the power grid, the water systems and all that kind of thing.

**SIS1:** As an intelligence requirement to report on it?

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Yes.

**SIS1:** You mean that we didn't understand how run down it was?

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Yes, from any source, open or secret.

**SIS1:** Is that the case?

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** That is the evidence we have got.

**SIS1:** That Iraq seemed to be better run than in fact --

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Or in fact turned out to be far worse run and more rundown than had been expected. It is slightly surprising.

**SIS1:** I suppose there was a sort of sense that Iraq was far more powerful in the areas that were a threat than it turned

out to be.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Yes.

**SIS1:** But that was part of Saddam's genius, really, for making himself appear taller and more strong. But I think there was no doubt that, as far as the Iraqi people were concerned, sanctions were having a highly damaging effect, that lots of things in the country were really quite miserable. But the effects of sanctions were -- the regime was insulated from many of the effects of sanctions.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Yes, the regime itself.

**SIS1:** But for the ordinary people, the ordinary people felt that this was a country that was on its uppers.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** I would like to turn in a moment, and Sir Roderic will pick it up, to policy development. But just before that, methodology or validation.

When you have got a limited number of sources from a totally closed regime [REDACTED] how does the process of validation actually work? You are not getting a lot of collateral or corroborative intelligence, I guess.

**SIS1:** Again, Sir John, you have got to distinguish between the validation of the source and the information. I take it you are talking about the source.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** I think I am, really.

**SIS1:** That's a process. It happens over sometimes years, and you don't know at the outset how reliable the person is, and reliability is on a number of different levels. The



person can be reporting sincerely but erroneously, or can be fabricating, and all the gradations in between.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Yes, you could have a reliable source --

**SIS1:** It's a matter of judgment often by the case officer or case officers in his or her dealings with an individual.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** There's tremendous positive human motivation on the case officer to maximise the amount of intelligence that he collected from a source he is handling or she is handling and to come to believe in it?

**SIS1:** That's where good training and culture comes in. I think the best intelligence officers want to produce the best intelligence, not the most.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Pre-running, but not at any length, the Butler Committee question, if you like, SIS had reduced, if not run down, its requirements side from the middle of the late 1990s, I think.

**SIS1:** Earlier than that. It wasn't so much run down, but had repositioned it in the organisation.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Yes.

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Right.

**SIS1:** And I could see some disadvantages in it. But equally it was part of streamlining and getting more for the resources expended.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** And doesn't itself, therefore, bear on the source validation?

**SIS1:** No, because previously -- I won't be lengthy on this -- [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. The effect of these changes was to bring the requirements teams [REDACTED]

[REDACTED].<sup>3</sup> [REDACTED]

Now, the best [senior managers] -- and we know how that works -- will not try to maximise output. This isn't a commercial organisation. You want to produce the best and most reliable intelligence. So the fact that you want to have, you know, good statistics at the end of the year in no way causes you, or should cause you, to cut corners.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Sure. Not thinking of cutting corners, but there is, at the same time, a strong drive to meet the tasking commands that are laid on somebody.

**SIS1:** I think what we have moved back to is better. That was one of the changes after Iraq, and I think it's better.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Thank you. Policy development, Roderic.

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** I want to look at the period 2002/2003, leading up to the decision to take military action. [REDACTED]

CIA presumably were your primary interlocutors in this

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<sup>3</sup> The witness explained that the requirements teams were brought within in the same management chain as operational officers.

process.

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SIS1:

SIR RODERIC LYNE:

?

SIS1:

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
SIR RODERIC LYNE: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]?

SIS1: [REDACTED].

SIR RODERIC LYNE: [REDACTED].

SIS1: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED].

SIR RODERIC LYNE: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]?

SIS1: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

SIR RODERIC LYNE: [REDACTED]?

SIS1: [REDACTED].

SIR RODERIC LYNE: [REDACTED]?

SIS1: [REDACTED].

SIR RODERIC LYNE: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]?

SIS1: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

SIR RODERIC LYNE: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]?

SIS1: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
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[REDACTED]

SIR RODERIC LYNE: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]--

SIS1: [REDACTED]?

SIR RODERIC LYNE: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]?

SIS1: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** But you would have written to very senior officials in the Foreign Office who would have communicated this to the Foreign Secretary.

**SIS1:** Yes.

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** And the other group of people who would have been undoubtedly in the loop would have been the Prime Minister and his most senior officials, and your chief would probably, in his regular contacts with the Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary, also have discussed this with them.

**SIS1:** Yes.

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]?

**SIS1:** Yes. There was also a certain amount of resistance, shall I say in the Foreign Office, to believing what we were hearing, and I frequently heard from, for example, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED], when they were discussing these things --

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** That was [REDACTED]?

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]. In fact, as late as December 2002, we had almost a wager that there would or there would not be

a war within four months, even at that stage. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

SIR RODERIC LYNE: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] --

SIS1: [REDACTED].

SIR RODERIC LYNE: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]?

SIS1: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

SIR RODERIC LYNE: [REDACTED].

SIS1: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] --

SIR RODERIC LYNE: [REDACTED].

SIS1: [REDACTED].

SIR RODERIC LYNE: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED].

SIS1: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED].

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]?

**SIS1:** [REDACTED].

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] --

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** Did you sense that the Foreign Secretary shared in the scepticism about what you were hearing?

**SIS1:** I'm not in a position to say. I think there was a resistance in the Foreign Office generally to the idea that the Americans would do this [REDACTED].

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** Why do you think that was?

**SIS1:** The resistance to the fact that that was an accurate picture.

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** Why do you think that was?

**SIS1:** Perhaps partly because they were not hearing it from their own contacts, and partly because they thought that it was not a sensible thing to do [REDACTED]



[REDACTED].

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** And they were very intensively engaged on the diplomatic track right through this period. The vision was towards that, rather than the failure of that line.

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** Did you get a sense of the response from Number 10 to this? Was that different?

**SIS1:** Number 10 knew, I think, the story.

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** The resistance that you felt from the Foreign Office, you did not feel from Number 10?

**SIS1:** No. And I wouldn't want to overplay the thought, because, I mean, different levels -- and I wasn't operating at the most senior level. One gets, you know, a human reaction plus a sort of departmental and institutional one. But some of the co-ordination groups -- I refer in particular to the Pigott Group, which I was a member of -- I was a very active member of it. I don't think I missed any meetings, but others took it less seriously.

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** So did you get concerned that, say, the Foreign Office, which was also participating in the Pigott Group, the Ministry of Defence, DFID -- was DFID in the Pigott Group?

**SIS1:** Later, but they were in and out.

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** But the Government machine as a whole was lagging behind the point that it should have been at in

terms of preparing for this upcoming conflict?

**SIS1:** I think that's true.

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** Yes.

**SIS1:** In understanding American intentions, I think that's true, and in preparing for the consequences.

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** Now, you were very convinced of your point of view, and you were right. Were there things that you could have done to have got that point of view across more strongly into the machine, so that it wasn't blindsided by this?

**SIS1:** Well, the machine -- I mean, there was no doubt that the view of the British military was the same as ours.

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** Yes.

**SIS1:** No question. I think at Number 10 there was no doubt at all about American intentions. That's quite a big part of the machine.

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** But it does suggest that the machine wasn't co-ordinating terribly well on a very important issue.

**SIS1:** It wasn't co-ordinating. But I think it wasn't that the messages were concealed or that there was a deliberate attempt to keep the reality of the American position, as we understood it, from people. I think there was a certain sort of, well, it may never happen. Let's just get on with what we are trying to do, continue the diplomatic track, and that's surely right, because it wasn't that the decision had been made to go to war, but rather that if all else failed,

the military option was the one that would be used.

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** At what point did you get the sense that the Americans had moved from the decision on principle, which we have described, into a specific decision that they were going to take military action within a timeframe?

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**SIS1:** <sup>4</sup> [REDACTED]

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** [REDACTED]

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] we did not want to be unprepared. So this was

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<sup>4</sup> The witness outlined the early Stages of SIS preparations for military action.

about getting resources. It was about getting Arabic speakers. It was about setting up a structure, because, frankly, we are not good at that sort of thing. I think in the First Gulf War there were weaknesses in the way that we approached it. So as part of this preparation I spoke to all of the senior officers who had been involved in the First Gulf War and said what went well, what didn't, and I also turned to the military people [REDACTED] and asked for their help, and they gave me the benefit of their own planning disciplines, which then informed that paper and enabled me to go to the board and say: I want a commitment of resources to this effort. If it turns out not to be needed, okay.

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** I'll come back in a minute to the planning, but just on the scenarios and the timeframes, I want to ask a question about DFID.

Clare Short in her published memoirs referred to conversations she had -- perhaps she shouldn't have done, but she did -- with the Chief of your Service. Now, I understand that you were somebody who had conversations with her from time to time. Do you recall briefing her, either yourself or one of your colleagues, on the probability of military action against Iraq in the course of 2002?

**SIS1:** Yes, and also in the course of 2003, where she became -- I think she was convinced that it would happen, and she was concerned about the humanitarian consequences. I do remember, yes.

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** Do you recall any impediments on her access to SIS, or it was a fairly free and easy relationship that you had with her?

**SIS1:** I didn't have complete visibility of that, but I know that she felt that she may not have had as much access as she thought she needed. I think that DFID were behind the curve for a number of reasons, and I think that was possibly one factor.

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** Did you have any sense of their state of pre-conflict planning?

**SIS1:** I did. I saw them in some of the forums that existed. There were about three or four forums. There was the Chiefs of Staff meetings, which I generally attended to represent SIS. There was the Pigott Group. There were a couple of other Cabinet Office based co-ordination groups that grew up later, and DFID were slow starters at these forums as an organisation. There were a number of people who got it and were very active. I think --

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** They were slow because of ministerial orders, the Secretary of State was very much against the idea of the conflict; was that holding them back?

**SIS1:** I think there were a number of reasons. Iraq was an odd place to commit DFID resources. It was a rich country, it didn't meet the sort of poverty criteria, and DFID may have felt that it was being used as an instrument of a policy that did not go to the core of their business.

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** We have also heard evidence that they were excluded deliberately by Number 10 from some of the

planning processes.

**SIS1:** I'm not aware of that, but it doesn't immediately surprise me.

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** No. That corresponds with what you saw.

What about other Government departments? Other than DFID and MOD, were SIS involved in scenario planning with other departments such as the Treasury, for example?

**SIS1:** There was a time when we needed more resources, and I put up the numbers, but that is not what you are talking about.

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** No, I'm looking at it from a different angle. They were having to think about what the effects would be on the economy, the world finances and so on. Were they coming to you and asking questions about this?

**SIS1:** I don't recall I or my colleagues being involved in those discussions. The main interface was the intelligence community, including the Cabinet Office and JIC assessment staff, MOD, Ministry of Defence and DFID.

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** Did you yourself have any discussions with the former Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, who was leader of the House at this stage?

**SIS1:** None whatsoever, speaking for myself, and I'm not aware of any that involved my colleagues.

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** We have asked others about his intelligence briefing and the view that he came to.

I think I would like to sort of now move into the more specific preparations for the conflict. I don't know at

what point we need to take a break --

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Not yet.

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** -- and I just wanted to pause in case any of my colleagues want to ask on this area before we move to the next step.<sup>5</sup>

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]?

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]?

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

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<sup>5</sup> There followed a further discussion about SIS' engagement with its main interlocutors overseas. The witness then outlined the authorisation SIS received from Ministers for the early stages of SIS preparations for military action and the different elements of those preparations.

SIS1: [REDACTED]

SIS1: [REDACTED].

SIS1: [REDACTED]

SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED].

SIR RODERIC LYNE:

[illegible]





[REDACTED]

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED].

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** Then you set up the [REDACTED] team. Can you tell us about that?

**SIS1:** Well, it seemed that one of the lessons from the earlier conflict was that we needed a focal point for all our efforts, to draw in the resources, to plan, to communicate and to avoid distractions. I mean, most operational teams are distracted by all kinds of administrative and other functions, and we wanted this team to have very little to think about, except positioning HMG, British effort, SIS, to provide what we were asked to provide, to meet requirements. But I think the innovation here was to work closely with the military and to operate in effect in an entirely different way, I think in a way which has changed the way in which SIS operates since then.

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** That was successful, in your view?

**SIS1:** I think it was one of the successes. I think it required a different kind of operational readiness, a different kind of deployment. It asked far more of the officers we deployed than we generally asked of people. I think in some of the reviews of that whole process that we wrote within a year of the end of the conflict, we identified just how profound an experience it was for those taking part, and how important it was for, I think, some of

the signal successes of SIS's contribution to the conflict, to winning the war. Providing officers [REDACTED] close to the military commanders, with good communications, so that they not only had the benefit of the sort of, as it were, deep intelligence, but tactical intelligence, what some people call fast food intelligence, which was less rigorously assessed, but had a direct tactical impact; some of that was extraordinarily valuable. Particularly one example was the final offensive to take Basra, where a number of pieces of intelligence which were gathered and disseminated in a way which would have been unthinkable a few years earlier, were, as Brims said --

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** We will come back a bit later on to what was actually done. I think I can pretty well pause at this point in the pre-conflict story and hand over.

But just a final observation on the [REDACTED] preparations. This was preparing to do something that SIS essentially had not done before, at least in the modern post-Second World War era. This was a very new type of engagement for you that you were doing?

**SIS1:** On this scale. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

So we had done it. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] So we had experience of it, but not on that scale, and not with that amount of lead time, so that we could prepare it and plan it properly [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]





[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

SIR MARTIN GILBERT: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] ?

SIS1: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

SIR MARTIN GILBERT: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] ?

SIS1: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

SIR MARTIN GILBERT: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]?

SIS1: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

SIR MARTIN GILBERT: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]?

SIS1: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

SIR MARTIN GILBERT: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] --

SIS1: [REDACTED] ?

SIR MARTIN GILBERT: [REDACTED].

SIS1: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

SIR MARTIN GILBERT: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] ?

SIS1: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

SIR MARTIN GILBERT: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] ?

SIS1: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

SIR RODERIC LYNE: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED].

SIS1: [REDACTED]

SIR RODERIC LYNE: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]?

SIS1: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

SIR RODERIC LYNE: [REDACTED].

SIS1: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

SIR RODERIC LYNE: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED].

SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]? [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

SIS1: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** [REDACTED].

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** I think that's a good moment to break very briefly because we've got a lot of ground still to cover. Could we resume at 25 to?

**SIS1:** I'm fine. So as soon as you like.

**(A short break)**

**SIS1:** Could I just add something to what I said before?

[REDACTED]

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** It's possibly just interesting in terms of the overall time pressures that were facing the UK

Government at the time as well. There wasn't much time.

On WMD, you weren't in the lead on that.

**SIS1:** At that time, yes.

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** So I don't want to spend a lot of time on the intelligence picture itself, but perhaps just to ask you whether you found the picture clearer by early 2003 than it had seemed to you earlier, when you looked back to it at that point. You felt more confident, rather than less, if you like?

**SIS1:** I think that the impact of some of the UNMOVIC inspections had increased our confidence that the stuff was there. We just needed the intelligence [REDACTED] to produce it. There were about three or four glimpses of what was there. As it turns out, the programme didn't exist. But when, for example, [REDACTED] said they went to this place, they missed the engines for these [Volga] missiles, which would be in breach of Security Council resolutions, if you go back there you will find them. They went back, they found them. One example.

Another example, where we not only gave them the intelligence about [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] and they went to that house and they found the papers.

Just imagine trying to do this in a whole country, with such limited opportunities. So that when we sort of threw

our shy and hit a coconut, we thought that's corroborative.

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** It reinforced your confidence. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED].

**SIS1:** Yes. Not just one source; I think there were two or three that were responsible there.

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]?

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED].<sup>7</sup>

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** [REDACTED].

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** The mechanism was the so-called Rockingham Cell [REDACTED]?

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

---

<sup>7</sup> The witness explained how intelligence had been fed into UNMOVIC.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** So was there a point in this, after those successes, where you started to wonder, or were you always confident that it was there, it just had been successfully hidden?

**SIS1:** I was always confident that the Iraqis would be found to be in material breach. But whether that would be technical -- I didn't think that, given all the pressures they were under, that they had made much progress in the period that we're talking about, and although the military planning included an assumption that chemical weapons would be used, and we were hopping into foxholes with full CW protection gear and so on, by that stage I think my belief was that when and if the regime fell, that there would then be sufficient evidence inside Iraq of material breach.

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** But not necessarily then full stocks, weaponised stocks?

**SIS1:** I think battlefield chemical weapons, I think I would have expected that that would be there. But I think we received a report [REDACTED] in March 2003 to say that such was their concern about being discovered to have chemical weapons or WMD, that the stuff was put beyond immediate tactical useful deployment.

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** That was the report within UNMOVIC that was referred to in one of our earlier sessions?

**SIS1:** Yes, I think that's right. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED].

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** How influential in all of this was the intelligence you were getting on Saddam's strategy for dealing with inspections? Did that sort of reinforce the view that there was really something to hide there?

**SIS1:** I think they looked guilty as hell. In a way it's a sort of spectacular miscalculation, and I think it's partly because of their paranoia about being open to hostile scrutiny, and partly because they had stuff to hide, but not necessarily what the inspectors were looking for. From military secrets to, as I mentioned before, embargo breaking, but on things that would not have been prohibited as part of the programmes.

So there was quite a lot of evidence of the unco-operative and mule-headed and crude efforts to make the inspectors' life more difficult. Demonstrations, car crash, you know, traffic problems and heavy surveillance.

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** So this was both the empirical evidence coming from the experiences of the inspectors [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]?

**SIS1:** Yes, and it seemed to form part of a consistent picture, allowing for the fact that there was a certain assumption in the first place about what that picture was.

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** By mid-February we have this conversation with Blix and with the Prime Minister, where he



is starting to express doubts that there's anything there.

**SIS1:** Or that he would find it.

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** The phrase was essentially that it would be pretty ridiculous and absurd if 25,000 people marched into Iraq and didn't find anything, and the Prime Minister responded that he was very confident in our intelligence.

Was that sort of sense of doubt being expressed in any of the liaison services of the countries you were dealing with?

**SIS1:** Not a single one. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED].

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** [REDACTED]?

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I think there was a sense in Iraq where the leader wished to convey to a fearful regime and the people that he was powerful, that he had things up his sleeve, and that those who were responsible for various programmes wanted to convince the leader that work was continuing and that there were capabilities. It was not

a well organised place. It was extremely repressive.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** And corrupt.

**SIS1:** And it was corrupt. So people told people up and down what they wanted to hear, and things which suited their ends.

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** So do you think when all of these people were telling, the ones you met, but others too, and we have had lots of evidence of Iraqis in direct contact, for example, with the UN and Sir Jeremy Greenstock, saying, we don't have anything; were they telling the truth as they knew it then, or do you think some of them actually did suspect they had something but that was the party line?

**SIS1:** Many of them believed they had it, and in a way that was part of the picture that we were getting [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** Just one final question. One of the senses one gets from the documents is a sense that UNMOVIC weren't really up to it, that it was put together quickly, gaps in its capabilities, acting under serious constraints, the Iraqis had a game plan.

What was your assessment of how UNMOVIC was trying to do its job?

**SIS1:** I think they were trying very hard. I think they were pretty capable, but it was such an enormous task. And the Iraqis controlled the space, and I don't think that the Iraqi behaviour was consistent with a view that they were being collaborative, co-operative, and wanting to get this process over with and convincing them. We still have the sort of "proving the negative" thing. But there was a lot of sort of residual debris from previous programmes, which I think they were probably worried hadn't been fully cleared up, because there was no records and there was very little discipline. They were worried, maybe they will find stuff and they will be able to say, "Aha, you have got it", and that would be dangerous.

I think the Iraqis had a genuine fear that, even though there would have been some that knew we had no programmes, it would be difficult to prove that to the international community's satisfaction, and particularly the Americans, who were hard over on -- I think they realised -- hard over on doing it one way or another. For the Americans, WMD was not necessarily the issue.

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]?

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] what have you got,

what have you found, what's the likelihood of UNMOVIC finding a so-called silver bullet, and I think our

assessment was, from about January 2003, that that likelihood was receding.

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** Not because there was not anything to found, but it was just difficult to find it?

**SIS1:** Difficult to find it.

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** And there wasn't a point that a small still voice was saying maybe it isn't there?

**SIS1:** I regret to say no.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** I think this brings us to [REDACTED].

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** Just a couple of quick questions about [REDACTED].

You had a chance meeting with the Prime Minister in [REDACTED] in January 2003. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] the Prime Minister told you that he needed some more evidence, something that he wouldn't necessarily need to make public, but that he could use as a basis for personal assurances to the Cabinet, the PLP, and to key allies like Chirac and Putin and regional leaders, that Saddam was in breach, but he hadn't yet seen this.

You had had a brief from SIS, referred to as silver bullets, in which you told him that, while the body of available reporting was highly damning, none of the reports could yet be termed a silver bullet. The Prime Minister then said that he was surprised and pleased that you had

accumulated as much as you had, but the essence of this was he needed something more.

Two questions about that. One, did this indicate, his pleasure to learn from you that you had got as much as you had, that he wasn't actually fully up to speed, that you were telling him something that he hadn't previously realised?

**SIS1:** Difficult for me to answer that. I don't know. I think he was very fully briefed at that point, but events were moving quite swiftly. He had been on holiday for a week or so. This was just after Christmas/New Year. Events were starting to accelerate. Time was running out. And I think it was a time to gather together what we had from the inspections, from [SIS reporting], from what we thought was still there to be inspected, because from a variety of reporting, overhead and other sources, including liaison and so on, there were sites that were on the sort of shopping list for UNMOVIC to look at, and one didn't know which one of these might turn up something that could be construed as a silver bullet.

So I think what he was asking for there, and it was the principal reason why I wrote that and sent it back, was a stocktake: where are we, and can we have an assessment of what's the likelihood of the UNMOVIC process producing this kind of evidence?

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** But this was also perhaps illustrating the pressure on SIS to produce something that the Prime Minister could use to justify supporting Bush, as he said, without necessarily having a second Security Council

resolution, as you've also recorded.

**SIS1:** Yes, that was before the efforts to -- the real push diplomatically to secure -- yes, SIS was under pressure, but, I mean, not unusual pressure. We were headed to war. The question of legality of British participation had not yet been resolved. At that point I think a second resolution -- evidence that would win that second resolution, even over French scepticism and Russian obduracy, all of that was in the balance.

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** Did you sense that you were being asked as a service to find facts that would fit a policy that had by this stage already been determined?

**SIS1:** No. Clearly there's been a lot of comment on that.

[REDACTED] I think at that point, you know, there was that concern, but already by January, early 2003, we were in a different phase of activity, both on the intelligence side, diplomatically, and military preparations. So we were concerned that if the likelihood was that the Americans were going to go in, and I was in no doubt about that at all, then the dilemma for the British Government was do we stand with them, and what's the legal basis, and what's the position of the international community, that intelligence could play a very significant part in arriving at those decisions.

So the pressure was very much there. If there was information about the state of Iraq's WMD programmes and their intentions, we should do whatever we could to produce it. I didn't feel that that was political pressure. It

seemed that that was the highest possible requirement at the time from the intelligence community.

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** As you just said, the upshot of this conversation was that SIS were asked specifically to produce a stocktake within a short period after the Prime Minister's return to London, to be presented through David Manning. Originally he said through himself, and then he corrected himself and said through David because of his diary. Was that stocktake done?

**SIS1:** It was, yes.

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** Was it then sent to Number 10 directly, rather than through other channels --

**SIS1:** I can't remember [REDACTED]. I think this was over the weekend, but from recollection it was done immediately.

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** This essentially was something that was separate from the JIC, which was doing intelligence stocktakes on a very regular basis for the Prime Minister.

**SIS1:** I think it was, yes.

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** So it implies that he wasn't getting from the JIC quite what he wanted.

**SIS1:** I think the JIC moved on a different sort of cycle. I mean, it could easily have got it from the assessments machinery.

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** Would he have got from your stocktake something that was significantly different from what he was getting from the JIC?

**SIS1:** No.

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** So why was he asking for it?

**SIS1:** I think the relationships with Number 10 had become quite personalised.

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** You mean SIS's relationships at the top?

**SIS1:** Yes.

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** Too personalised?

**SIS1:** Some say.

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** Your opinion?

**SIS1:** Yes.

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** I don't think I need pursue this further.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Thank you. Rod.

Let's turn to the SIS role during the conflict, and again quite briefly because we have seen your report from 2004 of battlefield intelligence in Iraq, and very interesting it is. So just a few questions about that.

The first is the Basra conundrum. I don't know when SIS realised or became aware of the fact that we were going to take the southern route, and then after that, that Basra itself would become a military target, leaving you rather little time. Comment?

**SIS1:** Yes. Absolutely. We were galloping to keep up with events and to do what we are not often required to do, which is to produce intelligence of military value that will help win a campaign.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Yes. I would like to take for granted



the fact that there were real and very valuable successes. They come out of your report and in the comments of military commanders. But at the same time there were shortcomings, and we're a lessons learned Inquiry.

Looking ahead, keys to the success, but also keys to a future better level of success in this kind of engagement, with the green army as well as with special forces.

**SIS1:** The sort of core SIS intelligence activity is not well suited to a fast-moving military situation. By that stage they are not interested in the broad intentions of the regime and so on. They want to know where the tanks are, when they are going to move.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** But you got the "fast food intelligence" effort running.

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED].

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** I notice it's one of the main comments in your own review that communications technology advanced so fast since Gulf 1, it's still advancing, because one of your main areas of -- [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED].

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED].

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Yes. Looking to SIS's working with the green army [REDACTED] the army

itself was only beginning the process of field in the moment system. It didn't have really reliable and interoperable radio comms. We have heard quite a lot of evidence about that.

In a future conflict involving SIS in the field, would you be able to operate together with next generation military technology, do you know?

**SIS1:** I see no reason why not, but I think, as you say, Sir John, it has moved on. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

I mean, it required a lot of effort, but it did the job at the time, and in a way which was quite different from the previous Gulf conflict.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Here is SIS really changing its whole modus operandi in response to a situation that hadn't arisen before for it. Was it, as it were, reasonable tasking? Was it self-tasking? Was SIS responding to what it could see it might be able to do, with a major change of pace, tempo, doctrine?

**SIS1:** The thing is people don't know what we can do. Very often they don't know what to ask for. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

So we knew what they were thinking of, and we knew what they wanted. So we devised solutions to give it to them.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** The thing that strikes me, standing

a long way back from it, but reading some of the stuff that including you have produced, you've got the UK's one division operating on, for us nationally, a pretty big scale in the course of an even larger military operation. SIS, against that scale, is tiny.

**SIS1:** Tiny.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Is there, therefore, a sort of scale issue about the degree of involvement in the relationship with the army at war in conflict?

**SIS1:** I think so. I mean, there was no higher national priority at that time, and you could say that the resources given [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] were not consistent with that challenge. At the time I was bloody grateful to have what I was given.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Sure. You are also imposing on people, and indeed on their families, as you've acknowledged, very considerable 24/7 strains, without much time for recovery whatever. So I'm left with wondering what lesson there is to learn from that, that expectations should be limited -- expectation of SIS, not by SIS.

**SIS1:** We tend to say yes and sometimes overcommit. I think there that can-do, want-to-help attitude may have given people the impression that we were capable of doing more than we were.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Yes. One real success, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED].

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** [REDACTED] There was also the horrible tragedy, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED].

**SIS1:** [REDACTED].

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** [REDACTED]? The question really is a general one, not about that particular incident.

How far is it possible to validate or assess the reliability of targeting intelligence in realtime, in conflict, for a war? It's not what SIS normally does.

**SIS1:** Normally we have so little to go on. These are rare circumstances. This would be a matter for [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED], commanded by and directed by the military. And in a way, that's the most appropriate place for this kind of activity. My own personal view is that SIS being part of that team is better than being a separate structure, and then interfacing through field liaison officers close to the headquarters.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Thinking of SIS's involvement in [REDACTED], a very different role there, the more classic SIS role, I suppose. They were acting as a political interface. That role was re-established after the conflict in Iraq, but didn't have much, if any, of a place during the conflict itself.

**SIS1:** Could you explain?

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** I think I've got this sense that the [REDACTED] operation was mopping up so much resource, that

there wasn't much left over for any other more classical SIS effort. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] but was there an alternative effort available to SIS during the conflict?

**SIS1:** I think the work [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] was not about war fighting. It was about assisting the wider aims of the campaign. And the officers who were posted there, they were quite a large percentage of our available Arabists, some of them very much fish out of water in those circumstances, but adapted to it very quickly.

It was not just about tactical intelligence for the war fighters. It was about understanding the environment, using their language skills and what we knew of the power structures in the areas that the military were moving through, to assist an intelligent conduct of the campaign.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Any last comment on the future of the relationship between SIS and the regular army? Issues such as training familiarisation, just keeping up a level of acquaintance with military personnel, with doctrines, et cetera. Is this an effort that SIS will and can continue to make and should make?

**SIS1:** Again [REDACTED] but I think yes. I think as long as we are engaged in this kind of activity, as we have been in Iraq and now in Afghanistan, it has to be one of the clubs in our golf bag. We have got to be able to do

that. It doesn't suit everybody, and it's not what people joining, say, 20 years would have thought they were going to do, but we have to do it. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED].

So the answer is yes, but it's a very complicated and in some ways untypical of traditional SIS work that has become more common and almost mainstream.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Part of the security and defence review input, perhaps.

**SIS1:** Yes.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** I think I'll turn to Martin now about how SIS went on in Iraq.

**SIR MARTIN GILBERT:** What discussion was there before the conflict about [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]? <sup>8</sup>

**SIS1:** We didn't know what we would find. We didn't know what the circumstances would be. There were some expectations that, you know, it would be like Normandy, and flags<sup>9</sup> and hand over to the grateful Iraqi people, and we would all push off. So that would be a short-term commitment.

But I think those of us involved in planning the SIS effort were aware that this would be many months, if not a few years, and therefore we needed to be in the right places, with the right resources, the right equipment, the

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<sup>8</sup> Sir Martin asked about plans for SIS working on the ground in Iraq.

<sup>9</sup> The witness subsequently clarified that he had meant welcome flags.

right kind of people, and we followed the military campaign.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED].

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

So we followed the military plans. We didn't know what they would look like, but we had capable people on the ground, who then, as it were, worked it out as we went along.

**SIR MARTIN GILBERT:** [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]?

**SIS1:** [REDACTED].

**SIR MARTIN GILBERT:** [REDACTED] --

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED].

**SIR MARTIN GILBERT:** What was the role of the special forces teams that were located --

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED].

**SIR MARTIN GILBERT:** How did you ensure in the early days that you were talking to the right people?

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED].

**SIR MARTIN GILBERT:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]?

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED].

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** [REDACTED]?

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED].

**SIR MARTIN GILBERT:** Finally, what were your intelligence



gathering priorities at that time, and how far did they fit in, say, with HMG [REDACTED]?

**SIS1:** Well, we responded to requirements, and these were a constant subject of discussion and refinement. We took those requirements from the FCO, from the military and so on, and I would say there were probably three.

One is security, security threats, bombers and terrorism. Two was there was a residual and a very important requirement to discover those who had been involved in the WMD programmes, even allowing for the fact that those programmes had been dismantled, because they had knowledge. They were a proliferation threat. They could go elsewhere with that knowledge, and we wanted to get to the bottom of what was the pre-war intelligence.

The third was: what's happening in this country? And that's very difficult. How are the different groups of players responding to these circumstances, and what does this mean for our presence and the aims that we had, and our ability to leave? [REDACTED]

**SIR MARTIN GILBERT:** I think we are coming on later to the insurgency aspects.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** On to WMDs then.

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** Before I do, just a question going back to the pre-war. We talked a lot about -- of course, IAEA was also involved, and they reported a clean bill of health, as it were, before the start of the war. What were you --

**SIS1:** On nuclear?

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** On nuclear. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]?

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED].

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** Again, was it a surprise, the definite pronouncement made by El-Baradei about the Iraqi nuclear programme?

**SIS1:** No, I think everyone accepted that there wasn't a nuclear programme. I think there was a belief that if Saddam was given a free hand, he would buy, beg, steal or borrow a nuclear capability as soon as he could.

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** Does that go on to issues like the aluminium tubes and all that sort of thing?

**SIS1:** Yes. That was again a small piece of a bigger jigsaw. It seemed to be consistent with an interest in resuscitating or developing that programme if conditions allowed.

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** There's more to explore there, but I want to concentrate on the post-conflict search for WMD.

For how long did this issue dominate your activity, or predominate, shall we say, within Iraq?

**SIS1:** Well, I remember having conversations in sort of May 2003 about what we should be doing, and facing an increasingly adverse security situation. So there was

a strong interest in keeping our people and the coalition forces safe from attack.

But there was still then a belief that the stuff is out there and we need to find it, for two very obvious reasons. This is why we said we went in, and because it would constitute a danger, an immediate danger and a proliferation risk.

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] to ensure that we were doing everything possible, working with everyone else, including the Iraq Survey Group and coalition forces, to try and answer those questions.

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** At what point in this process did you start to think that maybe nothing was going to be found?

**SIS1:** I was starting to think that then. The expectation was you get in there, and immediately people say, "It's here".

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** And they didn't.

**SIS1:** And they didn't.

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** But the effort to find stuff carried on for some time. So did you become concerned about the opportunity costs?

**SIS1:** Yes. I remember [REDACTED] in fact saying, "Look, we are spending too much time on this", and we were saying, "You do as you are told".

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** And clearly this was pretty important to the Prime Minister, that something be found. Was "do as you are told" influenced by Number 10?

**SIS1:** No, not at all.

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** That was your tasking?

**SIS1:** Yes, this was unfinished business, and if there was WMD -- remember that Iraq was awash with weaponry, and most of the dumps were not being guarded. It was a scandal at the time that you could just about pick up munitions wherever you wanted them. Small arms, bombs, and indeed old chemical munitions were subsequently found. Some people would have liked to have thought that that constituted the breach. Obviously it wasn't a programme. These were residual munitions that had not been destroyed after the First Iraq War.

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** So there was a lag between a grudging acceptance that may be nothing would be found and winding down your effort on this?

**SIS1:** I think it would have been highly irresponsible not to really try and validate the presence, whereabouts and threat from WMD in Iraq. But I would say, to answer your question, by the end of the year, by the end of 2003, there was much less specific effort targeted against getting to the bottom of the evidence that we had before, but a readiness to respond to anything that might come up. I assume that that readiness exists to this day.

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** Was this an issue of controversy within SIS?

**SIS1:** No, it was a normal discussion about priorities, where you've got too much to do and not enough people to do it.

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** Was the American intelligence effort similarly --

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED].

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** And you gave your instinct. Was this, do you think, widely shared [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]?

**SIS1:** By the summer of 2003, I think the thought was since nothing that would have constituted a silver bullet and material breach before the war had not turned up afterwards, that was highly significant. It was telling us something.

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** The Prime Minister was continuing to say "Wait".

**SIS1:** Well, I think that was a prudent view. To have said otherwise would have been, I think, quite a shift.

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** It would have been. Looking at your sources, you very interestingly explain the importance of [REDACTED] and the reliability on many issues of [REDACTED].

Did the failure to find WMD put his reliability in

question?

**SIS1:** No. I mean, I think all his reporting was -- can be validated in the sense that he was reporting sincerely what he knew and what he saw. So he was reporting faithfully what he was being told.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Validating the source but not all the intelligence.

**SIS1:** Validating the source and validating the intelligence in the sense that he heard it.

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]?

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]?

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] it was the nature of the regime that people didn't necessarily have the full picture, that people

feared what was -- you know, what the leader was doing. There was a sense within the regime that the leader had things up his sleeve. It was like a sort of, you know, end of Second World War bunker thing, that a way would be found, some dramatic reversal at the end would be produced, and the leader would be vindicated. Even if they hated him and thought that he was leading Iraq into disaster, there was still a sort of sneaking suspicious that he knew something, that he had something. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** What about [REDACTED], the less happy story?

**SIS1:** Yes, I think we did get to the bottom of that. I wasn't personally involved. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

But I think we came to the conclusion that he wasn't as reliable as we thought and his subsources were very much less reliable.

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** Did his subsources actually exist?

**SIS1:** Yes, they did.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** But there was fabrication?

**SIS1:** There was fabrication. There was fabrication.

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** So it was alerted, I think, in early June 2003 that this might not be wholly reliable. Might it have been withdrawn earlier, do you think?

**SIS1:** I don't know. I don't know.





ambassador and his good wife and all of that stuff in America.

Your question was about lessons learned. I think there's a sort of protocol. There has to be a protocol, about preserving the integrity and security of reporting you get from one liaison service. They are a source. If you compromise that with another service, you damage the trust that is the basis of that exchange.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** But is it a universal protocol?

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I don't see any great lessons learned there, except that there was some bad intelligence and there were some bad sources, and in terms of how freely and easily we shared those insights -- I think on CURVE BALL, the fact that it was a [REDACTED] source did complicate the discussion that we were able to have.  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

.<sup>10</sup>

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** It would have helped if you had?

**SIS1:** I think so, yes.

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** The fact that it came from [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] --

**SIS1:** Yes, I think the handling of the source, and the marketing, if I can use that word, of the intelligence was

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<sup>10</sup> The witness described the constraints on SIS' ability to validate the material, in view of the fact that it came from another country's intelligence agency.

awful.

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** Generally, are there any other lessons you can think of on this story?

**SIS1:** On what?

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** On the WMD story, I guess, including the role of the technical expertise, for example. The evaluation of the evidence that you were given or examining.

**SIS1:** It's not so much a lesson. It's an observation that we based a lot on not enough.

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** I don't think I can sum it up any better myself. I'll hand over.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Thank you. Martin, insurgencies.

**SIR MARTIN GILBERT:** We return now to the security situation inside Iraq after invasion.

What did the intelligence reveal, and when, that we faced as it were an ongoing and growing Sunni insurgency, rather than just former regime elements whose power was clearly going to dwindle?

**SIS1:** I think the realisation grew in the course of 2003 and was fully out there by 2004. But you must understand that the intelligence operations [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. It is an extremely difficult and hostile intelligence environment. Everything from passing through checkpoints to -- which is probably the most dangerous point in any operation. The thought of being shot at by American security guards was

very, very real.

So one had again glimpses of this, but very difficult to get an idea of organisation. A lot of it was unstructured, unplanned. Saddam was still alive. He had not been caught. His sons were likewise. I forget when they were killed. But there was uncertainty about how -- to what extent the regime had laid plans and put people and weapons and so on in the country to conduct an organised insurgency, or whether this was sporadic and unco-ordinated activity by former Ba'athists who had not given up.

**SIR MARTIN GILBERT:** When did it become clear, or how did it become clear, that foreign Islamist extremists were going to come to Iraq and were going to make common cause?

**SIS1:** I think that was very early on appreciated. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] So I think that realisation was there from very early on, from 2003.

**SIR MARTIN GILBERT:** [REDACTED] In June 2004, at that time what was the assessment with regard to MND south east and the Shia situation? Were there any indications then in the intelligence sphere --

**SIS1:** I think at that stage we were fairly pleased with how it had gone. The south east had been -- had not been racked by the same sort of violence, suicide bombers and so on,

that the Sunni areas around Baghdad had been.

**SIR MARTIN GILBERT:** So there was no indication from the intelligence side?

**SIS1:** No, not at the time. There was certainly concern about the way in which Iranian agents and surrogates and exiles who had been in Iran and were beholden to the Iranian regime had come back into the Shia areas, and may have been dancing to a Tehran tune, but not great visibility of that, and an expectation that the Shia would run their own areas and make use of the opportunity, which had been denied them for decades, to come out from under the oppressive rule of Saddam and Baghdad.

**SIR MARTIN GILBERT:** Do we have Shia people who are providing information?

**SIS1:** [REDACTED].

**SIR MARTIN GILBERT:** [REDACTED] --

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Thanks. Can we turn for a few moments to

Iran?

SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]?

SIS1: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED].

SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]?

SIS1: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED].

SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] ? [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] --

SIS1: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] ?

SIS1: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED].

SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: And did you continue with that after the war?

SIS1: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED].

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** What was your assessment of the Al Qaeda link at that point? Was this tolerated by the Iranians?

**SIS1:** Yes, they were using Al Qaeda, no doubt for their purposes. You know, my enemy's enemy, et cetera, although there was no love lost between Al Qaeda and the Iranian regime. But they were not dealing with them as threats to the region. They were using them as a bargaining chip, at best. That's the most benign explanation.

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** Jumping ahead, I want to come back to the relationship with the Shia, but just jumping ahead, was there evidence that the Iranians used those links or gave any other help to either Al Qaeda or the Sunni insurgency?

**SIS1:** [REDACTED] I think again, if they could cause trouble for the coalition, they would. It was not in Iran's interests for Iraq to be pacified, a government to be formed, and a secular Shia-dominated state, as it were, arising on their border. I think they would have thought that that was -- that would have been a challenge to their own world picture.

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** Because it showed an alternative Shia vision?

**SIS1:** An alternative Shia vision. At least that was our assumption. I don't know that we could read Iranian perceptions to that degree.

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** Do you have a sense of when they started to use the Sunni insurgency as a way of

destabilising that or the extent of this?

**SIS1:** Again, any methods. I think they began to do it as soon as they could. Iran, after the fall of Saddam, had so many ways into Iraq, from the pilgrims to the exiles who had come across the border, and I think it was a very complicated melting pot of interests and capabilities.

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** So on a scale of 1 to 10, how important do you think the Iranians were as a factor in the Sunni insurgency?

**SIS1:** No more than 4.

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** That's quite high.

**SIS1:** Okay. Again, lack of knowledge. I mean, frankly, the Sunni insurgency was doing fine by itself.

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** Quite.

**SIS1:** So I think it wasn't a question of them sort of pumping it up. It developed its own momentum, and then I think the Iranians need not have been involved at all. But the supply of weapons and the technology of roadside bombs, I think there was some evidence of Iranian-sourced technology, and these projectile roadside bombs and the ways of evading detection were sourced to Iran.

So you stick a whole lot of those into this pot, and you know they are going to be used against the coalition somewhere or another, and I think that suited Al Qaeda fine.

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** Was that actually Al Qaeda as well?

**SIS1:** Again, I won't say that I have great knowledge, but I think, from what I know in Afghanistan, that's true.



I think Iran does not have a strong interest in a stable and peaceful Middle East.

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** Going back to the Shia, I think there was an assessment in June 2004 that Iran had not ordered attacks on coalition forces at that time, but it had provided some training and so on to Shia. But then we found, I guess, more evidence.

So do you think we were complacent about Iranian intentions early on?

**SIS1:** I think some of these things were difficult to read. I don't think there was a single view. I think people on the ground could see evidence of outside support. It was an extremely difficult intelligence target to get hold of.

I wouldn't say that complacency would describe the way in which this was approached. I think people were doing what they could, and indeed what you do about it, and what levers you have to persuade the Iranians to do otherwise, is a very difficult question.

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** Looking back, what do you think the Iranians were doing? Do you think they had decided earlier on, with the Shia as well, to encourage an attitude against the coalition?

**SIS1:** I think they saw Iraq as an enormous opportunity in all sorts of ways. They had just so many options. I think they were trying several simultaneously.

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** Looking back, is there anything we could or should have done differently to deal with the Iranian issues? Would it have been better to try to have

more contact with them directly?

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The Iranians at that stage saw themselves as surrounded. Afghanistan, the Gulf, you know, Iraq, Turkey; they were surrounded by Americans, and I think they thought we need to take whatever advantage we can from this situation.

**SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:** Thank you.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** I think that leads us neatly to US/UK relations after the conflict. Martin?

**SIR MARTIN GILBERT:** Can you tell us about the interaction that you had, that SIS had, first of all with ORHA and the CPA and what your relationships were, and also with Sir Jeremy Greenstock?

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]

**SIR MARTIN GILBERT:** Were there problems in intelligence

sharing between them?

SIS1:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

SIR RODERIC LYNE:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]?

SIS1:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**SIR MARTIN GILBERT:** [REDACTED] had the relationship between us and the American intelligence been affected by Iraq, by the experience in Iraq?

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**SIR MARTIN GILBERT:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]?

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**SIR MARTIN GILBERT:** One final question. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. I would like to know your view, really.

The Baker-Hamilton report had recommended the drawdown and Bush had adopted Petraeus' recommendation on the surge. Did this decision come as a surprise to you?

**SIS1:** I don't have special -- I think we are talking about [REDACTED]?

**SIR MARTIN GILBERT:** 2006.

**SIS1:** [REDACTED].

**SIR MARTIN GILBERT:** But in terms of your understanding of what American policy would be --

**SIS1:** Politically, they had to have a sort of end -- an exit point, and I think --

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Most domestic political American --

**SIS1:** And domestically I think we were then playing into the new presidential campaign, and you couldn't really go into that campaign with absolutely no idea how you were going to get out of this. I think the unpopularity, fueled by the casualties, was growing, and you had to call success and go.

**SIR MARTIN GILBERT:** So it was essentially a political --

**SIS1:** I think so. But equally, letting the Iraqis run it, you know, encourages positive trends. As long as the Americans were there, they were targets. So pulling them back and letting the Iraqis run it arguably would have

a benign impact on the security situation.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** We would like to come for final questions to Libya.

Just before we do, can I take you back to the CPA period in Baghdad? Looking not so much at SIS and its particular relationships, but more generally at the level, degree, quality of UK influence on the CPA -- we were after all the other partner in the coalition. We were the joint occupying power. The numbers, as you described on the intelligence front, were hugely disparate.

Can you make a judgment about whether our influence was sufficient, proportionate, effective?

**SIS1:** As a partner in this enterprise, we were disregarded by the CPA. Our advice was not taken into account. Bremer had in Jeremy Greenstock an extraordinary partner if he chose to use him, and he treated him disgracefully. He would rebuke him in meetings and tell him that he didn't expect to be contradicted, when Jeremy was offering, you know, a correcting or modifying view.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Yes.

**SIS1:** And I think that says a lot about Bremer's arrogance. He was under clear political orders, and he didn't know a lot about the country, and that's quite a lethal combination.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Arrogance and insecurity sometimes go together.

**SIS1:** Arrogance and ignorance and insecurity, and I think, you know, if he had embraced Jeremy Greenstock and they had

gone forward together, a number of the mistakes that Bremer made, and still doesn't seem to acknowledge, would not have been made.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Just a last point on that, because we have got a lot of other evidence to take. Bremer was definitely acting under political direction on those key decisions about de-Ba'athification and disbandment?

**SIS1:** Yes, but I think people were desperate for someone on the ground to tell them what to do. I don't think there was an ideological sense that this had to happen. In fact it's quite the reverse. Initially you're talking about decapitating the regime and leaving the structures in place. He went a lot further, and frankly, to this day, I don't really know why.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** Okay, thanks. [REDACTED].

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]?

**SIS1:** <sup>11</sup> [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]?

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]

---

<sup>11</sup> The witness gave some insights into the intelligence contribution to the circumstances that led to Libya giving up its WMD programmes.

[REDACTED].

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** [REDACTED]?

**SIS1:** [REDACTED].

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** Do you think it came as a direct consequence of the imminent attack on Iraq?

**SIS1:** I have no doubt about that at all.

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** They were going to get hit next, they thought?

**SIS1:** Two things. They thought, "Shit, this is real"; and secondly, at that time they were starting to think "we need to decide what our place in the world is, where we are going." And I think they wanted to repair all the damage that had been caused before and come out of the cold, and trade and have relations and so on, and deal with Lockerbie and PC Fletcher and so on, and WMD was clearly a major factor.

We knew quite a lot about the WMD programme there, in some ways more, with good reason, than we knew about Iraq, because of the Tinnens and the AQ Khan network.

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** So they saw the stick. They could also see the carrot of coming back into the international community, and they took a sensible decision [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED].

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]

[REDACTED].

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** [REDACTED]



[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]?

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED].

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** [REDACTED].

**SIS1:** I think it was the "encouraging the others" factor over Iraq that led the leader, quite a capricious and rather instinctive decision-maker, to say this might be the time to score an advantage, and get rid of something that actually isn't going to do us any good and get the credit for it, and I think that was very much his thinking.

**SIR RODERIC LYNE:** But Saddam did not think in that way, and with Saddam, the imminent threat was not enough really to get him moving. So the methodology that worked in Libya, without having to go to war, wouldn't have worked or didn't work in Iraq.

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

I think Saddam Hussein woefully misread the world, whereas I think Gaddafi reads it quite well.

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** I think we have come to the end. There's

just one point, going right back to the beginning of this session.

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] Does your recollection extend to that or not?

**SIS1:** It does not. [REDACTED]

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** [REDACTED] but it's outside our terms of reference anyway. It's just the context.

[SIS1], thank you very much indeed for your evidence. It's been helpful and illuminating.

Can I just remind that there is a transcript which will need to be reviewed in this building, I'm afraid, when it's convenient to you.

**SIS1:** [REDACTED]

**SIR JOHN CHILCOT:** I'll close the session at this point.

**SIS1:** Thank you very much.

**(The hearing concluded)**