

Monday, 7 December 2009

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(11.30 am)

MR EDWARD CHAPLIN

THE CHAIRMAN: Good morning everyone and welcome.

This morning we welcome back Edward Chaplin. Last Tuesday you gave us evidence on the development of policy on Iraq up to the point that coalition troops entered Iraq. But you moved on from that post in London to become the first British Ambassador to Iraq for about 12 years, I think.

MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: Not for 12 years in the post, but after a 12-year gap.

MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: 13.

THE CHAIRMAN: And you took on that post in 2004 until 2005, I understand. And it is in that capacity we are hearing from you today.

For practical reasons, as, indeed, last Friday with Dominic Asquith, this is a little bit in advance of our straight chronological sequence and we will be hearing other witnesses covering the period from next week.

I remind every witness that he will be asked to sign a transcript of the evidence to the effect that the evidence given is truthful, fair and accurate, and I will now handover to Sir Lawrence Freedman to begin

1 the questioning.

2 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Thank you. I think this morning you  
3 are going to be looking at the British response to the  
4 situation in Iraq from the middle of 2004 to the middle  
5 of 2005, which was with obviously the time when things  
6 were getting increasingly difficult.

7 When you arrived in Baghdad in June 2004, you had  
8 obviously been dealing with the issue up to that point.  
9 What made the most direct impression on you compared  
10 with how things had looked from a London perspective?

11 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: As you say, I was dealing with Iraq  
12 although I took a couple of months off to prepare for  
13 Baghdad, but that was taken up with a lot of briefings. So I knew  
14 pretty well what the situation on the ground looked  
15 like. But of course there was an important change as  
16 I arrived because that was timed to be just  
17 after -- actually it was in early July rather than late  
18 June -- the interim government under Dr Allawi had taken  
19 over on 28 June. I arrived in the first few days  
20 of July, so there was a completely new situation. So  
21 no one knew quite what to expect.

22 The things that were familiar were the security  
23 situation, which was actually in some ways not as bad as  
24 people had imagined because people had thought there  
25 would be an upsurge of violence to mark the transition,

1 but it was still pretty bad. But the  
2 most striking thing -- I suppose it wasn't a complete  
3 surprise, but here you had a government which had been  
4 put together basically on the basis of ethnic and  
5 sectarian balance rather than on competence to carry out  
6 various ministerial tasks.

7 But Dr Allawi was stuck with that. And I suppose  
8 the other very striking thing was the sheer lack of  
9 capacity in the Prime Minister's office and the other  
10 ministerial offices to start the business of governing.  
11 We knew it would be lacking because, of course, many of  
12 the leaders, including Allawi himself, had spent many  
13 years in exile and didn't have very much experience of  
14 the business of government, but even so the sheer  
15 dysfunctionality, if that's the right word, of the  
16 ministerial apparatus was very striking and it was an  
17 area in which we gave a lot of our help in the early  
18 days.

19 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Not long before you arrived, there  
20 had been three particular events during April which had  
21 coloured many people's attitudes to how Iraq was likely  
22 to develop. That was the failed American effort on  
23 Fallujah, the arrival of Moqtadr Al Sadr as a serious  
24 political force with the militia, and the revelations  
25 about what had happened at the prison at Abu Ghraib.

1 I wonder how these coloured attitudes to what was  
2 possible in that period, particularly the arrival of the  
3 Shias as a potentially violent factor in our position?

4 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: Yes, I mean, those -- certainly those  
5 first two issues, Fallujah and the Moqtadr Al Sadr problem,  
6 dominated the first few months.

7 There was a crisis in Najaf, in southern Iraq,  
8 in August, with an uprising inspired by Moqtadr Al Sadr,  
9 which was settled by a ceasefire negotiated with  
10 Sistani, and that ceasefire more or less held. So --  
11 and I think the -- perhaps the broader point to make  
12 about that sort of sectarian violence is to draw the  
13 distinction between the, so to speak, internal  
14 opposition, those who had stayed all through the  
15 terrible years of Saddam Hussein and had been the  
16 opposition there, which was the Sadrist movement on the  
17 whole, who regarded those who were now mostly in power,  
18 which were mostly exiled leaders, in a rather  
19 unfavourable light, understandably.

20 They would claim -- and I had contacts with these  
21 people -- that was part of my job, to be in contact with  
22 as many different elements as possible to promote  
23 national reconciliation, which was going to be vital.  
24 But it was clear that they felt excluded from the  
25 process and, therefore, thought that violence was the

1           only way to make their views felt.

2           Fallujah was another theme which carried right  
3           through until November. As you say, there was the --  
4           there was the battle in April and so that was unfinished  
5           business, certainly unfinished business for the  
6           Americans, but also for Allawi. And there was a lot of  
7           discussion at the Ministerial Committee for National  
8           Security, which both I and the US Ambassador,  
9           John Negroponte, were members of, a lot of discussion  
10          about how serious the problem was, what the risks of  
11          action were, if and when to go in and deal with the  
12          problem. And in the end I think Allawi felt  
13          compelled to act -- the reason he felt compelled to act  
14          was because it was such a serious part of the security  
15          threat.

16          Fallujah by October/November 2004 was, by all accounts,  
17          a major terrorist haven. The numbers varied --  
18          there were said to be thousands of terrorists, and it  
19          was certainly a factory for car bombs, and a lot of the  
20          violence, the increasingly sophisticated attacks that  
21          were happening in Baghdad and central Iraq, were sourced  
22          out of Fallujah. So there was that reason for going in.

23       SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: We are now jumping ahead a bit.

24                That's in November.

25       MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: The risks, just to finish on that point,

1           were also pretty clear, of which the major one was what  
2           would this do to Sunni sentiment in the country and  
3           would it scupper the chances of them taking part in the  
4           elections in January 2005.

5           And I suppose since I have mentioned that, I should  
6           say that the overall priority for the embassy -- I mean,  
7           there are other priorities that I can come back and talk  
8           about -- but the overall priority was the support of the  
9           political process and making sure that elections could  
10          take place on time at the end of January 2005. That was  
11          the overwhelming priority.

12       SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: And Abu Ghraib, which in terms of  
13          the international opinion certainly had a major effect.

14       MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: I think Abu Ghraib did huge damage to  
15          the whole image of the enterprise and it took a long  
16          time to recover from that. And that whole issue of  
17          detainees, it wasn't one that took up an awful lot of my  
18          time, but that was a constant theme with the ICRC and  
19          others interested in the human rights --

20       SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: That's the International  
21          Committee --

22       MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: Of the Red Cross, sorry. I think it  
23          took a long time to recover from that.

24       SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: How did your American interlocutors  
25          respond to the situation which -- I mean, there were

1 other, obviously, stories about what British soldiers  
2 may or may not have done, but there was nothing to  
3 compare in terms of imagery to those that were coming  
4 out of what had been Saddam's own prison.

5 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: John Negroponte arrived  
6 almost simultaneously with me as US Ambassador. He was  
7 very conscious of the damage it was doing to the image  
8 of the US and of the coalition in Iraq, and I think  
9 helped set in hand a number of improvements. But as  
10 regards opinion in the Arab world, which was probably  
11 the most critical factor, you know, the television  
12 images replayed again and again and again I think did  
13 damage, certainly.

14 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: You mentioned, when talking about  
15 Moqtadr Al Sadr, the role of the Ayatollah Sistani. He is  
16 obviously quite a critical factor, but never played  
17 a very prominent political role. How important did you  
18 see him at the time in terms of managing that side of  
19 the sectarian equation?

20 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: He was a crucial figure and, indeed, if  
21 he had disappeared -- because there were some worries  
22 about his health at one stage while I was there --  
23 I think most people thought that would have been a  
24 highly destabilising event because I think one of the  
25 roles he played was to keep in check some of the more

1 extremist elements on the Shia side, including  
2 Moqtadr Al Sadr. And he may not have been publicly very  
3 prominent, but he was extremely influential in  
4 encouraging the putting together of the Shia list for  
5 the elections which, indeed, ended up with a majority of  
6 the seats in the election.

7 So in terms of entrenching Shia majority rule, if  
8 you like, in Iraq, at that stage, or at least giving  
9 Shia parties the best chance of winning political power,  
10 I think he was extremely influential. But he was also  
11 a moderating factor. He wasn't someone, of course, who  
12 dealt with ambassadors, but we did talk to a lot of  
13 people around him.

14 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Again, just to get the sense of  
15 policy in the summer of 2004, what was the prevailing  
16 analysis of what could be done to deal with the  
17 deterioration of security, and in particular what was  
18 seen to be the significance of the move away from the  
19 CPA and the Coalition Provisional Authority to an Iraqi  
20 interim government?

21 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: The move away from the CPA was an  
22 important symbolic act. You had an Iraqi government led  
23 by an Iraqi Prime Minister. Security, of course,  
24 dominated their thoughts in terms of priorities, because  
25 on that depends everything else. You can't do much

1 about reconstruction or standing up public services,  
2 and they were very conscious, this government, that they  
3 would be judged by the electorate -- and they didn't  
4 have very long -- they would be judged on how effective  
5 they were in improving the daily lot of Iraqis who, of  
6 course, cared about that a lot more about services than they cared  
7 about abstract constitutional concepts and so on.

8 So it was very much a priority, and the response to  
9 what Allawi was most interested in was producing as  
10 quickly as possible effective Iraqi security forces that  
11 he could deploy to deal with the security problem.  
12 That's not just army, but national guard and police.  
13 And so that main task was in the hands of  
14 General Petraeus , who at that time was in  
15 charge of the Iraqi-isation of forces.

16 But we did our bit as well, particularly, of course,  
17 in the south, where our troops were, with the training of  
18 National Guard and police and quite a lot of the DFID or  
19 of the aid effort went into -- both in Baghdad and in  
20 Basra, went into the police force.

21 So that was the critical lack, if you like, having  
22 reliable, effective, trained security forces to deploy  
23 against these various forces.

24 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Just to stay a little bit with the  
25 interim government, it had been put together through

1 a complex process involving the UN and others. Did you  
2 feel Allawi had a natural constituency within Iraq? Did  
3 he have any personal authority?

4 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: He was seen very much as one of the  
5 exiled leaders, so that was, if you like, a handicap. On  
6 the other hand, I think he was respected as a tough  
7 person who knew what he was about and realised security  
8 was the main priority. And I think it was also  
9 recognised that he was having to deal with a very  
10 difficult situation.

11 So if you like there was a honeymoon period that  
12 lasted perhaps most of the summer, but later, by the time we  
13 got to the run-up to the elections, I think  
14 people were disappointed that his government had not  
15 produced more, particularly in improving public  
16 services.

17 I think, just to give a sense of the number of  
18 things on his plate, apart from security, which we have  
19 touched on, and the sectarian violence there was  
20 the political process. He put a lot of effort into  
21 contacts with particularly the Sunni community to try  
22 and persuade them to come into the political process.  
23 There was the whole business of economic reform and  
24 sorting out Iraq's finances, contacts with the IMF and  
25 he wanted to put together a debt relief deal, which

1 indeed happened later.

2 He was very concerned about the neighbours,  
3 particularly Iran and Syria, but also the wider region,  
4 and wanted to get support from them for the political  
5 process. So quite a lot of his time and effort went  
6 into that. He did quite a lot of travelling overseas.  
7 And then there was the -- it wasn't perhaps very much in  
8 the news at the time but it was an important part of  
9 what a new government had to treat as a priority, which  
10 was the Iraq Special Tribunal and the trials of war  
11 criminals, Saddam Hussein and so on, setting that up.

12 So he had a huge amount on his plate, but  
13 actually -- of course most of his time was absorbed in  
14 crisis management, so one shouldn't be too harsh on  
15 judging his achievements or lack of them. He avoided  
16 any major disasters, he did take the important decision  
17 on Fallujah, which turned out to be the right decision,  
18 I think. He did stick to, in the end, and deliver --  
19 his government delivered elections with a lot of outside  
20 support, including from ourselves. And that was really  
21 the major event.

22 He also showed, I have to say, a lot of personal and  
23 political courage in carrying out the job of  
24 Prime Minister, a pretty thankless task at the time.

25 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: One of the criticisms of this period

1 is that the coalition accepted the sectarian divide and  
2 in some ways reinforced it in the way that they dealt  
3 with the different communities and in the setting up of  
4 the way the elections were established. And Allawi was  
5 somebody who notably tried to escape that.

6 Do you think he was handicapped by the fact that  
7 politics had become increasingly sectarian post-Saddam?

8 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: I think that was a handicap. In an  
9 ideal world, it would be nice to think that you could  
10 have a fresh start and encourage non-sectarian lists to  
11 link up. He did, as you say, try quite hard with his  
12 own centrist, secular list, which didn't do badly. It  
13 won 40 seats in the elections.

14 But in the end, I think that's another aspect of the  
15 pack of cards that he was dealt on arrival. And looking  
16 back, it is inevitable that for these first elections at  
17 least, people were going to coalesce round the parties,  
18 the individuals that they felt most comfortable with,  
19 and those were going to be tribal and sectarian or  
20 religious leaders. And so it was perhaps inevitable  
21 that the result of the elections was rather decided on  
22 a sectarian basis.

23 Not entirely. One shouldn't exaggerate it. There  
24 were no clean divides in the political body in Iraq in  
25 the sense there was Sunnis and Shias on every list. But

1       it wasn't until later, I think, the political process,  
2       if you like, matured, and it is noticeable that the vote  
3       for the major Shia list went down in the subsequent  
4       elections in December 2005, because they too were  
5       failing to deliver what people thought was really  
6       important.

7             Also, of course, the Sunni, having boycotted --  
8       which I think was a strategic mistake, but we can talk  
9       about that -- having boycotted the January elections,  
10      did get themselves into the subsequent elections and  
11      showed some of the strength that they had.

12   SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: I want to go on in a minute to that  
13      and the interrelationship with Fallujah. Can we just  
14      briefly perhaps, before we do that -- it is a very  
15      important issue -- get your sense of the targets, and the  
16      inspiration, for the developing violence within Iraq  
17      during the first months when you were in Baghdad,  
18      because it was changing at that time.

19   MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: Well, the insurgency -- and of course  
20      there are two elements to this: there was the foreign  
21      insurgency, the sort of terrorist groups coming in and  
22      following their own agenda -- Zarqawi and his ilk -- and  
23      a lot of other foreign fighters; and there was  
24      the internal insurgency fed by disgruntled, resentful  
25      Sunnis. We talked last time about the results of

1 de-Ba'athification and the dissolution of the army  
2 feeding that.

3 But what they were targeting, I think they were  
4 determined to prove that this was a government that had  
5 could not succeed and determined to throw the political  
6 process off track; in other words, to determine that  
7 there could be no progress without them.

8 That would be the Sunni take, I think. The foreign  
9 fighters were rather more negative than that. Their  
10 political agenda perhaps was different.

11 So what they did was target people and  
12 infrastructure, individual ministers and -- but once  
13 they were better protected going down the chain,  
14 assassinations of more junior people, a lot of  
15 intimidation -- police, truck drivers driving fuel,  
16 bowsers, that sort of thing -- and a lot of targeting of  
17 infrastructure, which I think later became rather more  
18 sophisticated. So instead of just blowing up a pipeline  
19 which can actually be quite easily repaired, they would  
20 blow up a pumping station which was more difficult to  
21 put right, as I say, in order to prove to the Iraqi  
22 population that this was a government that didn't have  
23 the capacity to meet their needs.

24 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Part of this, perhaps particularly  
25 relevant for British opinion, was the start of hostage

1 taking. So we had in this period the Kenneth Bigley and  
2 Margaret Hassan cases. How aware were you of the danger  
3 to British nationals in Baghdad?

4 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: Very aware. And, indeed, I think if you  
5 looked at the travel advice at the time, it would be  
6 "don't come anywhere near this place". They were  
7 terrible incidents. I mean, terrible obviously for the  
8 families, but terrible for the embassy in the sense that  
9 we were very helpless.

10 Kidnapping was very widespread at the time. This  
11 was often carried out by criminals rather than political groups.  
12 Of course, as we have seen elsewhere, often criminal gangs will  
13 carry out kidnappings of what they think are valuable  
14 people, valuable in the sense that they can be sold on  
15 to some political group. And I don't think we know even  
16 now exactly who was behind either kidnapping. I would  
17 have to refresh my memory.

18 I mean, they were different in the sense that  
19 Ken Bigley, we didn't even know about. He hadn't even  
20 registered with the embassy, we didn't know he was  
21 there. He was working with these two Americans for a  
22 Gulf company. The first thing we knew of his existence  
23 was when the news of the kidnap came through.

24 Margaret Hassan was different. In fact, I had met  
25 her before when I was Ambassador in Jordan because she

1 worked for CARE Australia, a very effective NGO, one of  
2 the few working inside Iraq before and after the  
3 invasion. So I admired the work that she was doing and  
4 the embassy kept in touch.

5 So that was, if you like, an even greater blow. But  
6 just to explain -- I don't know if you want to go into  
7 detail about this, but I probably cannot because what  
8 happens when a kidnapping of a British citizen takes  
9 place is you have set up a really discrete team because  
10 this needs 24-hours-a-day attention. So that team was  
11 led by my deputy and we had a lot of support  
12 particularly coming out from London, experienced  
13 negotiators and so on.

14 So after the initial phase, my job was really to  
15 keep it in the minds of Iraqi ministers whom we thought  
16 could help, the army and the police and so on, and  
17 do whatever else I could do to help.

18 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: What sort of response did you get  
19 from --

20 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: Very positive and, of course, this was  
21 raised all the way to Allawi himself and it was raised  
22 by ministers, but they didn't have the capacity to help  
23 very much, I don't think. And, of course, they were  
24 dealing at any one time with lots of other kidnappings.

25 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: We had no evidence ourselves of who

1           was holding her?

2   MR EDWARD CHAPLIN:  I think the assumption early on was it  
3           was a criminal gang of some sort, but we never got very  
4           far in pinning down exactly who was behind it and -- let  
5           alone having contacts that might lead to some progress.

6   SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:  And in the aftermath of her murder,  
7           we still seemed to have been in the dark as to what had  
8           happened and, indeed, where her body was.

9   MR EDWARD CHAPLIN:  Some time later some of her clothes and  
10          possessions were found.  We knew her husband as well,  
11          who stayed on in Baghdad.  So we would see him from time  
12          to time.  I don't know what the investigation --  
13          continued investigation showed.

14   SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:  Thank you.  It may be an issue we  
15          will need to explore in different ways.

16          If we then move on to the question of Fallujah, this  
17          had been something of an embarrassment for the coalition  
18          in April because the Americans had sort of set  
19          themselves up to take the city and then held back  
20          because of concerns about the violence that would  
21          result.

22          Why was it different in November and were you  
23          comfortable about the way the actual entry into Fallujah  
24          was handled?

25   MR EDWARD CHAPLIN:  It was different because the problem had

1           become more serious. I think I described earlier the  
2           terrorist haven that it had become and the threat that  
3           it posed, not just to the inhabitants of Fallujah but  
4           many of the central cities where these car bombs were --  
5           car bomb attacks were taking place.

6           So, if you like, the argument swayed backwards and  
7           forwards between those who thought that you had to take  
8           military action against Fallujah -- and of course there  
9           were negotiation attempts right up to the last minute,  
10          but in the end, if it had to be done, you had to take  
11          military action in order to improve the security, in  
12          order to allow elections to take place -- and the  
13          contrary view, which was that if you went in with  
14          military action with a lot of casualties on -- a lot of  
15          civilian casualties, never mind the military ones, you  
16          would so enrage Sunni opinion that the risk would be  
17          perhaps an implosion of the Allawi government --  
18          which had many Sunni members -- and so  
19          alienate Sunni opinion in the country that they would  
20          refuse to take part in elections.

21          And Allawi hesitated and there were long discussions  
22          in the Ministerial Committee, but in the end (and  
23          Ramadan was a factor -- it was thought not a good thing  
24          to do during Ramadan) -- but in the end he decided it had  
25          to be done.

1           Our own view was one of caution,  
2           highlighting the risks and trying to make sure that  
3           Allawi considered really carefully the pros and cons.  
4           But in the end it was his decision, and obviously an  
5           American decision, and the Americans of course concluded  
6           that this was the right thing to do. And I think they  
7           were proved right, in fact.

8           Our main involvement and the main thing we  
9           emphasised afterwards was that if there had to be  
10          military action, then the government needed to organise  
11          itself to ensure there was rapid follow-up, looking  
12          after displaced people, returning them as soon as  
13          possible, looking after the humanitarian aspects. And  
14          the part of the DFID team that was working closely with  
15          the Ministry of Health was heavily involved in that  
16          because, again, there was a lot of oral commitment that,  
17          yes, this was important and should be done, but actually  
18          turning that into action was more difficult and needed  
19          quite a lot of support, and that was provided by some of  
20          our experts.

21   SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: But we weren't directly involved in  
22          the attack itself?

23   MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: We weren't directly involved. It was in  
24          the aftermath; General Kiszely, who was by that time the  
25          senior British military representative in Iraq.

1 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: We will be talking to General Kizley

2 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: Well, you can talk to him because he was  
3 co-ordinating the humanitarian effort.

4 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: One of the consequences of that  
5 arguably was the non-participation of Sunnis in the  
6 election, or did you say it had other roots?

7 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: I think it was a factor, but I think it  
8 was more complicated than that. We spent a lot of  
9 time -- and this is probably an area where we were a bit  
10 more active than the Americans, at least in the early  
11 months and the lead-up to elections -- in our contacts  
12 with the different Sunni factions and laying out to them  
13 the arguments as to why we thought they should take  
14 part. The main reason being that the point of the  
15 elections was to elect a transitional assembly whose  
16 main job was going to be drafting the constitution on  
17 which there would then be a referendum in October and  
18 further elections in December.

19 So we were underlining, if you like, the unwisdom of  
20 excluding themselves from the process, denying  
21 themselves a place at that table and, therefore, denying  
22 themselves a part in that crucial bit of rebuilding the  
23 state of Iraq.

24 I think there were a number of reasons why they felt  
25 they couldn't take part. One was security; another was

1 I think they hoped until quite late on that the  
2 elections wouldn't take place because of insecurity, and  
3 I think they felt very sore and very excluded from  
4 the -- not just because of the attacks on Fallujah, but  
5 because of their exclusion from the process -- what they  
6 saw as the government not paying enough attention to  
7 their particular concerns.

8 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: What was the effect of their  
9 non-participation in terms of putting together  
10 a government after the elections?

11 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: Well, it made it more complicated, but  
12 in fact I suppose one of the results of our constant  
13 lobbying of the new government -- well before and  
14 after, of those who were forming the government  
15 under Prime Minister Jaafari, was the need to, despite  
16 the election results, despite the relatively low Sunni  
17 participation -- of course it wasn't negligible, there  
18 were quite a lot of Sunni members of parliament, but if  
19 you like, what we were pressing for was to make sure  
20 there was an adequate number of credible Sunni figures  
21 in the new government, and separately an adequate number  
22 of credible Sunni representatives in the Constitutional  
23 Drafting Committee in the Parliament.

24 So if you like we were asking people to set aside,  
25 up to a point, the results of what everyone agreed was a

1 democratically free and fair, reasonably well-run  
2 election for the sake of national reconciliation and  
3 the future of the country.

4 And in the end, though it took a very long time --  
5 and the delay itself, I think did some damage -- in  
6 the end Jaafari and the Shia slate agreed to make  
7 room for credible Sunni figures in the government.  
8 I think later on, although that was, I think, mainly  
9 after I left -- the constitutional process got going in  
10 mid 2005 -- Sunni voices were listened to.

11 At any rate if you like the lesson the Sunni  
12 community learned from that process was that they should  
13 certainly join in the next round, so to speak, the  
14 referendum on the constitution, and the elections at the  
15 end that of year. And they were telling us that from  
16 very early on after the elections.

17 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Jaafari's coming to power, as you  
18 say, took a number of months. Why was that? Were we  
19 trying to play a role in expediting the process?

20 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: Yes, we were. It took a long time  
21 because it was a very complicated process, because what  
22 you ended up with in fact was a sort of government of  
23 national unity. But the initial steps, if you like,  
24 were to -- for the different -- the major winners to the  
25 Shia list, to sort out amongst ourselves, because it was

1 something of a rainbow coalition, what the balance of  
2 influence was going to be, who was going to take which  
3 ministry -- assuming they were going to have half the  
4 number of ministerial posts, how those were going to be  
5 divided up. So there was a lot of internal negotiating  
6 going on and we really had to wait for that to finish.

7 Then there was the Kurdish factor, and there was  
8 a negotiation between the Kurds, who were the second  
9 most important party, and the question of whether they  
10 were going to come in -- there was, I think an agreement  
11 they reached with the United Iraqi Coalition, the Shia  
12 list, which took a lot of negotiating. And then there  
13 was the separate question of whether Allawi was going to  
14 be part of the government or not.

15 So it was quite complex and that's why it took so  
16 long. And in that process we and the American embassy  
17 as well were in constant touch, though by now I think  
18 John Negroponte left about this stage, so I suppose  
19 I was perhaps more involved than I might otherwise have  
20 been in talking to the leaders of the main parties who  
21 had a say in the formation of the government to urge  
22 speed, but also to urge visible signs of national  
23 reconciliation so that everybody could play a part in  
24 the new government and the drawing up of the new  
25 constitution. And that included contacts with the Sunni

1 groups as well, urging them to be patient and to respond  
2 to offers.

3 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Did Jaafari seem to you to have  
4 a different set of priorities and competencies to  
5 Allawi?

6 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: He was a very different character  
7 compared to Allawi. He saw the political point of all  
8 this and I think he in the end worked quite hard to make  
9 sure that his government did have the right elements,  
10 and I think the Sunni community ended up with about  
11 20 per cent of the Cabinet posts, which wasn't far off  
12 their share of the population.

13 But he was rather -- he had a rather different style  
14 of government, and of course he was faced with many of  
15 the same problems that Allawi was faced with. Security  
16 was still bad. He had more security forces to play  
17 with, the Iraqi-isation process was that much further  
18 on. The services were still as bad. In fact, I think  
19 the electricity supply was lower at the time of the  
20 elections than it had been before the invasion. So that  
21 is quite an indictment -- or perhaps it's tribute to the  
22 success of the insurgency in knocking everything out,  
23 because certainly a lot of money had gone into  
24 rebuilding that.

25 So he had a lot of expectations to manage, plus the

1 constitutional process on top of that.

2 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Then just my final question for the  
3 moment. As you are making an effort to incorporate the  
4 Sunni more into the political process, them having  
5 excluded themselves largely in January, what effect does  
6 that have on our relations with the Shia community? Is  
7 there a balancing act and were we losing some support  
8 that may have been relevant to the unrest in Basra  
9 later on?

10 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: I don't think that there was that sort  
11 of connection. I think most Iraqis regarded us as more  
12 or less honest brokers. Of course, we had a long  
13 history of involvement in the country. We were able to  
14 make the point to the Sunnis that in 1920, when we had  
15 had the mandate and had set up the very first government  
16 in Iraq, the Shia had unwisely excluded themselves from  
17 the political process and had paid the price for the  
18 next 85 years. The Sunnis should not make the same  
19 mistake.

20 So I think that -- and when I was talking, for  
21 example -- I said I was in contact with a very wide  
22 spectrum of different groups, but if you talked to the  
23 tribal chiefs, the Sheikhs, they would always start  
24 conversations with memories -- fond memories, they would  
25 claim, of dealing with the British. As you know, Arabs

1 can get quite sentimental about this sort of thing. The  
2 facts don't always bear out their memories.

3 So I suppose there was some trust that this was  
4 a country that we knew and, of course, we would talk to  
5 all concerned. I don't think people held that against  
6 us. I think what they held against us was different, it  
7 was the way we had handled the run-up, particularly on  
8 the Sunni side, the way we had allowed the Iraqi army to  
9 be dissolved and the way we had set up the CPA and the  
10 way we had set up the new government. And, again,  
11 I mean, the people on the Sunni rejectionist side that  
12 we had talked to had that real grievance with the exiled  
13 politicians, and there was a real feeling -- and you are  
14 familiar with how easily conspiracy theories take  
15 root in the Middle East -- there was a real feeling  
16 amongst some of those rejectionists that this had all  
17 been dreamt up between exiled politicians like Chalabi,  
18 and the US administration, the neo-cons, and they were  
19 just coming in to divide the country up and divide the  
20 spoils. It was as crude as that.

21 But we always had a hearing. We may not have made  
22 always enough impact, and the Iraqi Islamic party, the  
23 most moderate Sunni party, which withdrew late in the  
24 day, towards the end of December, I think agonised a lot  
25 over what the right thing to do was. And even after

1           they had decided not to take part, they in fact left  
2           their party's name on the ballot. They did actually get  
3           some votes, even a few seats, I think. And they were  
4           certainly still in contact with us going through into  
5           the period for the formation of the Jaafari government.

6   SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Thank you very much.

7   BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: Mr Chaplin, you were the director of  
8           Middle East and North Africa before you went to Iraq  
9           in June 2004. Perhaps you can tell us a little bit  
10          about what were the UK policies in relation to Iraq at  
11          that time and did it look relevant when you arrived  
12          there, because you have given us the description of what  
13          you found on the ground?

14   MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: I think I probably gave last time quite  
15          a detailed account of UK policy at the time, but the  
16          objectives, if you like, that we set ourselves before  
17          I arrived -- it was actually the early days of  
18          July 2004 -- were firstly to support the political  
19          process, especially the electoral process, make sure the  
20          elections took place on time, the national  
21          reconciliation that I have already talked about. That  
22          was the first priority. The second was to play our part  
23          in helping to build up Iraqi security forces, army and  
24          national guard and police. The third was to play our  
25          part in contributing to economic reform and

1 reconstruction, the restoring of public services  
2 particularly in our area in the south. A fourth was to  
3 support Allawi and the key ministries -- I talked at the  
4 beginning about the incapacity -- just to get simple  
5 things done in ministries. So we had a team helping  
6 Allawi's office just to do simple things that a system  
7 like ours takes for granted, but also in some other key  
8 ministries, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of  
9 Defence -- where there was a separate MoD team -- and the Ministry  
10 of Health I mentioned in the Fallujah context.

11 And the last priority, though this was more for my  
12 colleagues in posts around the region, was to encourage  
13 wider international support for the new government. And  
14 there was an important conference in Sharm-el-Sheikh in  
15 Egypt in November 2004 to help gather international  
16 support, and there was an important donors  
17 conference in Tokyo, I think in early December.

18 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: December of?

19 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: December 2004. Where, again -- this is  
20 perhaps a good example of the sort of practical help we  
21 gave. We helped the Deputy Prime Minister,  
22 Barham Salih, who was the Iraqi representative at that  
23 conference, draw up a development strategy to be  
24 presented to donors because we knew the sort of things  
25 that --

1 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: What I really want to find out from  
2 you is whether this policy that you had, was it relevant  
3 to what you found on the ground or not?

4 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: Those priorities, yes, they were  
5 relevant to the ones that we set ourselves early on, and  
6 the ones that I carried with me, so to speak, to Baghdad  
7 were very much the relevant ones.

8 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: How did those square with those of  
9 the United States? Was there much alignment with the  
10 approach that the UK had?

11 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: Yes, I think there was. We worked very  
12 closely with them at different levels. Of course, there  
13 is a lot of contact between London and Washington,  
14 between Nigel Sheinwald, who I think you are going to  
15 talk to as well, and Dr Rice. There was a lot of  
16 contact between myself and John Negroponte, the US  
17 Ambassador and the people working for us on both sides,  
18 on different aspects. There was a lot of contact  
19 between our military, because the senior British  
20 military commander was the deputy commander of the  
21 multinational force in Iraq.

22 So at all these levels we worked very closely. Also  
23 in contributing to the sort of policy debate that went  
24 on. So, for example, the major security problem from  
25 which everything else -- resolving that was the key to

1 everything else. In the early days -- because you had  
2 a new team on the US side: you had General Casey and  
3 John Negroponte, and they rapidly saw that they needed  
4 a new strategy. But the discussions for drawing that  
5 up, the counterinsurgency strategy, they invited to us  
6 contribute. So I attended some meetings of that with  
7 some colleagues. So I think we had some impact there.

8 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: What was the different strategy that  
9 was pursued by Casey and John Negroponte compared to  
10 before and what was our contribution to that?

11 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: It was, if you like, a more holistic  
12 approach, the recognition, which is easy to say but more  
13 difficult to put into practice, that you couldn't just  
14 deal with the insurgency by military means, you couldn't  
15 treat it as a counter-terrorism problem. The  
16 counter-insurgency strategy needed to be different, it  
17 needed to include getting the political process right,  
18 it needed crucially to include getting improvements on  
19 the ground, changing the environment in which the  
20 insurgents operate. That was the key. And that means  
21 redirecting resources to projects which would have quick  
22 impact, which would impress people, which would boost  
23 the credibility of the Allawi government.

24 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: What kind of projects were they?

25 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: Reconstruction projects, public service

1 projects.

2 There was that very large sum of money, you  
3 remember -- \$18.5 billion, I think -- allocated by  
4 Congress. Not an awful lot of it had been spent, so  
5 I think one of the results of this new strategy was to  
6 reallocate sums of money from that to what was seen as  
7 the priority projects.

8 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: Were we perceived differently to how  
9 the United States were perceived on the ground?

10 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: Yes. Of course, our area of operations  
11 in terms of delivering projects on the ground was  
12 largely confined to the south. I'm sure you will go  
13 into that in more detail with the military commanders  
14 and the consul generals because that was pretty much  
15 a self-contained operation.

16 But we had impact there. I suppose the frustration  
17 there -- but you will hear more about that from other  
18 witnesses -- was that the south being relatively quiet  
19 in this period, a relatively permissive environment, in  
20 the jargon, was not a very high priority for the  
21 Americans. They had this huge reconstruction programme.  
22 But both on the military training side and on the  
23 reconstruction side, not much of that was finding its  
24 way down to Basra, and that was damaging because it  
25 reinforced -- not only did we not have the resources

1 that we thought we should have to get on with  
2 reconstruction in support of the political process, but  
3 it also reinforced the feeling in the south that had  
4 always been neglected under Saddam Hussein. And so, as  
5 far as this could see, really nothing had changed: a new  
6 government in Baghdad, Allawi in charge, but nothing is  
7 changing down here, we are being neglected all over  
8 again.

9 So in the end -- but I'm sure you will come on to  
10 this in more detail with others -- we used some of our  
11 own resources on things like military and police  
12 training.

13 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: With the balance of powers moving  
14 from the CPA to the interim government, how did that  
15 change the political dynamic in Baghdad?

16 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: Well, it was a new start of a sort.

17 I think the problem was that as far as the public were  
18 concerned, they wanted to see results and, if you like,  
19 one of the crucial things that Allawi didn't get right,  
20 on which we tried to help him, was the management of  
21 expectations. I referred to that earlier, in my last  
22 appearance. But, in other words, getting a coherent  
23 message out to the public as to what was going on, what  
24 the government's priorities were, why the public had to  
25 be patient in waiting for improvements in public

1 services and so on.

2 But the dynamic was certainly different. The Iraqis  
3 were in charge and of course they were very heavily  
4 reliant on outside support at that stage. And there was  
5 a -- of course, they were very keen to demonstrate that  
6 they were in charge and that could lead to some  
7 awkwardness. For example, one of the  
8 first things that Allawi did was to get some emergency  
9 legislation put through to give him emergency powers.  
10 That was necessary. And he used them in Fallujah and  
11 elsewhere. But those emergency powers, although they  
12 included an amnesty process, which obviously helped the  
13 reconciliation process, also included the restoration of  
14 the death penalty, which the CPA had done away with.

15 Of course, we and everyone else in the EU are very  
16 opposed to the death penalty. That was not something  
17 that troubled the Americans, so that was a particular  
18 point where with the UK had to argue against this.

19 In the end, Allawi made it clear that on that issue  
20 there was huge popular support for the reintroduction of  
21 the death penalty, but he would listen to the arguments that  
22 it should be used transparently, that the system of  
23 justice should operate more effectively and the number  
24 of crimes for which people could be sentenced to death  
25 should be fewer than in the days of Saddam Hussein.

1 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: Understandably, although they wanted  
2 to be in the lead, but how did that impact on the way we  
3 tried to help and influence? Did it change our policy  
4 towards, and the way we worked with, the interim  
5 government?

6 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: We had very close relations with him and  
7 we responded as best we could to the various requests he  
8 made. The most pressing, which I think I have  
9 mentioned, was the functioning of his own office. So we  
10 had a team there discreetly, because obviously we had  
11 an Iraqi face on everything, just helping him organise  
12 his office, organise his communications, get some order  
13 into the flow of people and papers through his office,  
14 preparation of decisions in Cabinet and so on.

15 All that, as I say, stuff that we take for granted  
16 in our system simply didn't exist then.

17 And the same thing applied to his other key  
18 ministries. And I mean, he made clear what his  
19 priorities were and we did our best to respond, I think  
20 is the short answer to your question.

21 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: How did we manage to integrate the  
22 military and the civilian policy, if at all, on the  
23 ground?

24 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: In practice, by very frequent contact  
25 between the military side and the civilian side. So

1 I would see John McColl and then General Kiszely at  
2 regular intervals and his people would be in contact  
3 with mine.

4 So things like security sector reform, we were  
5 making the same noises, pushing for the same things,  
6 including pressing, say, the Americans for some action  
7 or lack of action. One example of that would be the  
8 multinational force. The Americans had a very clear  
9 idea of Sunni leaders who they thought were up to no  
10 good and who they would launch operations against when  
11 they saw the opportunity in order to arrest them and so  
12 on. There was a risk that that, at certain crucial  
13 stages, would cut across the national reconciliation  
14 that we were promoting.

15 That's an example of where we would -- because we  
16 were perhaps a little more conscious of that than my  
17 American colleagues, we would go to the Americans and  
18 say, look, this is not a good time to take action, it is  
19 going to stir up more resentment in the Sunni community  
20 just at the time when we seem to be making some progress  
21 in tempting them back into the political process.

22 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: You said earlier that it was very  
23 much an era of sort of crisis management, in the way  
24 that it was a breakdown in security and so on. How much  
25 did that impact on the delivery of other objectives, you

1 know political and economic objectives, and how did you  
2 try to sort of take that into account?

3 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: I guess -- I mean, one of my jobs as  
4 Ambassador was to coordinate the whole UK effort, which  
5 wasn't just devoted to those sort of crisis management  
6 or the security aspects but was also targeted on  
7 building up capacity in other parts of the government,  
8 on helping them make sense of their dialogue with the  
9 IMF, on things like the passing of a sensible oil  
10 legislation and indeed on restoring our bilateral ties.

11 So there was a large team. There was 110 or so  
12 UK-based people in the embassy, plus a lot of security  
13 people, and another 90 down in Basra, and a one-man team  
14 up in Kirkuk.

15 So, if you like, my job was to make sure that,  
16 although a large chunk of my time might be taken on  
17 helping with the crisis management and helping with key  
18 things like keeping the electoral process on track, that  
19 the other things that needed to be done, even if they  
20 weren't a top priority, were still being addressed. But  
21 inevitably the crisis management did have some impact on  
22 those others areas.

23 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: Can you say a little bit about  
24 capacity building. I mean, you had some staff. What  
25 were you doing in the area of capacity building?

1 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: Well, the main focus, which actually  
2 carried through from the Allawi government into the  
3 Jaafari government -- Jaafari had much the same  
4 problem -- was a team led by DFID but with some input  
5 from us and from the FCO -- and we were working closely  
6 with the Adam Smith Institute -- as I said earlier, very  
7 much focused on putting in place the sort of processes  
8 and procedures that would allow a Prime Minister's  
9 office to function effectively.

10 Then there was a similar team staffed by the  
11 Ministry of Defence, in the Iraqi Ministry of Defence,  
12 again very much focused on putting in place the  
13 processes -- planning, budgets, the sort of nitty gritty  
14 things but without with nothing much can happen and for  
15 which there was very little Iraqi capacity or what  
16 capacity there had been had disappeared. And then in  
17 the Ministry of Health a similar team staffed by some  
18 very good UK experts, helping the Minister of Health  
19 draw up sensible plans.

20 So that was all, if you like, in central government,  
21 and then down in the south there was again a lot of  
22 capacity building going on, helping local governing  
23 structures make sense of their administration, helping  
24 them draw up plans, so, instead of just a general  
25 complaint against the centre for not giving them more

1 resources, putting together sensible plans with which  
2 could bid the centre to devolve resources and showing  
3 what they could do with it and then following up and  
4 actually implementing it.

5 So there was a lot of very nitty gritty but very  
6 necessary help being put into the Iraqi machine.

7 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: Given the unrest, was there an  
8 imbalance between the regional issues and what -- you  
9 know, always looking at nationally, at Iraq, I mean,  
10 were there sort of domination of the regions?

11 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: I mean, there was a problem about -- and  
12 this is one area where I did play a role -- in persuading  
13 the central government to pay more attention to the  
14 south, and the focus of Allawi's attention, inevitably,  
15 was where there were most problems, which was in the  
16 centre of Iraq.

17 Also, of course, he had his own views about Shia  
18 clerics and Iranian influence and so on, which I think  
19 were a bit exaggerated but certainly coloured his opinion -- or  
20 reduced his enthusiasm for doing very much for the  
21 south. But he did respond and his ministers responded  
22 and we did get ministerial visits down to Basra and  
23 action, when necessary action had to be taken, by  
24 someone in the central government in order to allow  
25 something in Basra to happen, for example, re-opening of

1 Basra airport. That's the sort of issue on  
2 which the embassy in Baghdad would be engaged.

3 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: As you reversed roles -- I mean, you  
4 were sort of responsible for the policy in the UK and  
5 then you were for ten months on the ground. What  
6 impact, if any, did you have on the evolution of policy?  
7 How much influence were you able to have (inaudible)?

8 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: It was very joined up. I think we  
9 had -- apart from more or less daily contact with  
10 Number 10, and with the Iraq policy unit in the FCO, we had a system  
11 of weekly priorities to agree on and whenever a policy  
12 paper was going up to ministers, we in Baghdad and  
13 Basra, as appropriate, would always have input to that.  
14 So I think it was a very joined-up process. That part  
15 worked well.

16 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: Do you think you had enough  
17 resources and means to turn the policy into reality on  
18 the ground?

19 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: Yes, I think we had enough people in  
20 Baghdad and in Basra. I think other people have talked  
21 about later on the lack of resources to carry out the  
22 projects that we thought were necessary. But I think in  
23 those early days -- we have just talked about lack of  
24 capacity -- there were limits to what Iraq could  
25 actually absorb in terms of money and assistance.

1 I think we had as much as we could use. The one exception  
2 might be that I think we were a bit slow to get going on  
3 helping the Iraqi police. We were paying a lot of  
4 attention to the Iraqi army and the National Guard and  
5 so on, but in some ways restoring security depended very  
6 heavily on standing up an effective Iraqi police force,  
7 not least to deal with the enormous amount of criminal  
8 activity. Never mind terrorist or political activities,  
9 criminal activity had to be dealt with. But that was  
10 something that -- and perhaps it is a good moment to  
11 mention the amount of international help that was  
12 starting to build up. So in my time there the EU sent  
13 successive missions in order to find out what it could  
14 do, and one of the areas that it decided it should  
15 concentrate on was the rule of law area, both in the  
16 justice system because the Iraqi justice system was  
17 rather similar to those --

18 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: And that came purely from the EU?

19 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: It came from the EU with a lot of  
20 nudging from ourselves. But that was one area, just as  
21 on the officer training side we encouraged the NATO  
22 training mission to take that over. So the  
23 internationalisation of the effort was definitely one of  
24 the key objectives.

25 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: And did we play a role in that, in

1 getting international support --

2 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: Yes, I think we did.

3 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: How did you determine what we should  
4 focus on and what should the coalition partners focus  
5 on?

6 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: We were focussing on, if you like,  
7 everything, or everything that was a priority for the  
8 Iraqi Government as far as we could -- and I think  
9 I have mentioned the priorities earlier on. As other --  
10 as the international community, particularly post  
11 elections, became more willing to get engaged on the  
12 ground on Iraq, so we would point them in the direction  
13 of different aspects. So the Italians, for example,  
14 took the lead in officer training - they were involved as  
15 part of the coalition.

16 But the EU I have already mentioned and NATO and the  
17 ICRC. They were all involved in different aspects.

18 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: I mean, looking back on it, what do  
19 you think worked? What didn't work? What could have  
20 been done better? In retrospect, any observations?

21 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: Well, I think we were quite -- we were  
22 as effective as we could have expected to be in terms of  
23 support for the political process. The key priority, as  
24 I said earlier, which everyone agreed on, was to make  
25 sure that elections took place on time at the end

1 of January 2005. I think we played quite a significant  
2 part in ensuring that that happened.

3 We certainly did our bit in terms of building up the  
4 capacity of the Iraqi Government. We did our bit with  
5 the Iraqi security forces. We could have done more, we  
6 could have done better, I think, on the police side, as  
7 I have already mentioned.

8 Similarly on the reconstruction front, but mainly  
9 down in the south, I think, certainly at the time that  
10 I was there, the multinational force was held in very  
11 high regard for what it was doing. Security problems  
12 grew up later.

13 I think we succeeded -- and of course part of the  
14 main job, being the first ambassador back after this  
15 long gap, was to actually establish the embassy and  
16 establish the right relationships with all the key  
17 players, both inside and outside the government, and  
18 I think we were quite successful in that and in  
19 restoring the bilateral links and exploiting, if you  
20 like, the enthusiasm of many Iraqis for restoring those  
21 ties after a long absence, particularly, for example, on  
22 the commercial side and in educational links, which had  
23 always been traditionally very strong.

24 And I think we succeeded in maximising our impact on  
25 what the Americans were doing, both on the military side

1 and on the civilian side, and it is interesting that --  
2 I mean, General Casey really welcomed advice from  
3 General McColl and later General Kiszely. You can talk  
4 to them about that, because he wanted a different view,  
5 the alternative view from the one that the US system was  
6 feeding up to him. So I think -- and it was the same  
7 with John Negroponte. He was very open with me and  
8 listened carefully to views that we fed in. So I  
9 don't want to exaggerate the influence but I think we --  
10 I think that was the part of the operation that went  
11 well.

12 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: Any observations on how you think  
13 the policy could have been better coordinated at the  
14 London end? As I said, you saw both sides of it. Any  
15 observations on that?

16 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: I think, in comparison with the  
17 run-up -- you know, the year before the invasion, which  
18 we talked about last time, I think actually the policy  
19 coordination, after we set up the embassy, was pretty  
20 good. I talked earlier about the daily contact,  
21 constant communication, ability to feed in ideas to the  
22 centre. So I think that side of operation was quite  
23 well joined up.

24 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: What worked before that?

25 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: Do you remember I talked the last time

1 about the -- because there was so much focus on trying  
2 to get the second resolution and so on, and basically  
3 trying to avoid military action, there was less  
4 attention given to the aftermath once we were there. Once it  
5 had happened and everyone was focused on the  
6 priorities, the whole machine started to work rather  
7 better, I felt.

8 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: Thank you.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: Lawrence?

10 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Yes, just a few more questions.

11 When we spoke on Friday to Dominic Asquith, he  
12 mentioned, by the time he took over, the problems in  
13 communication between Baghdad and Basra, the need to --  
14 you couldn't get there by helicopter, it was quite  
15 dangerous to move around and so on. Did you experience  
16 those sorts of difficulties?

17 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: From that point of view I was there in  
18 a more benign time. The environment in the south was  
19 all right in the sense that, yes, you had to fly down  
20 there, but you took the C130 down. But in my time, most  
21 of the time you could move around by car, which I did,  
22 although I used a helicopter to go to places further  
23 away like Maysan, which we were also responsible for. So  
24 that wasn't such a problem. And I visited -- I suppose  
25 roughly every six weeks and was in contact in the same

1 way as I was in the south -- in Baghdad and, indeed, in  
2 the north.

3 The north was even more permissive because, of  
4 course, they had had a long period of autonomy and  
5 looked after their own security. So, again, you could  
6 move around by car rather than by air. So that wasn't  
7 a particular problem.

8 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Were you comfortable with the lines  
9 of communication between Baghdad and the people in  
10 Basra?

11 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: Yes, we were in very close contact,  
12 Simon Collis, who was the consul general most of the  
13 time that I was there. He and I were in very regular  
14 contact both by email and by phone, and when there were  
15 particular problems which he needed my help on, he could  
16 get hold of me very easily and I could try and get hold  
17 of somebody in Iraqi Government to try and help. That  
18 plus visits, and Simon would come up from time to time  
19 to get some sense of how things were at the centre and  
20 to put the southern view, if you like, to some members  
21 of the government and similarly with the north. So  
22 communication and contact was constrained in Baghdad  
23 because -- I mean, I went out quite a lot outside the  
24 so-called Green Zone, the international zone, because  
25 many ministries were out there and you had to be careful

1 with security. But in the south and the north there  
2 wasn't very much of a problem.

3 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: How good were your relations with  
4 the various military officers sent by the UK?

5 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: Oh, very close. I mean, they were  
6 mainly with the senior British military representative,  
7 in my time John McColl, John Kiszely and then  
8 Robin Brims right at the end, which was perhaps one of  
9 the issues, that the speed of turnover in the south was  
10 even more. I think there were four different commanders  
11 in my ten months in Iraq, in the south, which is quite  
12 a rapid turnover compared to the Americans.

13 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: This is an issue that we have become  
14 very aware of. Did you express a concern back to London  
15 that there just seemed to be so many different people in  
16 charge, one after the other, but quite a rapid turnover?

17 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: Yes, I mean, as time went on, they  
18 weren't neophytes because it turned out the person who  
19 turned up as senior British representative in Iraq, in  
20 Baghdad, had probably served as commander down in the  
21 south, so they knew the issues -- and our system is relatively  
22 efficient. There was -- we made sure that continuity  
23 happened. But I think rotating senior officers through  
24 only sort of four to six months at a time is much less  
25 than ideal; the Americans were doing two years or more.

1 So you do sacrifice a bit of impact.

2 On the other hand, being a commander responsible  
3 for an area as big as MND south-east, was very  
4 taxing, very exhausting, so I suppose there is a limit,  
5 but it is probably something worth looking at.

6 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Did you have a sense that our  
7 performance in the south made a difference to how we  
8 were viewed in Baghdad? So long as we seemed to be  
9 making progress there, the security situation was  
10 comparatively better than Baghdad?

11 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: Yes, I think the Americans were happy  
12 for us, so to speak, to get on with it in the south.  
13 I talked earlier about some constraints because the  
14 funding -- the share of this huge pot of \$18.5 billion,  
15 we didn't think enough of it was coming to the south,  
16 and it was quite slow getting sort of a US liaison  
17 office, a proper one, set up in Basra to improve  
18 communications. But the Americans had other priorities  
19 in that period, which was understandable.

20 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: A different sort of question: how  
21 much did you have the good sense or feel of opinion on  
22 the ground amongst Iraqis? When we were talking  
23 earlier, you mentioned conspiracy theories and concerns;  
24 we have had discussions about criminal gangs, the  
25 difficulty of founding out what had happened to

1 Margaret Hassan and so on, the aftermath of the Abu  
2 Ghraib scandal and questions about people being picked  
3 up. Did you have a feel for the shifts in terms of  
4 opinion on the ground?

5 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: We were very conscious that inside the  
6 international zone, the Green Zone, you were in  
7 something of a bubble, but I and my colleagues,  
8 respecting the security rules, got out and about as much  
9 as we could because, as I say, many of the leading  
10 personalities, party leaders and a good number of the  
11 ministers were outside in Baghdad. So we did get out.

12 We were also in contact a lot by other means. Other  
13 leaders came into the international zone, a lot of  
14 meetings took place in the margins of the Parliament and  
15 so on.

16 We had our quite sizeable local staff, who, of  
17 course, would talk freely to us about what was really  
18 going on on the ground, nitty gritty things like, you  
19 know, lack of electricity, water and so on. So we had  
20 some idea of that.

21 There was also, curiously enough, quite an  
22 effective -- I can't remember who paid for it, possibly  
23 the Americans, but a lot of polling went on, opinion  
24 polls of Iraqis, and you can read those. So you were  
25 able to track opinion on the way Iraqi opinion was

1 shifting so far as the political process, elections and  
2 so on was concerned.

3 And the other thing worth remembering is that there  
4 was a great explosion of media. This was one of the  
5 Iraqis' sort of joys of liberation, that at last  
6 they had television channels, newspapers and so on.  
7 There was a great plethora of them, in which people  
8 could -- really could freely express their views,  
9 something that made life a bit uncomfortable for the  
10 government, although actually I think Allawi's main  
11 concern was not about the local media and newspapers, it  
12 was about Al Jazeera and their portrayal of what was  
13 going on inside Iraq and what he regarded as incitement  
14 to violence and so on. So we had quite a few debates  
15 about that.

16 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Just following that up, how good  
17 were the means of communication with ordinary Iraqis?  
18 Presumably, you were having to work through the  
19 political parties at this time and the political  
20 leadership. Did we have our own lines of communication.

21 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: We had our own lines of communication  
22 with lots of political figures, yes. Some of those had  
23 been built up in the time of the CPA. So we inherited  
24 those. Others we developed. People were quite keen to  
25 talk to us, often, one felt, exaggerating the British

1 influence but that is sometimes the way in the  
2 Middle East. But they were certainly very keen to make  
3 sure we understood their views.

4 So, yes, we had a lot of contact, also with sort of  
5 the rejectionist elements on the Sunni side, and indeed  
6 on the Shia side. So I think overall we had  
7 a reasonable picture of what was going on but, of  
8 course, it could always have been improved.

9 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Then just the final question from  
10 me, going back up to the higher level policy, if you  
11 like. Sometimes one feels, looking at this, a sort of  
12 disconnect between the rhetorical aspirations we held  
13 out for Iraq, perhaps especially in March 2003, and then  
14 the reality as it was developing over this period, and  
15 over 2005 in particular things didn't really go in the  
16 right direction.

17 It is basically an invitation to a reflection on --  
18 was there a disconnect? Was it difficult to bring home  
19 to politicians in Britain just how difficult things  
20 actually were becoming in Iraq, and did you get a sense  
21 in -- in a sense in the second part of your time in  
22 Baghdad that things maybe were starting to slip away and  
23 that the processes that had been set in motion were just  
24 really not producing the outcomes desired?

25 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: No, I don't think, if you mean by "the

1 processes", our set-up in Iraq, with the embassy and so  
2 on, the sort of help we were giving. I think we were  
3 doing as much as we reasonably could. Of course one  
4 could always, looking back, thinks of ways we could have  
5 done better. In terms of the disconnect between  
6 rhetoric and reality, I mean, of course it was easy  
7 enough in early 2003 to set out, as I think happened  
8 in January of that year, to Parliament a set of -- a  
9 set of objectives that nobody could really quarrel with,  
10 all the wonderful things that could be achieved in Iraq,  
11 and -- but once we were actually there on the ground, of  
12 course, we had to take account of what was really  
13 achievable and, if you like, refine our priorities to  
14 what was most important and what was achievable.  
15 I think that process did happen quite rapidly.

16 Of course, the other thing that happened was we had  
17 lots of visitors, so Hilary Benn, Development Secretary,  
18 and Jack Straw as Foreign Secretary, and the  
19 Prime Minister and many others, and officials from all  
20 those departments were fairly frequent visitors to -- I  
21 mean, not the ministers; they came once each in my time --  
22 but there was a lot of contact on the ground and so they  
23 could see for themselves. I think that's one of the  
24 things that improved the Whitehall coordination of the  
25 whole effort; there were people sitting around that

1 table who had actually -- if they hadn't served in Iraq,  
2 had actually been there, talked to the Iraqis themselves  
3 and had a grasp of what was possible and what wasn't  
4 possible.

5 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: I accept that you did what you  
6 could, but had the country in some ways bitten off more  
7 than it could chew, that the amount of effort that was  
8 going to be needed in a situation that was  
9 deteriorating, perhaps for reasons beyond your control,  
10 more Baghdad-related than Basra-related, say -- that it  
11 had just become too much, or gradually was becoming too  
12 much to cope with?

13 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: Well, increasingly, as the  
14 Iraqi Government and then the second Iraqi government  
15 got into gear, this was increasingly an Iraqi problem,  
16 and as far as the political process was concerned,  
17 outsiders could only do so much. I mean, as we made  
18 clear from the very beginning, we were -- we could only  
19 be there to hold the ring while the Iraqis worked out  
20 amongst themselves how they wanted to to go forward, and  
21 I suppose in a sense you could see that process  
22 continuing even today.

23 In terms of what you were mentioning earlier,  
24 I think we perhaps go back to the conversation we had  
25 last time I was here about why we thought a second

1 resolution was so important, why we were trying to  
2 convince the Americans that they had to have very early  
3 involvement of the UN, because we did have some sense of  
4 the enormity of the task, and indeed it was, of course,  
5 enormous; scarcely anything was functioning as it needed  
6 to -- I mean, to be fair, the Americans did rapidly buy  
7 into that. We talked, I think, last time about how  
8 rapidly after the invasion we had resolution in the  
9 Security Council. We had another one, 1546, I think,  
10 which mandated the multinational force and made  
11 everything sort of -- put everything on a proper legal  
12 basis and did mandate the UN to do various things, and  
13 I worked quite closely -- very closely -- with the  
14 special representative, who was appointed, Ashraf Qazi,  
15 who had been the Pakistani Ambassador in Washington, and  
16 he did a lot of good things. He was constrained because  
17 of the terrible attack which had killed  
18 Sergio Vieira de Mello and various colleagues. They  
19 were constrained by security; they had to be very  
20 cautious, understandably. He was rather frustrated at  
21 the ceilings put on the number of UN staff he was  
22 allowed to bring in.

23 But, if you like, going back to where we were before  
24 the invasion, it kind of underlined the point that you  
25 did need a huge international effort, and the longer we

1        were there, the more that became clear and, to be fair,  
2        the more the international effort did gather pace, the  
3        more actors got involved, as we have already mentioned.

4            But that is crucial, and the legitimacy argument  
5        that we talked about last time is crucial, that you make  
6        things a whole lot more difficult for yourself if, as  
7        I have referred to in talking about some of the internal  
8        elements, factors, if you go in and set up a Coalition  
9        Provisional Authority, act in a way which is seen, not  
10       just by many Iraqis, but by many people in the region as  
11       not legitimate, not having proper international  
12       blessing. It took us some time to recover from that,  
13       and I think the lack of that did have a direct impact on  
14       the security and therefore on the -- on the environment  
15       in which insurgents and terrorists could operate  
16       relatively freely and therefore on all the other  
17       elements that were necessary to support the political  
18       process.

19    SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: So in fact by the time you arrived,  
20       the issue was recovering from the decisions that had  
21       been taken in 2003/2004?

22    MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: Yes.

23    SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Thank you.

24    THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. I would like to ask my colleagues  
25       if they want to put any last questions. I've got one

1 thread I would like to tug on just a little more.

2 You have told us about the sustained and continuing  
3 effort to build governmental capacity in your time:  
4 finance, health, whatever, including, by the way, the  
5 Iraq foreign ministry?

6 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: Yes.

7 THE CHAIRMAN: I just wonder if you could make an assessment  
8 of the results over your period, in terms of the  
9 survivability of the capacity that was being built  
10 against all the political events, changes of political  
11 leadership, just by (inaudible).

12 Was there an, if slow, nonetheless a gradual and  
13 genuine increase in the capability of Iraq to govern  
14 itself at the central government level?

15 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: Yes, I think there was progress, but  
16 building capacity is a very slow business, as I'm sure  
17 DFID witnesses will tell you, and depended quite a lot  
18 on having the right people, not just in terms of their  
19 qualifications but in terms of their ability to build a  
20 relationship of trust with the individual minister  
21 concerned, and of course, if the minister concerned then  
22 changed, as happened after the election, you weren't  
23 quite back to square one but you had to do that  
24 rebuilding of trust all over again, and I think it says  
25 something for the high regard in which our effort on

1 that front was -- how it was viewed, that when Jaafari  
2 came in, he very readily accepted the suggestion that we  
3 should use the team, slightly differently constituted  
4 perhaps and possibly with different priorities, that we  
5 had used with Allawi to transfer to support his office.

6 And I think with the foreign ministry and with other  
7 ministries -- the Ministry of Finance, the  
8 Ministry of Defence -- I think a lot of unspectacular  
9 but very important work was done, and I can't say,  
10 because I haven't looked into sort of how much of it  
11 survived unscathed into the period after I was there --  
12 but you can ask the other ambassadors, who were there  
13 afterwards -- but my impression is that we did help lay  
14 down the sort of more solid foundations for more  
15 effective administration.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Sir Martin? Rod?

17 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Just one or two questions. How much of  
18 a threat did you and your staff live under while you  
19 were there as Ambassador?

20 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: Quite a heavy threat. I mean, but for  
21 the political imperative -- this is not a place, not an  
22 environment, in which you would willingly put diplomatic  
23 and other staff, and of course there was a huge variety  
24 of staff. The foreign office element was probably in  
25 the minority.

1           It was a constant concern. By November, when we had  
2 attacks on the route between the embassy and the  
3 airport, we had to suspend all road movements between  
4 the embassy and the airport, which meant you had to use  
5 helicopters, which meant that -- and the Americans were  
6 using helicopters so there was a lack of capacity. We  
7 had to ask the Ministry of Defence -- and they responded  
8 very rapidly, I must say -- to dedicate helicopter  
9 assets to make sure that simply our staff could get in  
10 and out, because the staff were on -- for obvious  
11 reasons they were working seven days a week. Well,  
12 I tried to make them work only six days a week but not  
13 everyone obeyed that injunction, including myself. But  
14 the system was that you would work for six weeks or so  
15 and then have a two-week break. So there was, for  
16 a staff of 120 or so, that meant a constant roulement,  
17 and so having no road access between the airport and the  
18 embassy was quite an complication and did make us think  
19 about the numbers we should keep.

20           Security in the south was better -- I talked about  
21 that, a more permissive environment -- but in both  
22 places there was a lot of concern, particularly in the  
23 early days, from stand-off attacks. So these were  
24 mortar and rocket attacks, when people -- we talked  
25 earlier, I think, last time, about the arms dumps that

1           were not probably guarded or dealt with. So almost any  
2           group could help itself to a rocket or a mortar and with  
3           minimal experience go and set it up in a suburb of  
4           Baghdad some kilometres away and lob it in the direction  
5           of the international zone and hope that it hit  
6           something.

7           We were perhaps lucky that it didn't hit us. But it  
8           was a very big concern, one that my deputy took the lead  
9           on more than I did, but obviously I took a very close  
10          personal interest. My own security was well looked  
11          after by the Royal Military Police.

12        SIR RODERIC LYNE: In your time were any of the staff of  
13          whatever nationality under your command killed or  
14          wounded?

15        MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: No.

16        SIR RODERIC LYNE: Different area of question: Did you feel  
17          that, in the period we are talking about, the coalition  
18          had enough troops on the ground to deal adequately with  
19          both insurgency and security questions and with the  
20          training of Iraqi forces?

21        MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: It is difficult to judge and you should  
22          perhaps ask a military man, who would have a better  
23          opinion than I do --

24        SIR RODERIC LYNE: Well, if I may interrupt, the Chief of  
25          the Defence Staff talked about the initial stage of

1           this, the American numbers as being anorexic and quite  
2           inadequate for the task. You were there a year later.  
3           Was it still anorexic?

4   MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: Well, the situation had changed. I  
5           mean, I think -- if you like we shouldn't  
6           have started from there. So indeed I would agree with  
7           CDS that there should have been more troops on the  
8           ground to ensure that basic level of security in the  
9           early stages. Once you had lost that, then you were  
10          really looking at a counterinsurgency strategy, which --  
11          in which more boots on the ground was not necessarily  
12          the biggest priority; you needed other things to happen.

13                 I don't remember in my time either John McColl or  
14          John Kiszely saying, "If only we had more -- if  
15          only the Americans had more forces here, we would be  
16          able to do much better on the security front." I think  
17          things had moved on -- moved beyond that. Of course,  
18          later on, when things got much worse and there was the  
19          whole debate about the surge, that debate had changed.  
20          But I don't remember it being a crucial factor when  
21          I was there.

22   SIR RODERIC LYNE: I mean, when you were there, we were down  
23          to a brigade-level contingent in the south region, which  
24          is a very large area of countryside. Was there a debate  
25          going on about actually drawing this down further

1           within -- this is within the British Government?

2   MR EDWARD CHAPLIN:  There was a debate going on about how  
3           quickly you could hand over to Iraqi provincial control  
4           but that was quite a bit beyond my time.  It was just  
5           being talked about in my time, but it was clearly some  
6           way from becoming a reality.

7           The other major debate, I suppose, was whether more  
8           of the civilian effort that the -- our troops were  
9           involved in could be handed over to civilian people and  
10          why more of that wasn't happening more quickly.  But I  
11          think -- but those issues became more urgent a bit  
12          further down the track.

13  SIR RODERIC LYNE:  But at the time you were there were you  
14          conscious of pressure from any quarters, military or  
15          civilian or political on our side, to reduce our forces  
16          in a hurry?

17  MR EDWARD CHAPLIN:  No, no, the people on the ground were  
18          too busy getting on with the many priorities that they  
19          saw.

20  SIR MARTIN GILBERT:  Did you have intimations or forebodings  
21          of a worsening of the situation?

22  MR EDWARD CHAPLIN:  No, I mean, my focus really was -- or  
23          my -- I think the hopes of a lot of us were focused on  
24          the idea that the elections would play a big part in  
25          relegitimising the whole enterprise.  So once you had a

1 freely and fairly elected government in place,  
2 that would kill the argument that was driving so much of  
3 the insurgency, that this was a wholly illegitimate  
4 enterprise. It was hard to argue. And indeed I think  
5 that was the case: there was a sort of a bounce after  
6 the January elections, in which some of the Sunni  
7 rejectionists felt, "Well, okay, they have had the  
8 elections and we have excluded ourselves and perhaps  
9 that's a mistake and we should come in."

10 But there are many other things that you need to do  
11 to change the environment in which the insurgency  
12 operates, and that was to do with reconstruction and  
13 managing people's expectations and so on, all the things  
14 that I have already talked about, because if you think  
15 about it, what does it take for a member of the public  
16 to, if you like, pick up the phone to the police when  
17 they see somebody preparing to carry out a mortar attack  
18 from a few miles away on the international zone. Well,  
19 it takes someone who feels some sort of greater loyalty  
20 to the government than he does to the group that's  
21 setting up the mortar. It requires him to think  
22 that that the government is actually on his side and  
23 addressing some of his interests. So that's what I mean  
24 about changing the environment, making it -- creating an  
25 environment in which it is more difficult for terrorists

1 to operate.

2 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Can I just come back to the question of  
3 reconstruction? You have talked of the, I think it was,  
4 \$18.5 billion that the American congress had voted for  
5 reconstruction. Did you feel that the United Kingdom,  
6 as the number one partner of the Americans in this  
7 exercise, put in a commensurate effort in terms of  
8 financial and other resources, into reconstruction?

9 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: I think in my time -- I think I referred  
10 earlier to there was a limit on the capacity of the  
11 Iraqi system to absorb very large sums. I think in the  
12 south we had set up programmes and were probably --  
13 probably had as much in the way of resources as we could  
14 sensibly handle to put into the Iraqi system. I think that  
15 issue of lack of resources was a bit later on, probably  
16 after my time. It certainly wasn't a very -- I wasn't  
17 being pressed daily by people down in the south saying,  
18 "We really do need extra resources." I mean, only in  
19 the sense that I think I have already mentioned of  
20 resources that we hoped would come from that pot of  
21 funds to help with training of the Iraqi army -- well,  
22 the Iraqi National Guard and police, and a bit later,  
23 from early 2005, the army, these funds were clearly not going to  
24 come until later, if at all, and therefore we did have to  
25 find our own resources.

1           So on those particular issues, that's one example  
2           where we did have to find some extra resources, yes.

3   SIR RODERIC LYNE:   So in this period, when the security  
4           environment in the south, as you have said, was  
5           relatively benign, did the British succeed in doing an  
6           effective job there, in both our civilian and our  
7           military capacities?

8   MR EDWARD CHAPLIN:   I think they did do a pretty effective  
9           job.   I mean, I can only judge by the reactions I used  
10          to get when I visited, and of course you have to  
11          aim off for what people will tell the Ambassador.  
12          They will sometimes tell him what they think he wants to  
13          hear.

14          But I think there is no mistaking that in the  
15          training of both police and National Guard and later the  
16          army, there was a lot of -- and in the way that we  
17          carried out different projects, there was a lot of  
18          admiration for the way we went about it.   I mean, again  
19          a rather unsung part of the effort was reforming  
20          and reconstructing the Prison Service in the south, with  
21          a lot of advice and mentoring, and the mentoring of  
22          chiefs of police.

23          So in the activity which is very vital to keeping  
24          and increasing consent of the local population, I think  
25          we were well engaged and I think our efforts were

1 appreciated. You would have to talk to others about  
2 why, later on, despite all those efforts and what I am  
3 talking about as positive results, there was  
4 nevertheless a deterioration in security.

5 SIR RODERIC LYNE: The same would have been true in this  
6 period for our performance in restoring services?

7 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: Yes, and I think, once the consent had  
8 deteriorated, then, of course, we didn't have forces on  
9 the ground to -- and there were other political  
10 constraints, I guess. But that's something you need to  
11 talk to William Patey and Dominic Asquith about, and  
12 indeed the military commanders.

13 SIR RODERIC LYNE: But if we had been drawing the bottom  
14 line, say in the middle of 2005, about the time that you  
15 left as Ambassador, on our performance in the south, it  
16 would have been a record that we could have been fairly  
17 proud of?

18 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: I think so, yes.

19 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Okay, thank you.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Chaplin, on present plans this is your  
21 last appearance before this Inquiry. That will be  
22 a matter of relief to yourself, although not to us.  
23 What I wonder is, are there any final comments you would  
24 like to offer?

25 MR EDWARD CHAPLIN: No, thank you.

1 THE CHAIRMAN: In that case, thank you very much for your  
2 testimony, and that will conclude our session this  
3 morning.

4 This afternoon, starting at 2 o'clock, we have  
5 Major General Tim Cross, who was embedded in the  
6 United States Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Affairs,  
7 planning for and then moving to Iraq, it is his  
8 experience of the aftermath, and then later on in the  
9 afternoon we have Desmond Bowen, who was the deputy head  
10 of the Overseas and Defence Secretariat in the  
11 Cabinet Office in London, who was at the heart of the  
12 cross-Whitehall planning machinery during and after the  
13 invasion itself.

14 So 2 o'clock here for Major General Cross.

15 Thank you all very much indeed.

16 (1.02 pm)

17 (The short adjournment)

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