

Monday, 14 December 2009

1

2 (2.00 pm)

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LIEUTENANT GENERAL SIR JOHN KISZELY and

4

LIEUTENANT GENERAL ROBIN BRIMS

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THE CHAIRMAN: Good afternoon.

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Well, good afternoon, everyone, and welcome. And

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welcome on to our two witnesses for this first of three

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sessions.

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This afternoon we are looking at the situation in

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Iraq in 2004/2005 and we are going to hear -- it is

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quite a strong cast this afternoon, if I can put it that

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way -- four senior United Kingdom military officers who

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had commanded Iraq in those years.

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First, for about an hour, can we welcome

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Lieutenant General Sir John Kiszely and

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Lieutenant General Robin Brims who has already appeared

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before this Inquiry.

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Both of you held the post of Senior British military

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representative in Iraq based in Baghdad at that time, as

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I understand it. General Kiszely from October 2004 to

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April 2005 and then General Brims from then to

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October 2005, so we cover a year.

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Later on this afternoon, just to explain how the

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rest of the afternoon will run, we are going to hear

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from Lieutenant General Jonathon Riley who was

1 commanding the Multi-National Division in the south-east  
2 of Iraq based in Basra, for the first six months, in  
3 effect, of 2005. Then, because of having to tie  
4 timetables together, we have to go back in time for the  
5 end of the afternoon starting around 4 o'clock-ish for  
6 General Peter Wall, who commanded 1 Div, that's the  
7 predecessor of Multi-National Division South East, from  
8 May to July 2003. So we are going to go through 2004  
9 and 2005, and then back to 2003.

10 Two other things. We recognise that witnesses are  
11 giving evidence based on your recollection of events and  
12 we have checked those against the papers we've got  
13 access to, some of which are still coming in, and to  
14 remind all the witnesses, as I do, they will later be  
15 asked to sign transcripts of their evidence to the  
16 effect that the evidence they have given is truthful,  
17 fair and accurate.

18 And with that out of the way, may we turn to the  
19 questioning, and I will ask, if I may, Baroness Prashar.

20 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: Thank you, Chairman. I think, as  
21 the Chairman said, we are covering the period from  
22 October 2004/2005, but I think it would be helpful to  
23 hear from both of you what was your role in Baghdad and  
24 the reporting lines so we get the background in terms of  
25 how you were operating. So it would be helpful to hear

1 from both of you.

2 LT GEN SIR JOHN KISZELY: Shall I start? The job was  
3 double-hatted. Essentially the daytime job, if I can  
4 put it that way, as Deputy Commanding General of  
5 Multinational Forces Iraq -- so deputy commander of the  
6 coalition, deputy to General Casey -- and also the  
7 second hat, that of senior British military  
8 representative Iraq, but the first of those jobs was  
9 a very traditional role of deputy commander. The second  
10 job -- rather different -- that of reporting, of  
11 influencing, decision-making in the coalition, in  
12 particular the conduct of operations and forward  
13 planning and liaising. So essentially a political  
14 military role.

15 What it was not was Commander British forces, which  
16 of course was an appointment held by the Commander of  
17 Multi-National Division South East down in Basra.

18 The lines of reporting were, in the case of the  
19 Senior British military representative job, to the Chief  
20 of the Defence Staff, normally through the Deputy Chief  
21 of the Defence Staff Commitments, keeping the Chief of  
22 Joint Operations -- Joint Headquarters informed, and in  
23 the case of Multi National -- in the case of the Deputy  
24 Commander job, obviously reporting direct to the  
25 Commanding General.

1 LT GEN ROBIN BRIMS: That was exactly the same position,  
2 I could go on and say what specifically the focusing  
3 were within those roles, but that was exactly the same  
4 system.

5 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: Can you say a little bit more about  
6 how that fitted in with the coalition, the national  
7 political and military structures?

8 LT GEN SIR JOHN KISZELY: How the role of deputy commanding  
9 general or senior British military representative?

10 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: Senior military representative.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: It is a matrix, isn't it? You are reporting  
12 across lines and managing relationships within those  
13 reporting lines, I guess. I think a bit more about that  
14 would be helpful.

15 LT GEN SIR JOHN KISZELY: Yes. In the case of the Deputy  
16 Commanding General, this was a Multi National  
17 Headquarters, although more in name than in being,  
18 because I think there were only probably three or four  
19 nations represented in the headquarters itself although  
20 the coalition was over 30 members. So headquarters was  
21 essentially American, I would think, 90 per cent of it  
22 American, with about, I should think, a dozen British  
23 officers in the headquarters, and half that of, maybe  
24 a third of that, of Australians. And I think that was  
25 the only nations represented in the headquarters while

1 I was there. And, therefore, the job involved working  
2 very much with those other nations in carrying out the  
3 Commanding General's instructions.

4 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: And what were the relationships with  
5 the British representatives in Iraq?

6 LT GEN SIR JOHN KISZELY: Indeed. The senior British  
7 military representative obviously had a close working  
8 relationship with all the other United Kingdom officials  
9 who were in Baghdad primarily with the British Embassy,  
10 with the Ambassador, who, in the time that I was there,  
11 was Edward Chaplin whom I know you have spoken to, with  
12 his defence attache, with the head of his contingent  
13 from the Department for International Development, at  
14 that time Lindy Cameron, but also with other military  
15 officers who were in Baghdad.

16 There was a small contingent including the Deputy  
17 Commanding General at the corps headquarters, that's to  
18 say to the Multi National -- the American corps  
19 headquarters at Camp Victory and with other embedded  
20 officers in the Multi National Support and Training  
21 Command Iraq, inevitably known by the Americans as  
22 MNSTICI, of which we had half a dozen officers  
23 (inaudible) officials from the British military defence,  
24 who were embedded with the Iraqi Ministry of Defence,  
25 and lastly in the Prime Minister's press office, where

1           there was one or two British representatives, in  
2           particular Charles Heatley while I was there. And then,  
3           of course, a relationship with the other British  
4           agencies that were present in Baghdad.

5           So there was quite a wide matrix of British  
6           representation in Baghdad at that time.

7 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: So you were working with the whole  
8           contingent?

9 LT GEN SIR JOHN KISZELY: Very much. So very much part of  
10          the job, part of the directive given to me by the Chief  
11          of Defence Staff, was to maintain close relationships  
12          and liaison with all those people.

13 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: What was the balance between Baghdad  
14          and Basra?

15 LT GEN SIR JOHN KISZELY: The balance between ...?

16 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: Your work. I mean, you were not --

17 LT GEN SIR JOHN KISZELY: Yes, clearly there was  
18          a relationship with Multi National Division South East,  
19          and the commander of Multi National Division South East  
20          down in Basra. And certainly I was talking to him  
21          probably two or three times a week, sometimes more,  
22          sometimes less, depending on operations. And, indeed,  
23          representing the interests of Multi National Division  
24          South East in Baghdad.

25 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: Thank you. Anything you want to

1 add?

2 LT GEN ROBIN BRIMS: I effectively agree all those points.

3 I think probably the time I was there, I had less  
4 dealing with the British-led division in the south-east  
5 because I was very focused in my time in trying to  
6 assist the Iraqi Ministry of Defence, Ministry of  
7 Interior and national security adviser, getting an  
8 Iraqi-led lead on operations. So that was -- much of my  
9 effort was on that, so in that sense I didn't probably  
10 deal as much with the British-led Division South East as  
11 General Kiszely.

12 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: We will think about that later.

13 If I can just concentrate on your time  
14 between October and April, when you got there, what was  
15 the situation on the ground because my understanding is  
16 there had been intensive political activity, the  
17 security situation was bad.

18 LT GEN SIR JOHN KISZELY: Yes, the situation from my  
19 perspective in October, firstly the political situation  
20 was the Iraqi interim government, which was only about  
21 three months old, having -- facing quite a challenge.

22 Obviously it was an appointed government rather than  
23 an elected one. It was very much a coalition, not  
24 necessarily of partners who were very closely aligned  
25 politically. It was a government where ministerial

1 capacity and capability was strictly limited, ministers  
2 appointed not necessarily on the basis of any experience  
3 they had in running anything and a civil service that  
4 was hugely limited in capacity, largely as a result of  
5 the de-Ba'athification process, but the basic wheels of  
6 bureaucracy just didn't exist.

7 So the government was facing a huge challenge  
8 without the fact that it was also in the middle of  
9 a very serious security situation and the fact that it  
10 knew it was only two or three months away from  
11 elections. So it had a lot on its plate, and I think it  
12 is probably fair to say that it was partially effective  
13 and only partially effective.

14 It had considerable difficulty obviously on the  
15 security side of imposing the rule of law. It had huge  
16 infrastructure problems that it faced, and its approval  
17 rating when I arrived was down from 63 per cent in about  
18 August to 43 per cent in October.

19 There were very fragile ethnic and religious  
20 mixtures in the country and in the government. Not  
21 everybody had a commitment to a united Iraq and it was  
22 surrounded by neighbours who perceived themselves very  
23 much as stakeholders, the neighbouring countries, and  
24 some of them were both partisan and interfering.  
25 A security situation with a growing insurgency, but

1           there was a reluctance for people to call it an  
2           insurgency, and I think Secretary of Defence Rumsfeld  
3           had instructed that it wasn't to be called an  
4           insurgency. I think he called it a bunch of no-hopers  
5           carrying out some terrorist acts.

6           But it was an incipient insurgency.

7   BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: Does that description affect the way  
8           people operated on the ground, because you saw it as  
9           insurgency it was seen as something different by  
10          Rumsfeld?

11   LT GEN SIR JOHN KISZELY: I think so, because if you  
12          recognise that something is an insurgency, then you are  
13          using a different method to counter it than if you think  
14          it is merely terrorism. If you think it is merely  
15          terrorism, you use merely counter-terrorist tactics and  
16          activities on the basis that if you kill or capture all  
17          the terrorists, you've probably solved your problem,  
18          which of course is not the case in an insurgency.

19   BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: You said initially that your  
20          objective was to influence the thinking. Were you able  
21          to influence the approach against that background?

22   LT GEN SIR JOHN KISZELY: Yes, I think it was a very  
23          important part of what I was doing there and certainly  
24          General Casey I think was well aware of this, but there  
25          is a difference in the man at the top being aware of it

1 and that culture permeating right the way through a very  
2 large organisation.

3 Going on with the security situation that was there  
4 when I arrived, there had just been a considerable  
5 increase in the number of attacks. The first week I was  
6 there the attacks were up by 25 per cent to, I think,  
7 87. The coalition casualties had doubled to 24, that in  
8 particular in Baghdad and Al Anbar, the situation was  
9 really quite serious. Fallujah, of course, was a safe  
10 haven at this time and to cap it all the airport road  
11 from the airport into Baghdad was being cut on a daily  
12 basis by insurgents.

13 I think one of the more serious aspects of it for  
14 me, which I don't think I had appreciated until  
15 I arrived, was the degree to which the insurgency was  
16 taking its roots through a campaign of intimidation and  
17 one where the rule of law didn't really exist in quite  
18 a number of provinces, the writ of law just did not run.

19 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: Can you explain a little bit about  
20 intimidation. Who was intimidating --

21 LT GEN SIR JOHN KISZELY: Yes, the different insurgent  
22 elements -- and it was multifaceted at that time with  
23 what were called former regime elements, adherents of  
24 Saddam Hussein. There were international terrorists  
25 such as Zarqawi. There was a Shia dimension to it as

1 well and quite a lot of people whom David Kilcullen  
2 would call accidental guerillas, that's to say people  
3 who have no political motives but just didn't like  
4 people invading their space. And these were all  
5 combining together and being exploited by those who did  
6 not want to see the rule of law established.

7 So members of the judiciary, members of the police  
8 force, politicians, were subject to intimidation and  
9 kidnap, in particular, and as a result, as I say, the  
10 rule of law didn't really exist as we would know it in  
11 a number of provinces, not all the provinces, but  
12 a number of them.

13 And I think just to round off, the situation when  
14 I arrived, the Iraqi security forces themselves had very  
15 limited capacity. There were only -- you may want to  
16 discuss this later on, but there were only three or four  
17 battalions, units of the Iraqi army who were capable of  
18 operating at battalion level, and the police force was  
19 in an even worse state.

20 The Iraqi army, of course, as a result of the  
21 Coalition Provisional Authority's decision to disband  
22 the army, had been starting from scratch in many areas.  
23 So the competence of commanders was in many cases way  
24 below that which you would expect of their rank, and in  
25 the police force as well very limited capacity and

1 fairly poor morale.

2 I think I would just round off that, having looked  
3 at the political and security lines, if you like, to  
4 look at the economic and reconstruction, which I think  
5 it was fair to say was disappointing. Congress had  
6 voted something like \$18 billion for aid and  
7 reconstruction through the US Agency for International  
8 Development, and there wasn't much sign of this on the  
9 ground.

10 It was very disappointing to see how little had been  
11 done and was being done, and intimidation did play  
12 a part in that. When Iraqi contractors bid for jobs,  
13 they were often dissuaded by those who didn't want  
14 cooperation with the Iraqi Government or the coalition  
15 from people who intimidated them into withdrawing their  
16 contracts. I think that's the situation when I arrived.

17 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: Was it very different to what you  
18 had been expected to believe and how did that square  
19 with the objective you were presented with?

20 LT GEN SIR JOHN KISZELY: I visited Iraq before on the  
21 reconnaissance. I think I had been well briefed.  
22 I think the briefing/induction process, if you like, was  
23 comprehensive, but it was these little subtleties, what  
24 was happening, if you like, below the surface, that you  
25 can only really get a feeling for if you are there

1           yourself. And I think that was -- a very large part of  
2           the job of senior British military representative was to  
3           keep London in touch with what was actually happening  
4           rather than what they were being told was happening.  
5           And you can only develop that, if you like, fingertip  
6           feeling when you are there on the ground.

7   BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: Can you just say how things  
8           developed, because you were there in October.

9           In November you had Fallujah, then there was elections.  
10          Can you just tell me the story in terms of how things  
11          developed and what role you played?

12   LT GEN SIR JOHN KISZELY: I think there were probably four  
13          major areas or events that are worth highlighting, and  
14          the first is Fallujah, which, as I said, was a safe  
15          haven for terrorists, for insurgents, when I arrived and  
16          quite clearly there was going to be a major challenge to  
17          the Iraqi Government, how to deal with Fallujah, what to  
18          do about Fallujah. And on the one hand there was  
19          a great deal of pressure from the Sunni politicians and  
20          communities to deal lightly with Fallujah, not least in  
21          order to avoid alienating the Sunni population and in  
22          any way deflecting it from participation in the  
23          elections which were to happen two or three months  
24          later, and on the other hand a very strong argument that  
25          you couldn't allow this safe haven to continue, that

1 something had to be done about it. And there was  
2 a great deal of agonising for the first month I was  
3 there, by Ayad Allawi, the Prime Minister, and his  
4 cabinet and his government seeking advice from the  
5 coalition, and in particular from the American and  
6 British Ambassadors. The American Ambassador at that  
7 time was John Negroponte, and I have already mentioned  
8 Edward Chaplin as the British Ambassador.

9 And I think they were influential because Allawi was  
10 always seeking their opinion. But on the coalition side  
11 we were careful to make sure that any decision that was  
12 made was, and was seen to be, an Iraqi Government  
13 decision and nobody else's.

14 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: Because he was of the view that it  
15 should be the Iraqi forces who were dealing with Fallujah  
16 and you were just in the supporting role? What was the  
17 relationship?

18 LT GEN SIR JOHN KISZELY: No, it was quite clear that the  
19 capacity the Iraqi army at that time was insufficient to  
20 deal with Fallujah itself. They had tried back in April  
21 to deal with Fallujah and the Iraqi forces who had been  
22 used at that time, along with American forces, had  
23 performed rather less well than expected. And it was  
24 quite clear that some Iraqi army forces, and police as  
25 well, would be capable of assisting in clearing out

1 Fallujah, but that it would require a very major not  
2 only presence by the coalition but a coalition lead.  
3 And because it was in an American area, in Al Anbar  
4 province, it was the Americans who led on that.

5 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: Do you feel that the multinational  
6 force had the capacity to deal with insurgency because  
7 they had been on a war footing? Were they able to  
8 adapt?

9 LT GEN SIR JOHN KISZELY: That's a good question. When they  
10 had arrived, the multinational forces, most of the  
11 coalition, had arrived in order to carry out what they  
12 thought was a classic war-fighting operation, large  
13 scale interstate, regular, conventional warfare, which  
14 indeed was what that first phase was.

15 I think, though, there were some of them who felt  
16 that what came afterwards in security terms would be  
17 less challenging, on the basis that if you were good at  
18 war fighting, it was just a step down and you could  
19 handle anything that was, in the jargon of the times,  
20 operations other than war. And I think there was an  
21 underestimation of just how damn difficult  
22 counterinsurgency is. And it took, unsurprisingly, some  
23 time for the coalition to get good at it in terms of  
24 training and education and preparation.

25 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: You said you wanted to highlight

1 four events?

2 LT GEN SIR JOHN KISZELY: That's the first. Do you want me  
3 to carry on about Fallujah and how it played out?

4 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: Briefly.

5 LT GEN SIR JOHN KISZELY: Very briefly, the Iraqi Government  
6 decided towards the end of October, early November that  
7 they would carry out the operation. There had been  
8 a great deal of preparatory, what the Americans would  
9 call shaping of the battlefield, in particular quite  
10 a lot of artillery and air-delivered munitions, and the  
11 ground assault was made in early November.

12 It was quite a bloody affair. There were over 2,000  
13 insurgents or civilians and -- I think they were  
14 described as "insurgents" -- were killed, over  
15 85 Americans were killed and over 700 seriously wounded,  
16 and a number of Iraqi security forces as well.

17 But by the end of November/early December, it was  
18 quite clear that this operation was going to be  
19 successful. And the big concern for the Americans was  
20 what was going to happen afterwards: was this going to  
21 be a microcosm, if you like, of the campaign as a whole  
22 in which the reconstruction phase was not properly  
23 planned for, or were they going to ensure that it was  
24 properly planned and managed? And they very much  
25 focused on getting this right. And, in fact, I was

1 appointed a role in the reconstruction phase to  
2 coordinate all the effort from the Baghdad end.

3 The second major activity was the election, and in  
4 brief, although many people predicted it would not go  
5 well, it was successful politically. But the election  
6 day was -- had a tragic aspect to it because that was  
7 the day that a British C130 Hercules aircraft was shot  
8 down just north of Baghdad killing ten people.

9 The third area I think was the change of strategy  
10 which occurred at the beginning of December as a result  
11 of a strategic planning conference, where the emphasis  
12 of the strategy was changed to one of holding the ring  
13 with the coalition while training up, as fast possible,  
14 the Iraqi security forces and handing over, area by  
15 area, to an Iraqi lead. And that -- that was a change  
16 and it was heavily dependent on not reducing your  
17 coalition armed forces until you had achieved the right  
18 quantity and quality of Iraqi security forces to take  
19 the lead in each area. And I think probably in  
20 retrospect, it is easy to see that there was an  
21 over-emphasis on quantity rather than quality, that  
22 people were meeting numerical targets, very much pressed  
23 to do so from Washington, and that sometimes this might  
24 have obscured the importance of quality as well as  
25 quantity.

1 I think the last subject that I would draw attention  
2 to, the fourth, is that after the election on  
3 31 January, there was then an interregnum before the  
4 next government took over. It was most definitely not  
5 a case of the new Prime Minister and his cabinet  
6 seamlessly taking over the reins of power within a few  
7 days. This was three months later that I think  
8 Prime Minister Jaafari was appointed, and longer than  
9 that for him to appoint his cabinet.

10 And this interregnum did have an impact on the  
11 campaign. There was a loss of momentum. The ministers  
12 who had been Allawi's Iraqi interim government carried  
13 on, but they were most obviously lame ducks and some of  
14 them less interested than they had been before. And  
15 I think that the coalition counterinsurgency campaign,  
16 if you like, lost momentum during that interim period.

17 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: Two brief questions before I hand  
18 over to Sir Lawrence Freedman. How well do you think  
19 the coalition actually adjusted to the changes that took  
20 place post-election and changing strategy?

21 LT GEN SIR JOHN KISZELY: I think that the coalition learned  
22 quite fast. It was facing quite a steep learning curve  
23 and I think that goes for all contingents and members of  
24 the coalition. It is just not one nation or another.  
25 I think all nations were learning very fast. They were

1 learning fast when I arrived. By the time I left they  
2 had learned a great deal and I think the Americans were  
3 learning particularly fast at that time.

4 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: Were they learning because of what  
5 they found on the ground or do you think it was the  
6 influence of the British on the Americans?

7 LT GEN SIR JOHN KISZELY: I don't think so much an influence  
8 of the British. You know, there were some pretty smart  
9 guys at the top of the American army who realised what  
10 needed to be done and were doing it, general Casey,  
11 foremost among them. But, as I say, it takes time to  
12 change a culture and I think the same thing was going on  
13 with the British contingent. It had a great deal to  
14 learn, maybe it didn't realise quite how much it did  
15 have to learn but it too was climbing a steep learning  
16 curve.

17 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: You talked earlier about quantity  
18 and quality. I mean, obviously quality was needed in  
19 terms of the changing strategy. Do you think there was  
20 a time lag before you got the people with the relevant  
21 skills to be able to deal with the strategy, or was it  
22 that they were just thinking the people on the ground  
23 will adjust to that?

24 LT GEN SIR JOHN KISZELY: I think the change resulted from  
25 education and training. That's how these changes occur.

1           These things take time. You can't just change a culture  
2           or an approach or a modus operandi overnight. So inevitably  
3           time was taken as new forces came to join the coalition  
4           who had been better trained than their predecessors, and  
5           I think that was the most important part of the learning  
6           process. But it did take time.

7   BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: One final question. Do you think  
8           enough attention was being paid to the provinces, you  
9           know, to create a better political framework (inaudible)  
10          concentration around that time?

11   LT GEN SIR JOHN KISZELY: There was always a slight tension  
12          between those in the provinces who would accuse people  
13          in Baghdad of being Baghdad-centric, and people in  
14          Baghdad feeling that some of the provinces were trying  
15          to draw more attention to themselves than was merited by  
16          the security situation. And it is true that Baghdad is  
17          a very large -- population proportion of Iraq, but also  
18          it did have a key, obviously, strategic position and  
19          a key ethnic mix within it. But I think an even greater  
20          problem was in Al Anbar province and that I think was  
21          recognised, the extent of that problem.

22                 But I think that there was an increasing  
23          understanding that neither Baghdad alone nor the  
24          provinces alone were the solution; it was a pan-Iraq  
25          solution that was going to be the one that was

1           important.

2   BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: Thank you.

3   THE CHAIRMAN: A bit of a sidenote before Sir Lawrence comes  
4           in, but you said something of interest to me,  
5           particularly. Your assessment of how things stood  
6           politically when you arrived, that in the interim  
7           government not everybody was dedicated to the  
8           maintenance or the renewal of a single Iraq nation  
9           state.

10           But we have heard quite a lot of testimony the other  
11           way apart from the perhaps long-term aspirations of the  
12           Kurds for a separate Kurdistan. Was that what you were  
13           referring to?

14   LT GEN SIR JOHN KISZELY: Largely, yes, otherwise the  
15           ministers that had been chosen, that had been  
16           appointed -- I think some care was taken to choose  
17           people who actually had a commitment towards a unified  
18           Iraq. But I think that, generally speaking, in terms of  
19           the ministers themselves, was true.

20   THE CHAIRMAN: One of the things I think we have been  
21           learning or getting our heads around is the strength of  
22           the undertide of Iraq nationalism which spans ethnic  
23           difference and religious difference. But it was the  
24           Kurdish thing which was the standout component in that.

25   LT GEN SIR JOHN KISZELY: Largely. I did feel that,

1           although, yes, there was a surprising amount of Iraqi,  
2           if you like, nationalist feeling of wanting to create an  
3           Iraqi nation state, there was a lot of pressure in the  
4           other direction and not just restricted to the Kurds.

5   THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Since I have got in -- and  
6           Sir Lawrence will forgive me, I hope. A completely  
7           different point. You mentioned briefly in passing that  
8           in the coalition headquarters, the Americans, ourselves,  
9           the Australians, but pretty much nobody else, but there  
10          were, what, 30/40 nations contributing, however small --  
11          some not entirely small, like the Danes. Was it part of  
12          your job as deputy commander to manage them?

13   LT GEN SIR JOHN KISZELY: Very much. So keeping coalition  
14          cohesion together was one of the jobs I knew I would be  
15          heavily involved in when I went, and certainly  
16          General Casey was very clear that this was one of the  
17          major roles that he wanted me to play. So I spent quite  
18          a lot of time going round to the different contingents,  
19          talking to their commanders and, indeed, talking to some  
20          of the political representatives in Baghdad.

21                 But I should say that most of my personal effort  
22          during my time was devoted to Fallujah, because  
23          General Casey had given me that as a primary task. He  
24          was very concerned that there would be a huge  
25          humanitarian problem as a result of practically the

1 whole population of a city of maybe 200,000/250,000  
2 people having left when the invasion took place. So  
3 more of my time than I perhaps would have wished was  
4 spent focusing on one place and at the tactical level.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Sir Lawrence?

6 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Thank you. Can I just take you back  
7 to Fallujah, but I'm interested in the British aspects  
8 of this.

9 Now, before Fallujah -- and I think probably decided  
10 before you arrived in Baghdad, was the decision to send  
11 the Black Watch to north Basra, which is outside our  
12 normal area of operations. Do you have any background  
13 to why that decision was taken?

14 LT GEN SIR JOHN KISZELY: You are right, it was before  
15 I arrived and in the time of my predecessor,  
16 General McColl. But my understanding was that the  
17 Americans wanted to concentrate more forces into Al  
18 Anbar province, wanted to move some of their troops who  
19 weren't in Al Anbar, including those who were in Brigade  
20 in North Babil, towards Anbar and had requested that the  
21 British supply a unit to take the place of those forces  
22 in North Babil. So that when I arrived, wheels were in  
23 motion for that move of the Black Watch which took place  
24 right at the end of October, and I think they were --  
25 took over in North Babil about 2 November.

1 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: What was your assessment of how that  
2 operation had gone?

3 LT GEN SIR JOHN KISZELY: I think it was a well planned  
4 operation. I think that the unit who came, the first  
5 battalion of the Black Watch, carried out a very, very  
6 difficult task in a highly commendable way and I went  
7 down to visit them two or three times and I thought, as  
8 I say, performed it in a commendable way.

9 It was a very difficult task and very difficult --  
10 very different from the area they came from, very  
11 different problems, the insurgency, at a much more  
12 intense level and they suffered a number of casualties.  
13 I think they had four people killed and a number  
14 seriously injured. They were there for, I think, the  
15 best part of a month and not only did they carry out  
16 their task particularly well, but I think it sent  
17 important signals that the UK was prepared to assist the  
18 coalition in ways that other contingents weren't, for  
19 example, by going out of the area of operations they  
20 were in to assist in North Babil. So it was important  
21 politically as well as militarily, and it was an  
22 important example for the rest the coalition.

23 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: It has been argued that this was  
24 also -- also gave Britain a greater prominence in  
25 a counterinsurgency effort than they had hitherto had

1 and possibly drew us more into internal tensions within  
2 Iraq than it might have been if we had just stayed in  
3 the more homogenous area in the south. Is that a fair  
4 assessment?

5 LT GEN SIR JOHN KISZELY: I think that may have been the  
6 case. Clearly it was the case that having moved out of  
7 an area, essentially a Shia area, moving into one that  
8 was essentially Sunni in North Babil, that would have  
9 been the case.

10 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: It has also been suggested that this  
11 was one reason why there was kidnapping of British  
12 subjects at the time. But you have also indicated that  
13 kidnapping was going on quite regularly. I was just  
14 wondering, in your role did you get much involved with  
15 the questions of Ken Bigley and Margaret Hassan?

16 LT GEN SIR JOHN KISZELY: Yes, Ken Bigley had been kidnapped  
17 before that, I think. Margaret Hassan was kidnapped  
18 I think in around November. I don't think there was  
19 a great increase or increased threat to British subjects  
20 as a result of that. Clearly some, because, as I say,  
21 we had moved into the Sunni area, but I don't think that  
22 the Black Watch deployment, once it had taken place, had  
23 quite the prominence that perhaps we would attribute to  
24 it now. It was hugely, if you like, politically and, in  
25 the media, overshadowed by the Fallujah operation

1           itself, which was obviously on a much bigger scale.

2   SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:  Another part of the question: were  
3           you involved in -- or how was the military involved in  
4           dealings with kidnappings and so on and trying to find  
5           people?  Was that part of the role of the armed forces?

6   LT GEN SIR JOHN KISZELY:  Yes, but the kidnappings, when  
7           they occurred, were dealt with very much by a team from  
8           the embassy to which specialists were attached, some  
9           from within the British contingent in Baghdad and also  
10          from the UK.  So it was dealt with by a completely  
11          separate cell, which was responsible through the  
12          Ambassador to London.

13   SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:  Just finally on Fallujah, before  
14          turning to General Brims, what sort of post mortem was  
15          done on Fallujah?  You suggested that there was a change  
16          of strategy not long afterwards.  Fallujah, in the way  
17          that you have described it, was a pretty bloody affair.  
18          What were the assessments made afterwards of the balance  
19          of political and military effects that came from --

20   LT GEN SIR JOHN KISZELY:  I don't think that the change of  
21          strategy and Fallujah were directly connected.  Clearly  
22          they were connected both in time and space, but the one  
23          didn't result from the other.  The change of strategy  
24          I think would have happened without Fallujah.

25                 Yes, obviously, people were looking in retrospect at

1 the Fallujah operation, but I think the biggest lesson  
2 they drew was that the coalition should not again allow  
3 a situation to arise where a safe haven was created so  
4 that you wouldn't have to carry out this very bloody  
5 operation with all the disadvantages and impact that it  
6 had and that, as I say, the main lesson: don't allow  
7 a safe haven to take effect in an insurgency situation.

8 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Because of course one argument was  
9 that Fallujah was one reason why there was an even lower  
10 turnout of Sunnis than there might otherwise have been  
11 in the election.

12 LT GEN SIR JOHN KISZELY: I think that's absolutely right,  
13 there was. And as I say, I think there was a huge  
14 balance of judgment to be made about whether it was  
15 worth possibly disenfranchising the whole of the Sunni  
16 community, the main Sunni party. I think that led by,  
17 or as a member of, Adnan Pachachi had withdrawn from the  
18 election because of the Fallujah operation, and if this  
19 had snowballed it would have been a very serious  
20 situation impacting on the elections.

21 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: General Brims, could I now turn to  
22 you? We have heard from General Kiszely how, after the  
23 election, it took a number of months to form  
24 a government and he suggests that the momentum of the  
25 counterinsurgency operation was lost. You arrived just

1 after, I think, in April, just after the Jaafari  
2 government had been formed, but did you have this  
3 feeling of a loss of momentum when you arrived?

4 LT GEN ROBIN BRIMS: I was there before the Jaafari  
5 government took office, about three weeks, I think,  
6 before. And it was quite clear that there was an Iraqi  
7 political vacuum, and the reality was street violence  
8 had occupied that.

9 So that would be the downside, yes. The upside was  
10 that, as it happened at the same time, there was  
11 a changeover of a lot of the coalition forces, but  
12 principally the American forces, and there had been  
13 a realisation that it was a counterinsurgency, it was an  
14 insurgency, it needed to be treated as such. And I saw  
15 the start of a change from the training that the forces  
16 received and the operations they were conducting.

17 Inevitably, in a force of that size you could see it  
18 operating almost at slightly different speeds depending  
19 on the nature of the commanders and the forces and,  
20 indeed, the challenges they faced. So -- and that,  
21 throughout my time, was a growing understanding that  
22 this needed to be treated as an insurgency even if that  
23 word wasn't actually used because it was frowned upon.

24 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: What did you see your objectives as  
25 at this time when you arrived?

1 LT GEN ROBIN BRIMS: My principal objective was, as the  
2 Deputy Commander General -- because actually that's what  
3 occupied probably 80 per cent of my time -- was to do  
4 the things that General Kiszely has described, but my  
5 principal focus, although I took over Fallujah from  
6 him -- actually my principal focus was to work with the  
7 Iraqi ministries and try and be their mentor for the  
8 senior people in the ministries to get them to make  
9 Iraqi plans and to get them to lead the plans and,  
10 therefore, to get an Iraqi leadership and ownership  
11 of it.

12 And that's where an awful lot of my time was spent.  
13 And, indeed, in the second half of my tour, I assisted  
14 in the creation of the criteria by which each province  
15 would be assessed, so that the lead for security would  
16 formally pass into Iraqi hands.

17 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: As this process developed of Iraqis  
18 taking a greater role, how did it work in terms of their  
19 ability to actually influence the conduct of the  
20 coalition forces, because there is always a danger  
21 presumably with these situations that you give the  
22 appearance of them being in charge, but if it appears  
23 that in practice they are puppets, then it is going to  
24 undermine their authority rather than enhance it. So  
25 how did you manage that tension?

1 LT GEN ROBIN BRIMS: You are quite right, the reality was  
2 that most of the things that we did were done by the  
3 coalition and, in truth, most of it was American and  
4 they did it. But by persuasion and encouragement you  
5 got Iraqi ownership of what they were doing and Iraqi  
6 endorsement.

7 So, for example, there was a major operation down in  
8 Tal Afar in -- I think it was in sort of September 2005.  
9 It was actually done -- it was planned by an American  
10 brigade. But that brigade commander came to Baghdad and  
11 I worked with him, with the -- all the supporting  
12 ministries to get them all involved and, indeed, to get  
13 the Iraqi people to come in after the event with life  
14 support to make the infrastructure of Tal Afar better.

15 It took an enormous amount of coalition, frankly,  
16 American persuasion and resource and ingenuity, but at  
17 the end it was an Iraqi decision and it was Iraqi-led,  
18 and it was a good outcome and it was -- I think it would  
19 be true to say -- you know, it was a model of how you  
20 should do things in a counterinsurgency.

21 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Can you think of any examples where  
22 the Iraqis vetoed successfully operations or  
23 alternatively suggested operations that hadn't been on  
24 your mind?

25 LT GEN ROBIN BRIMS: Certainly they would delay things from

1           happening in the same way as the coalition would  
2           sometimes delay things from happening.  And, indeed,  
3           I would regard that as being pretty positive in the same  
4           way as I would expect -- I don't know, in other places I  
5           had been where different parts the leadership of  
6           a counterinsurgency wanted to lay things for various  
7           reasons and in greater understanding across the whole  
8           that yes, there were delays.

9   SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:  Just in terms of the British role,  
10          we have heard from General Kiszely on the Black Watch's  
11          operation, how this was seen as a signal of British  
12          readiness to go outside its normal area of operations.  
13          But I think I'm right in saying that there weren't any  
14          other examples of this.  Were there any asked for?  Were  
15          the Americans asking us to do similar sorts of things  
16          again?

17  LT GEN ROBIN BRIMS:  No, the main focus of the British  
18          forces was in the south-east.  There were a number of  
19          specialist capabilities, niche capabilities, which were  
20          employed across the whole force, which I think was very  
21          widely welcomed by the coalition and by the Americans,  
22          the specific expertise that the British troops brought.

23  SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:  In -- (inaudible) on particular  
24          things involving British troops, and I realise this is  
25          in the south rather than your direct responsibility, but

1       there was the episode in September at the police  
2       station, when two servicemen were held and had to be  
3       rescued and so on. I'm just interested, how did that  
4       episode appear from your perspective and how did it play  
5       back in Baghdad?

6   LT GEN ROBIN BRIMS: I was fully aware of the situation as  
7       it was being reported in, and I think it is fair to say  
8       that in Baghdad the Iraqis were embarrassed by this.  
9       The Americans, I think, felt that we took unilateral  
10      British action, and I found myself in a slightly awkward  
11      position at one stage, that the Americans saw everything  
12      in the south-east was being run by London rather than by  
13      Baghdad. That was a perception that took me a bit of  
14      time to manage after the event.

15             From my perspective, I understood the situation as  
16      it arrived. I wasn't involved. I was advising various  
17      different people. I thought the British handled it  
18      extremely well and I have no difficulty with what was  
19      done and why it was done and how it was directed.

20             There were some misunderstandings that had to be  
21      sorted out. That's what I had to do within the  
22      coalition, and I think everyone, you know, picked up the  
23      pieces afterwards. But from an Iraqi perspective, it  
24      was interesting because it was the first sign to me that  
25      the Iraqis were going to take control of their own

1 ministries, and they weren't going to allow the  
2 coalition to tell them what was going to happen. So,  
3 for all the awkwardnesses, there was quite a positive  
4 outcome, in the sense that they were going to take  
5 control of things. But I would say that their enquiry  
6 into what happened and the causes and the outcomes was  
7 very different to the one that we did.

8 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Perhaps you could elucidate the  
9 differences.

10 LT GEN ROBIN BRIMS: I think there was a number of political  
11 influences that were at play in Basra, that were being  
12 played back in Baghdad, where people, Iraqi political  
13 parties, were trying to make political capital in  
14 central government.

15 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Do you think this had an impact on  
16 how the British were viewed generally as part of the  
17 coalition?

18 LT GEN ROBIN BRIMS: I think it was short-term only.

19 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: You don't think it had a  
20 particularly --

21 LT GEN ROBIN BRIMS: I think most of my American colleagues  
22 thought the British troops had done a very good job, to  
23 sort it out in the way that they did --

24 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: But it did create a question mark  
25 against what it actually meant for the responsibilities

1 for handing over to the Iraqis.

2 LT GEN ROBIN BRIMS: Yes.

3 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Perhaps just some general questions  
4 in terms of your overall sense of your mission --  
5 perhaps these are for both of you -- and how it worked  
6 out.

7 One of the issues that keeps on coming back in this  
8 Inquiry is that of influence, and it has already been  
9 raised by Baroness Prashar. How does this influence  
10 work in practice? You are deputy to an American  
11 commander, so one way influence is going to work is  
12 through the senior commander to the deputies, who  
13 presumably were under American influence, but in what  
14 ways are we having influence on broad American strategy  
15 and tactics? They are so much bigger in what they are  
16 doing than our contribution.

17 LT GEN ROBIN BRIMS: I think that we had quite a lot of  
18 influence, quietly. I think that, by discussing things  
19 with people and by being a sounding board to the  
20 Americans, I think that we provided that, and  
21 sometimes -- and General Casey was quite open with me.  
22 He asked me to do that. He asked me, as it were, to be  
23 a sounding board for him, to bring an alternative view,  
24 so that he could benefit from it, and sometimes I would  
25 bring an alternative view, not a British view but just

1 an alternative view, to be able to test a hypothesis.

2 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: How much was your ability to  
3 influence events dependent upon what was going on in the  
4 south? How well were you perceived to be managing the  
5 operations there?

6 LT GEN ROBIN BRIMS: As I said earlier on, practically all  
7 my time in Baghdad was spent dealing upwards, within the  
8 Iraqi ministries (inaudible) some set piece operations,  
9 but most the set piece operations were in those  
10 provinces where most of the insurgency was active at  
11 that time and therefore I actually had, apart from the  
12 events of 19 September 2005, very little routine  
13 activity with the British in the Basra area.

14 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: But the question was more sort of an  
15 indirect one, I suppose: If the British were perceived  
16 to be managing okay in the south, then our views on  
17 counter-insurgency and so on may have more credibility  
18 than if we were having trouble.

19 LT GEN ROBIN BRIMS: Yes, I think so, but I think what also  
20 happened during 2005: what in 2004 was seen to be  
21 a Sunni-inspired insurgency, increasingly -- and I think  
22 General Kiszely mentioned it -- you saw the start of  
23 a Shia violence and that started to increase, and it was  
24 happening in Baghdad and, of course, then it started to  
25 spread more widely, and it was still to come later on to

1 play in much greater effect in 2006 in the south.

2 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: General Kiszely?

3 LT GEN SIR JOHN KISZELY: Just maybe a concrete example of  
4 what you are talking about, influence, in particular in  
5 how the operations were being conducted by the  
6 coalition: in March General Casey put out what he called  
7 his "ten top tips" for counter-insurgency and one of  
8 these, I noted in my notebook, and was very pleased to  
9 see it:

10 "Treat the Iraqi people with respect and dignity.  
11 Learn and respect Iraqi customs and culture."

12 That was the sort of nature of conversations that  
13 I think he and I had been having before -- and I don't  
14 think he needed any reminding of that -- but it is  
15 those sort of things that I think are then reflected, if  
16 you like, in policy and implementation.

17 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Two final quick questions: first,  
18 the Americans have an election in November 2004, we have  
19 an election in May 2005 -- of course, there is an Iraqi  
20 election in the middle of all of this. Did you have any  
21 sense that these elections were affecting the sort of  
22 orders you were given, the ability to take a certain  
23 sort of operations or encouragement to take a certain  
24 sort of operations? Did you have any feel for the  
25 domestic politics of your situation?

1 LT GEN ROBIN BRIMS: I was fully aware of the domestic  
2 politics but I was given no constraints, and indeed  
3 I don't remember the election, the British election,  
4 having any particular influence over our activities.

Addendum provided by Lt Gen Robin Brims: "Upon reflection I should report that on my arrival in post in mid April 2005 I passed the message to General Casey from MOD(UK) that as a matter of policy British Forces would remain on current tasks in current geographic areas but this might change after the British General Election. In the event there was no change to that policy after the Election."

5 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Final question: you were both there  
6 for six months. Is this long enough for a senior  
7 commander in such a position?

8 LT GEN ROBIN BRIMS: I would have happily stayed there for  
9 a year, and I think I could have done a good job.

10 LT GEN SIR JOHN KISZELY: I would go even further than that,  
11 to say manifestly it is not long enough. A lot of  
12 people had been saying it was not long enough -- when  
13 I left Sarajevo in a similar role in 2002. I said so  
14 again, in writing in my post-tour report, and I think it  
15 is only surprising -- or maybe not -- that that hasn't  
16 been implemented as policy. There was one of my  
17 successors, General Lamb, who was there for the best  
18 part of a year, but otherwise they were all there either  
19 for six months or slightly less.

20 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: What was the reason for that? Why  
21 were you only given six months?

22 LT GEN SIR JOHN KISZELY: There are very complicated reasons  
23 that I think only somebody at the top of the British  
24 armed forces could explain. It is all to do with  
25 career manning, bureaucracy, postings, but clearly

1           somebody cleverer than me decided that six months was  
2           the right amount of time.

3 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: There was no flexibility as such?

4 LT GEN SIR JOHN KISZELY: Not much.

5 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: (inaudible) just explain to you what  
6           the consequences were of this quite rapid turnover?

7 LT GEN SIR JOHN KISZELY: Yes. Unless you were careful, you  
8           were treated as passing trade. People knew that if you  
9           were only there for six months, or in some cases of the  
10          senior staff members, less than six months, they knew  
11          that -- I'm talking about Iraqi interlocutors,  
12          ministers -- would know that the next time you came  
13          through their door you would be saying goodbye.

14                 So they, unless you were careful, weren't  
15          establishing the closeness of a relationship with you  
16          that they would with somebody whom they knew was there  
17          for a year, or more than a year, and I think that's true  
18          with all the Iraqis with whom one dealt, and in the  
19          headquarters, certainly, with the huge majority of the  
20          headquarters being American, they were all there for  
21          a year at least, and I don't think it reflected very  
22          well on the UK that we chose only to be there for half  
23          that time.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: Without being personal, is there a risk of  
25          short-termism if you have six-month tours?

1 LT GEN SIR JOHN KISZELY: Yes, exactly.

2 THE CHAIRMAN: I know Sir Roderic would like to ask  
3 something and so would Sir Martin. Rod?

4 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Just a couple of quick questions. You  
5 say that General Casey put out ten top tips in March --  
6 that's March 2005, two years after the invasion -- and  
7 you were pleased that one of these was to treat the  
8 Iraqi people with respect and decency. What had the  
9 Americans been doing for the previous two years?

10 LT GEN SIR JOHN KISZELY: I think their policy had certainly  
11 been to understand that that sort of thing was important  
12 in the counter-insurgency, but I don't think the  
13 Commanding General himself had gone as far as putting  
14 out ten top tips. This was a slightly unusual thing to  
15 do, but I think it was a very effective thing to do and,  
16 as I say, I think it had effect.

17 SIR RODERIC LYNE: But it took a bit of time for the penny  
18 to drop?

19 LT GEN SIR JOHN KISZELY: No, I think General Casey was well  
20 aware of the requirement. I think some of the senior  
21 American generals, who had been there during the  
22 invasion, the war-fighting phase, if you like, saw  
23 themselves very much as war-fighting generals. In fact  
24 I think General Sanchez said as much when he left  
25 Baghdad in the summer of 2004. But General Casey,

1 I think, saw himself in a different way and saw himself  
2 as somebody who was leading something very different  
3 and, in terms of counter-insurgency, understanding what  
4 needed to be done and effecting that transition of  
5 thinking and of procedures and how people went about the  
6 implementation during his time.

7 SIR RODERIC LYNE: You both said that in the time you were  
8 there the generals on the ground were not allowed to use  
9 the word "counter-insurgency" to describe the situation,  
10 that there was a ban from Secretary Rumsfeld, who didn't  
11 like this word. To what extent do you feel that  
12 backseat driving from Washington by Donald Rumsfeld was  
13 actually constraining and inhibiting the people in  
14 charge on the ground dealing with the problem?

15 LT GEN SIR JOHN KISZELY: Well, certainly when I arrived,  
16 the word "insurgency" was discouraged because, as I  
17 said, he had been asked, "Is this an insurgency?" and he  
18 had made it absolutely plain that in his view it wasn't.

19 SIR RODERIC LYNE: But the generals thought it was? That  
20 was their appreciation?

21 LT GEN SIR JOHN KISZELY: Gradually, I think people  
22 understood that it was but, to start with, we didn't use  
23 the word, just as we didn't use the word in Northern  
24 Ireland. We said we were involved in military aid to  
25 the civil power rather than counter-insurgency, and

1       there is always a reluctance, obviously, politically, to  
2       admit that you are in an insurgency, but gradually this  
3       became the accepted parlance because people realised  
4       they were in an insurgency.

5               Going to the wider point of your question about  
6       influence from Washington, I think one thing that I saw  
7       was huge impetus from the top of the Pentagon to draw  
8       down force levels very quickly, and General Casey was,  
9       I think, arguing that they should not be drawn down as  
10      quickly as he was under some pressure to do so, and  
11      I think he was absolutely right.

12              Why this was being done from Washington was,  
13      I think, largely because the American forces were under  
14      huge pressure; they couldn't keep up a large troop  
15      deployment for a long time. But I think it was also  
16      influenced by the projections of when the Iraqi security  
17      forces -- that's the army and the police -- would be  
18      ready to take over, and I think some optimistic  
19      predictions were made --

20   SIR RODERIC LYNE: You mean over-optimistic predictions?

21   LT GEN SIR JOHN KISZELY: Most definitely overoptimistic,  
22      unrealistic, predictions were made earlier in 2004.  
23      There was considerable pressure from Capitol Hill to  
24      keep to these predictions, that the administration in  
25      Washington was being given a very hard time, that it

1 didn't appear to be keeping up to the targets that it  
2 had set itself, and I think, therefore, a reluctance to  
3 adjust those targets and, as a result, adjust the level  
4 of drawdown, and I think this was throughout my time  
5 very much the pressure that was coming from Washington,  
6 and it was certainly not General Casey's intention, as  
7 I understood it, to draw down a moment sooner than he  
8 thought it was wise.

9 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Were you getting similar pressure from  
10 London?

11 LT GEN SIR JOHN KISZELY: No, because in a sense  
12 Multi-National Division South East was pretty calm, the  
13 area, during my time there, there was not a virulent  
14 insurgency taking place down in the south and British  
15 troops, generally speaking, were maintaining security in  
16 their area with much less difficulty than the Americans  
17 were in other areas.

18 SIR RODERIC LYNE: And it had already been drawn down from  
19 three fighting brigades to one by then anyway.

20 General Brims, do you want to comment just briefly  
21 on this? I know we are running out of time.

22 LT GEN ROBIN BRIMS: That was the situation I inherited.  
23 I think, whilst there was a lot of talk about when it  
24 might be possible to reduce the number of troops,  
25 American troops, I think that there was much greater

1 understanding this had to be conditions-based. Hence  
2 the work that I described earlier on to set up how you  
3 were going to assess, province by province, handing  
4 security control to the Iraqis. That was part of this  
5 overall process, because until you could have the Iraqi  
6 forces in place and the Iraqi command and control and  
7 the Iraqi police and the involvement of the provincial  
8 governor, then you couldn't start taking away coalition  
9 forces.

10 So I think that was, you know, developing on. But  
11 I still think that there were still some people who were  
12 wedded to a timetable of reduction. And it also led on  
13 to the same piece in it, that there was a glaring need  
14 to me and many others that there was need for  
15 reconciliation, Iraqi reconciliation, but Iraqi  
16 reconciliation was going to involve the coalition  
17 because there was coalition blood in it. But there had  
18 to be that reconciliation to assist in moving things  
19 forward and that was going to be very difficult.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Sir Martin?

21 SIR MARTIN GILBERT: General Kiszely, you mentioned your  
22 role in the reconstruction after Fallujah. I wonder if  
23 you could say something about the specific objectives  
24 you set yourself and how far you were able to achieve  
25 them and whether your six-month term was in any way an

1           impediment in that?

2   LT GEN SIR JOHN KISZELY: I think, given direction from  
3           General Casey towards the end of October about Fallujah,  
4           that this was to be my main effort. So he set my  
5           priorities very clearly for me, and this was managing  
6           from the Baghdad end, if you like, the Iraqi ministry's  
7           part in the reconstruction of Fallujah. So I was  
8           coordinating the ministries of the interior, transport,  
9           health, industry, et cetera, to provide that support to the  
10          Americans in Fallujah, and it brought home to me very  
11          starkly the complete lack of capacity in the  
12          Iraqi Government. The ministers, as I say, were not  
13          used to managing things. They needed a civil service to  
14          make things happen. The civil service was not there.  
15          The people who were occupying very senior jobs had been  
16          very junior before. They were not properly trained.

17                 This was definitely heavy lifting to get anything  
18                 done whatsoever, and the fact that it was achieved was  
19                 fine, but it did, I think, shock me about how quickly  
20                 Iraq could self-govern if, when faced by an example such  
21                 as this, it was totally incapable of actually making  
22                 things happen.

23                 That was true also in other government departments,  
24                 in the Ministry of Defence, and I think I thought the  
25                 people who thought there was going to be a quick

1 solution were going to be severely disappointed, and  
2 I remember saying so to London.

3 THE CHAIRMAN: I would be very interested in one question  
4 from the experience you have both had in your tours in  
5 Baghdad at that time, and it is about the speed of  
6 Iraqi-isation, particularly in the security field, and  
7 whether there is -- question. I mean, is there  
8 a differential pace between the possibility of building,  
9 or rebuilding, an effective military component from  
10 scratch but there are people in the background who have  
11 had some military experience, on the one hand, and  
12 really effective policing on the other, given that that  
13 needs much more intimate day-to-day political direction,  
14 it is much more open to corruption problems and things  
15 of that kind, and is there an average you have to find,  
16 a sort of golden mean, between policing, with justice  
17 following on behind, and the army?

18 LT GEN SIR JOHN KISZELY: To me the key area was in the rule  
19 of law, essentially a policing function, that people  
20 tended to be obsessed with numbers of police trained and  
21 yet the basic training course for a policeman was eight  
22 weeks, eight weeks complete. Now, that has been  
23 extended since then but this was not in any way training  
24 an effective police force. It was meeting the targets  
25 but it wasn't training a proper police force.

1           When you add that to the fact of the intimidation  
2           campaign, that judges were amongst those who were being  
3           most intimidated, that lawyers and prosecutors were  
4           amongst those being most intimidated, the rule of law  
5           did not function, and again I'm not sure that people who  
6           viewed the progress of the campaign by statistics, by  
7           things that could be measured, by performance  
8           indicators, understood really the dire situation, in  
9           terms of security, that Iraq was in.

10           You know, you can't measure these things.

11           Therefore, people tended to dismiss them because they  
12           couldn't be measured, and yet these were the real  
13           indicators of the depth and intensity of the insurgency  
14           and the lack of progress in the counter-insurgency.

15   THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. General Brims?

16   LT GEN ROBIN BRIMS: I would endorse those points. I would  
17           just reflect that right at the start, when I was talking  
18           to you last week, we, the coalition, have encouraged the  
19           Iraqi armed forces not to fight us. The disbandment of  
20           the Iraqi armed forces -- and I think you have heard  
21           quite a lot about that -- is incoherent at best.

22           The Iraqi police weren't disbanded. The Iraqi  
23           police is nothing like European police, nothing like it.  
24           It has got a mechanised brigade for a start. So I think  
25           that we have got to be quite careful of being able to --

1           because in the language I think we sometimes confuse  
2           ourselves, and the Iraqi police are/were much more open  
3           to local influences than the centralised army, and  
4           I think that would be true before 2003.

5   THE CHAIRMAN:   Because a provincial governor would be  
6           responsible for policing?

7   LT GEN ROBIN BRIMS:   Yes.

8   THE CHAIRMAN:   Thank you very much.   Usha?

9   BARONESS USHA PRASHAR:   Thank you.   I want to come back to  
10           the ten tips of General Casey.   I mean, this war was  
11           undertaken to liberate the Iraqi people from the  
12           oppressive regime of Saddam Hussein and also to restore  
13           the human rights of the Iraqis, so why was it necessary,  
14           two years on, to sort of have tips to treat people with  
15           respect, because I would have thought the very basis of  
16           the war was precisely to restore the human rights, to  
17           deal with oppression, and therefore the whole attitude  
18           and the culture should have that of respect for the  
19           local people.   So why was it necessary to emphasise that  
20           particular --

21   LT GEN SIR JOHN KISZELY:   I think that a large number of  
22           coalition forces were going about it in the right way,  
23           but clearly he felt at that time that not everybody was  
24           and wished to give that his particular emphasis, which  
25           I think was absolutely the right thing to do.   As I say,

