

1 (3.20 pm)

2 MAJOR GENERAL JONATHAN SHAW

3 THE CHAIRMAN: Let's reopen after the break. We heard

4 before the break from Lieutenant General

5 Sir Richard Shirreff and we now welcome Major General

6 Jonathan Shaw.

7 You succeeded General Shirreff, I think, as

8 commander of the Multi-National Force in January 2007

9 and went on until August of that year? Thank you.

10 I will repeat, for form's sake, what I said before

11 the opening session. We recognise that witnesses are

12 giving evidence based on recollection, and we are, of

13 course, checking what we hear against the papers to

14 which we have access, and we remind every witness that

15 he will later be asked to sign a transcript of his

16 evidence to the effect that the evidence given is

17 truthful, fair and accurate. With that, I will hand

18 over to you, Sir Lawrence Freedman.

19 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Thank you very much. You heard the

20 previous evidence. You were listening. So rather than

21 going over it all again, I would just like your reaction

22 to arriving with Sinbad, I guess, petering out -- or

23 coming to a conclusion, and Zenith already being

24 planned. Just how sort of au fait were you with both

25 operations when you arrived?

1 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: With regard to Op Zenith,
2 fortunately -- well, I felt very fortunate that the
3 members of my staff, including my Chief of Staff,
4 Colonel Ian Thomas, and, indeed, my J5, who is already
5 sat in the audience as well, had been out in Basra and
6 had helped plan Op Zenith. So Op Zenith, although it
7 was planned under my predecessor's divisional regime,
8 was actually planned by the people who were going to
9 execute it: namely, ourselves. So there was great
10 continuity there. So we were completely au fait with
11 the planning of Op Zenith and indeed had a part in
12 writing it.

13 As far as Sinbad was concerned, we had been aware of
14 the plan, we had been briefed on it many times, we had
15 seen it on the recce, so again, we were completely
16 au fait with how that was progressing, and indeed how it
17 was going to run on through our time.

18 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: We have heard a description of the
19 UK now really being committed to, if you like, an exit
20 strategy rather than what was described as a winning
21 strategy. Was that how you understood the situation?

22 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: I wouldn't use those words. I would
23 say that we were trying to work to an Iraqi solution to
24 the Iraqi problem. We were trying to work out what was
25 best for Iraq, and we were, therefore, looking at it

1 through an Iraqi prism. We were, therefore, trying to
2 achieve Iraqi -- provincial Iraqi control and do that in
3 the best way possible, the best way for the Iraqis, the
4 best way for ourselves, the best way for the coalition.

5 I wouldn't have described it as a straight exit
6 strategy, no, I would say that that is one way -- the
7 whole definition of what it is to win in Iraq is one of
8 those moot questions, but to us it was getting a good
9 Iraqi solution to their problems, a self-sustaining
10 Iraqi state. Therefore, success, to me, was defined in
11 Iraqi terms rather than in British or in coalition
12 terms.

13 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: We had a definition of failure which
14 was the sense that the British had been bombed out, that
15 the position had become so untenable, so much bound up
16 with our own force protection that it was necessary to
17 leave without a lot of our objectives being achieved.
18 By the time you took over, do you feel that that danger
19 had passed or was still present?

20 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: I think there was always a danger
21 that that might be perceived to be the situation and
22 that was certainly one of the pitfalls that we strove to
23 avoid. It was one of the keys of executing -- planning
24 and executing Op Zenith that we avoided that conclusion
25 being drawn.

1 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: How, in your planning, did you seek
2 to avoid that?

3 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: Op Zenith was about the reposturing
4 of British troops from the bases in Basra out to the
5 COB, out to the airfield. It was about handing over
6 those bases to Iraqi security forces, therefore it had
7 to be arranged with the Iraqi security forces, it had to
8 be executed in a way which was not seen in any way -- it
9 had to be seen in a positive light, it had to be done
10 completely in conjunction with the Government of Iraq
11 and it had to be done at a time and in a manner of our
12 own choosing.

13 When you look at the results of Op Zenith, I think
14 you can look at every single base we pulled out of, we
15 achieved exactly those objectives.

16 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: How was this co-ordinated with the
17 Iraqis because obviously everything you are describing
18 depends very much on the Iraqis taking over, yet we have
19 heard evidence about the police force still being in
20 a pretty grim state and obviously the aftermath of
21 the December attack on the Jamiat police HQ and that
22 10 Division was in a difficult position because it was
23 withdrawn so much from the area. So how were you able
24 to achieve those objectives?

25 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: You are right in saying that the

1 police were a particularly problematic organisation, but
2 we weren't handing over bases to them. So let's just
3 park them to one side.

4 The people we were dealing with were 10 Division,
5 and here you need to understand a little bit about the
6 nature of the violence that was going on in Basra. You
7 have to remember that 85 or 90 per cent of the violence
8 was taking place against us, it wasn't taking place
9 against the locals.

10 Therefore, in handing over security to the Iraqi
11 security forces, the problem that they would have to be
12 dealing with was a great deal less than the problem that
13 we faced. You also need to consider that the militia
14 were launching -- basically no attacks against the Iraqi
15 security forces and I think that tells you something
16 about the nature of the violence in the south.

17 You know, there is an open question as to whether
18 there was actually an insurgency in the south, because
19 these people were actually -- in fact, an awful lot of
20 them were vying for the title of who was the greatest
21 Iraqi nationalist, and this was all part of their
22 narrative, that we were actually the occupiers.

23 So we were quite confident, seeing that narrative,
24 that, once handing over -- if you organised the handover
25 to the 10 Division, that actually there was very

1 little motive for the militias to actually attack 10 Div
2 in those places.

3 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: So this is evidence again we have
4 heard of the assessment in Baghdad and London that the
5 risk -- that we had become part of the problem rather
6 than the solution, that we were drawing fire towards us.

7 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: That's certainly true, yes, that is
8 certainly true.

9 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: So politically, how did this work
10 with the Iraqis?

11 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: The Shia polity was, I think, the
12 greatest problem that we had to cope with in Iraq and
13 that played right the way up to Baghdad. You have
14 already heard about how Salamanca was altered because of
15 resistance within the Shia polity and became
16 Op Sinbad.

17 In effect, what that meant was that a lot of the
18 kinetic element that had been intended in Salamanca was
19 taken out. It continued under another guise, if you
20 like, and that just showed an early sign that, whatever
21 the de jure freedom of action by the UN Security Council
22 resolution, de facto you had to work within the
23 tolerances of the Shia polity, and that became
24 particularly apparent where anyone in MNF tackled a Shia
25 problem.

1 Just as we encountered difficulties, and my
2 predecessor had encountered difficulties, from the Shia
3 polity, so General Chiarelli, as the corps commander,
4 faced difficulties when he tried to mount American
5 operations into Sadr City. So this was a common problem
6 that we all faced, that the ruling Shia polity was
7 itself so internally divided and Prime Minister Maliki's
8 position was itself so weak, that if we attacked what we
9 would call the dark state, their shadow state sponsors
10 would pull the levers on their official state
11 representatives and veto the operation or get various
12 people released, and there were various instances,
13 during the time when we arrested high-up operators in
14 the dark state, who then subsequently were released by
15 Maliki because of political pressure put on him at the
16 top end. So that whole issue of dealing with the Shia
17 polity was a major issue.

18 So who did we deal with? We dealt with the national
19 security adviser, Rubaie, who was very keen on us
20 pulling out, very keen on this transition policy.
21 Officially, all these Iraqi politicians were keen on it,
22 because, from a Shia polity point of view, there was no
23 political advantage to them to be seen to support the
24 British, ie the occupiers, against their own
25 constituents. So inevitably, the Government of Iraq was

1 very keen on us handing over. Their only uncertainty
2 was whether 10 Div were up to taking it over from us.

3 We spoke to Governor Wa'ili, who was very happy for
4 the Iraqi army to take over these bases. We spoke to
5 General Habib, the new man in charge of 10 Div, and he
6 was very happy to take over, provided he had enough time
7 to prepare his people for it, and that's where the sort
8 of nervousness came in about the ability of 10 Div to do
9 the job that was coming their way.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: Could I --

11 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: I remember that from the end of
12 January -- I'm sorry you have a question, sir.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: No, do complete it and then I'll cut in.

14 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: At the end of January 2007, 10 Div
15 were handed over to the IGFC, Iraqi
16 Ground Force Command, excuse me, by a contract whereby
17 we handed them over to the IGFC, and, therefore, we were
18 in support of 10 Div. So we couldn't tell them what to
19 do, we had to work in support of 10 Div, and 10 Div,
20 General Habib, the new man who took over, he had to come
21 up with the plans of how he was going to take over these
22 bases and we had to work with him a plan of how we
23 worked those handovers.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: You have described, and we have heard from
25 other witnesses too, the attractive force of the British

1 presence, in terms of the playing out of the
2 intrafactional competition, the political power within
3 the Shia community in Basra.

4 Did any of factions, or indeed political
5 personalities, see the Multi National Division as, in
6 a sense, an instrument they could bend to their own will
7 in order to attack, defeat or at least weaken competing
8 factions within the Shia community?

9 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: We never got any definite -- I can't
10 recall any definite intelligence that told us that they
11 were trying to do that, but we were very conscious in
12 our initial planning stage that this was a possibility,
13 that we could become an organ of factionalism within
14 a -- yes, within the Shia competition and that we could
15 become a player for one side rather than the other.

16 But that rather became the point of the whole
17 political plan that we tried to urge the Foreign Office
18 to write, and, indeed, that we ended up trying to write
19 with them, trying to work out who the good guys were,
20 who the bad guys were, who were the people we were
21 supporting.

22 When you look at the priorities that we set for the
23 application of military force, the number one
24 priority for the utility of our force was to alter the
25 political balance within Basra in favour of those people

1 who were in favour of the objectives for Iraq that we
2 had agreed upon and that the Iraqis had agreed upon.
3 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Before I hand over to Sir Roderic,
4 you used the rather sinister phrase "the dark state"
5 for -- I presume this relates to the good guys and the
6 bad guys. Can you give us a little description of what
7 the dark state is? It sounds like Harry Potter.

8 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: Indeed. Actually, it is not
9 JK Rowling, it is Professor Charles Tripp of SOAS, who
10 enlightened us to this way of looking at the world, and
11 his -- if you will forgive me precisising his view, his
12 view was that the official state had been so weakened by
13 Saddam's reign, by the Iran/Iraq war and then being
14 completely wiped out by the invasion, our invasion, in
15 2003, and then de-Ba'athification, that you ended up
16 with the shadow state being in charge of the country,
17 and that what had happened in the elections of 2005 was
18 that the shadow state, organisations like the militias,
19 like SCIRI, like JAM, had taken over the organs of the
20 official state, and that, therefore, when you were
21 dealing with the official state, you were not actually
22 dealing with the official rulers, you were dealing with
23 proxies, you were dealing with representatives of the
24 shadow state who worked in the shadows.

25 Now, the interesting thing about militias in Iraqi

1 law was that they were not themselves illegal, and
2 that's why I called them the shadow state.

3 The dark state -- it was a term that I then defined,
4 developing that thesis. The dark state were the people
5 who made themselves illegal by their actions, and they
6 were often members of the shadow state, and, in some
7 cases, they were members of the official state as well,
8 which made it even more confusing.

9 What it meant, therefore, was that you had a direct
10 link between the people in power advising Maliki sat in
11 his Cabinet down through the shadow state and down to
12 their militias, the sort of violent militias, the
13 criminals, the murderers and the terrorists at the
14 bottom, there was a strict linkage between those three,
15 and so, what you ended up with was a system where the
16 dark state was protected by the official state.

17 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: In getting round that sort of
18 situation, I guess you can assume, one, to reassert the
19 power of the official state and get it to clean up its
20 act, but another route would be to try to find those
21 elements within the shadow state that actually were
22 amenable to working with you and helping Iraq
23 reconstruct?

24 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: Exactly, exactly right. That's what
25 one had to do, I think. Recognising that there was

1 a sort of spectrum of loyalties and interests out there,
2 we had to look at what united people, and there were
3 various things that united that we recognised after
4 a few weeks there, that united people in Basra, and, by
5 focusing on that, we tried to create a political plan
6 based on that.

7 Everyone seemed to want to be wealthy, no one
8 attacked the oil infrastructure, so it seemed to me that
9 everybody wanted Basra to work, even the Iranians, whom
10 we suspected had invested huge amounts of money in
11 there, so they were quite happy for it to be
12 a prosperous place. So everybody wants to make money.

13 There seemed to be a general fear, a Shia fear, of
14 a Ba'athist revival, and, again, that was another common
15 interest with the Iranians, and that explained -- those
16 two reasons, to my mind, explained to me, not why
17 Iranian violence was so great, but actually why Iranian
18 violence was so limited. You know, was this really the
19 action of a state full-blown? Absolutely not. This was
20 very limited and very calculated violence on their part
21 to very specific ends, to the extent that we could work
22 out what they were. But it was common ground --

23 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: What did you think they were?

24 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: I'm sorry?

25 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: What did you think they were?

1 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: I'm trying to cast back now.
2 I think they didn't like us being there. They
3 definitely wanted us out. I never got any sense they
4 wanted to -- a turbulent state to their western side.
5 I think they wanted Basra to be quite prosperous.
6 I think they wanted a strong Shia power to their west,
7 but equally, I think they wanted -- while they wanted it
8 to be strong, my sense was that they wanted it to be --
9 what can one say -- as beholden to Iran as possible.
10 I think that would be a natural aspiration for them to
11 have. So two things: people wanted to be wealthy in
12 Basra; they didn't want a Ba'athist revival.
13 But my sense very strongly, having said about Iran,
14 was that people in Basra did not want to be run by Iran.
15 Our strong conclusion was that the influence that Iran
16 had in the south was rented not bought; ie, that it had
17 been taken by these people for their specific purposes,
18 which, short-term, was to get rid of us, but, long-term,
19 would be to get rid of them too. Because these were
20 Iraqi nationalists, they wanted to run themselves.
21 Until I had been there and served there, I really
22 had no idea what Iraqi nationalism could stand for,
23 given that -- all these people who said that Iraq was a
24 false state, it was just lines on a map. Actually,
25 I found a very strong sense of Iraqi nationalism and

1 a very strong sense that people did not want to be run
2 by Iran. That came from all sorts of people, even from
3 the great governor of Maysan who declared himself
4 a member of JAM, but was an opponent of Iran; he could
5 use it for purposes, but he didn't want to be run by
6 Iran. I think that was -- that struck me as a very
7 interesting sense of loyalty to Iraq and gave me great
8 hope.

9 So, yes, you played on those factors, those factors
10 of unity, in order to create an appeal to certain parts
11 of the opposition to come on board and stop fighting us
12 and actually switch in seeing the Iranians as the enemy
13 long-term. That was the policy we pursued on
14 a political level, which, ultimately, I think was
15 successful.

16 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Perhaps I can just come back to how
17 events unfolded on the ground chronologically in your
18 period there.

19 I mean, firstly, the end of Sinbad, how did Sinbad
20 play through? Your predecessor has just been telling us
21 about his hope, not fulfilled, that there would be a big
22 idea, as he called it, a Rooseveltian new deal idea, but
23 also obviously talking about the importance of the
24 economic element of this, and the fact that, at this
25 stage, the Iraqi 10th Division was not in the condition

1 to do an effective job in taking over security from us.

2 Can you just take us through the latter stages of

3 Sinbad and where it led to and what its overall results

4 were?

5 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: Sinbad was planned on a series of

6 pulses. Was it 19? I can't remember how many pulses

7 there were, something of that order.

8 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Something like 16, yes.

9 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: They were planned out and scheduled

10 and they continued in my time, and, frankly, I was

11 looking beyond Sinbad to what we were going to do after

12 that and how we moved on to Zenith. So very much that

13 was a written plan. It was done by brigade and it

14 carried on being executed, and I'm not sure I have got

15 anything to add usefully on Sinbad, except perhaps to

16 say --

17 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Do you think it was important?

18 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: Do I think Sinbad was important?

19 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Yes.

20 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: The importance of Sinbad for me was

21 the consent that it gained for -- from the

22 Provincial Council for our actions. We were in

23 a curious position. You highlighted in the previous

24 talk to my predecessor that the only political downfall

25 was that the Provincial Council would not talk to the

1 division. That remained the case for my entire time
2 there.

3 That was a problem, because, actually, in terms of
4 the modalities of how you arrive at provincial Iraqi
5 control, the Provincial Council had a part to play. So
6 how do you negotiate provincial Iraqi control if you are
7 not talking to the people you are meant to be handing
8 over control to? So that was a real problem.

9 But the Jame'at incident, having caused them to
10 embargo all talks to us, nonetheless what they never did
11 thereafter was to actually stop any of our strikes or
12 complain about them. My reading of that was that they
13 read 'the street', 'the Arab street view', that they were
14 very much impressed by what they had seen of Sinbad and
15 they had been impressed by the actions of the MNF on the
16 streets and they had liked seeing the ISF there, and the
17 politicians, although they couldn't say so in public
18 because of the pressure from the militias, in private
19 they knew that the population actually quite approved of
20 action that the MNF were taking.

21 That, to me, is the only explanation I can give for
22 why the Provincial Council made no objection to any of
23 our strike operations. Remember, the period when we
24 took it from -- that 19 Brigade went into
25 through January, February, March, April was the most

1 intense series of brigade strike operations throughout
2 the entire campaign. So this was a very intense period
3 of kinetic operations that were embarked on after Sinbad
4 and they went through with the connivance, the silent
5 acquiescence of the Provincial Council, which to me
6 spoke volumes.

7 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Did the extent of the -- the 4 March raid
8 on the National Intelligence Information Agency, did
9 this silent acquiescence extend there?

10 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: Yes, that was the error.
11 25 February exactly. That was the one operation where
12 they did object to it, and it was a real shame, because,
13 actually, the morning after that raid, I had been
14 planning to have a re-engagement meeting, and, indeed,
15 the Chairman, Obadi, had planned to come and see me
16 and, of course, that was cancelled as a result of that
17 and that was a real shame.

18 But that raid, again, exposed the difficulties
19 within the Shia polity again, because this was a raid
20 which was speculative in the sense that it was a bit of
21 hot intelligence in the middle of the operation, but it
22 was a raid against someone against whom there was an
23 arrest warrant. It was a raid carried out by the Iraqi
24 special forces, so it was an Iraqi raid and it was
25 trying very hard to abide by or comply with Iraqi

1 sovereignty, and yet, even so, even though they found --
2 they just missed the guy, although they knew he had been
3 there, they found again, like going to the original
4 Jame'at, all kinds of mistreatment of prisoners, a woman
5 being raped in front of her two children, all kinds of
6 misdemeanours going on.

7 That wasn't the issue that ended up being the
8 political headline; the political headline was that we
9 had broached Iraqi sovereignty, and I think that, again,
10 tells us a lot about the way the Shia polity was
11 playing.

12 So yes, that was a mistake, it was an unfortunate
13 raid, we learned lessons from it, we played even more
14 gingerly with Shia political sensitivities thereafter.

15 SIR RODERIC LYNE: While all of this was going on, the
16 American surge was taking place in other parts of Iraq.
17 Did this asymmetry raise any questions for you?

18 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: Well, it is only asymmetric if you
19 imagine that the problems we were facing were themselves
20 symmetric, and they weren't. I think the most
21 appropriate -- I think the word one should use is
22 "appropriate". I think what we were doing in the south
23 was appropriate, given the situation in the south.

24 SIR RODERIC LYNE: The force levels you had were
25 appropriate?

1 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: Go back a question to what I said
2 about the nature of the violence. The nature of the
3 violence that the Americans faced up north was of an
4 entirely different nature to our own. It was
5 accelerated by a nihilistic AQI, Al-Qaeda Iraq,
6 organisation, who would have quite happily brought the
7 Iraqi house down, if they could.

8 That sort of accelerant was leading to a sort of
9 sectarian civil war in the north which the Americans
10 chose they had to intervene to surge to stop, and I can
11 see their justification. But that sort of violence,
12 that sort of accelerant, as I have explained about the
13 nature of violence in the south, was completely absent
14 in the south. There was no accelerant of violence
15 there. The violence was against us, not against the
16 locals.

17 SIR RODERIC LYNE: So the solution was not to squash it, it
18 was for us to take the target, ie ourselves, out of the
19 firing line?

20 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: In a sense, as I have said, the
21 people who were going to end up running Iraq were the
22 Shia polity. The problem was within the Shia polity.
23 You cannot really ask -- I never felt that the British
24 forces were the appropriate tool to deal with the
25 problem within the Shia political organisation. I think

1 that was the real issue.

2 SIR RODERIC LYNE: That had to be dealt with internally --

3 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: Yes.

4 SIR RODERIC LYNE: -- or should the British have had a more

5 effective civilian and political operation to engage

6 with than we had at the time you were there?

7 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: That's a separate question, although

8 it comes to the same answer, that, actually, the answer

9 lay within the Shia polity and it needed all the organs

10 of state power to encourage the Shias to deal with their

11 own inner demons, which, in effect, they only did with

12 Charge of the Knights, which is why Charge of the

13 Knights actually was a great success, in terms of the

14 establishment of -- well, from my perspective, sitting

15 back here, in terms of the establishment of Iraqi

16 self-rule, because, finally, it was a decisive blow by

17 Maliki declaring some elements of the Shia polity out of

18 bounds.

19 So it was a risk on his part, but it seems to me to

20 have been exactly what was missing in my time, which was

21 one part of the Shia polity standing up and saying,

22 "This is right. That is wrong". That was what was

23 missing in my time.

24 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Your predecessor described in graphic

25 terms how bad the security was in Maysan province, how

1 it was effectively a no-go area, but I think I'm right
2 in saying that during your time you were able to hand it
3 over to Provincial Iraqi Control. Is that correct?

4 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: Yes.

5 SIR RODERIC LYNE: How were you able to do that within such
6 a short timespan?

7 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: I claim absolutely no credit for it.
8 The question of Provincial Iraqi Control was perhaps the
9 most hotly debated. Is it a set of concrete objective
10 judgments or is it a set of political reality judgments?

11 At the time the decision was made to make a judgment
12 on PIC, the judgment about the way the whole campaign
13 was going was very much in flux. We should -- if anyone
14 has got an idea that the moment that George Bush
15 declared the surge, the entire American policy changed,
16 if you have got that idea, it is the wrong idea.

17 Reading through my notes on the way here, I was
18 struck by how the attitudes throughout the year changed
19 like a supertanker and they very much changed depending
20 upon how successful things were being. For instance, in
21 the late March corps conference, General Odierno
22 declared that 2007 was absolutely vital because -- and
23 we had to achieve success within that year because it
24 was unlikely we would get a UN Security Council
25 resolution at the end of the year, the Government of

1 Iraq will and sovereignty was increasing and American
2 public support for the operation in Iraq was dwindling.
3 So we had limited time. That was his words at the end
4 of March.

5 On that basis, if success had to be achieved in
6 2007, people realised the need to take risk. They had
7 to take risks with security. What happened in Maysan
8 was not that there was any blinding flash of new
9 security, but, rather, that the situation in Maysan had
10 been stable for long enough, in the sense that the rough
11 coalition of JAM, or the accommodation that JAM and Badr
12 seemed to have made there seemed to look reasonably
13 steady and it was as good as it was ever going to get,
14 and, therefore, the decision was made to give it PIC on
15 the basis, not that that handed it over to the militia,
16 but actually that it was as good as it was going to get
17 and that, once you had given PIC, if the Americans still
18 wanted to raid in to there and do surgical raids on
19 particularly troublesome elements, then they still could
20 providing they had the Government of Iraq permission.

21 So, from the American point of view, this was a risk
22 worth taking, and my sense was that was the reason that
23 they granted PIC to Maysan at that time.

24 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Then we were trying to move towards
25 a similar point in Basra, which was a bigger problem,

1 a more difficult problem, and a more sensitive political
2 problem.

3 Last week, we talked -- we took evidence from
4 Mr Jon Day who confirmed to us that there had been
5 contacts between the UK and the Sadrists in Basra from
6 the spring of 2007 and that, as a result of that
7 continuing dialogue, we had reached a series of
8 understandings by mid-June with the core elements of the
9 Sadrists/JAM militia. He described the objective of
10 trying to separate the irreconcilable elements and deal
11 with the more reconcilable ones. Were you involved in
12 that process?

13 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: I think the statements of Jon Day
14 say everything that should be said in this hearing.

15 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Did it lead to a lasting improvement in
16 the security situation?

17 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: I left in August 2007, so you would
18 probably have to ask my successor.

19 SIR RODERIC LYNE: But it was an important step in the
20 process?

21 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: I would say it was.

22 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Lawrence, do you want to take on from
23 here?

24 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Thank you. By the time that you
25 left in August, how did you feel the position was, as

1 against what it was when you had taken over?

2 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: When I left?

3 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Yes.

4 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: I thought there were very hopeful
5 signs. The hopeful signs were on the Iraqi side,
6 particularly the arrival in -- I mean, three things
7 happened in May/June. The first thing that happened was
8 that the JAM leader was killed, as a sort of final
9 gesture of 19 Brigade, and that really destabilised JAM
10 in Basra.

11 The next thing that happened was that we got a new
12 police chief, General Jalil, whom I admire greatly, and
13 he came to the very strong conclusion -- very early on
14 he said -- he said, "The issue here is not one of
15 training, nor of equipment, it is one of loyalty", and
16 this was a statement that resonated very strongly with
17 the views that we had had before. He spoke about the
18 police and why they were so bad.

19 What was interesting -- the observation I made
20 within weeks of arriving is, why is it that police
21 forces in Muthanna and Dhi Qar out in the west of our
22 area operate so differently to the police in Basra when
23 they both had the same equipment and the same training?
24 The only difference was loyalty. It wasn't a question
25 of whether they were members of militias or not,

1 because, actually, our sense was that the police forces
2 in Dhi Qar and Muthanna were actually Badr dominated,
3 but actually there was unity of command.

4 The issue that we had -- I go back to the fact that
5 being a militia member is not illegal in Iraqi law, and
6 what was accepted at the first corps conference at which
7 I spoke was a sense that it wasn't that you were
8 a member of a militia or not, it was the purpose to
9 which you put that membership of the militia, and if
10 you, as a militia, decided to work with the Government
11 of Iraq, then that was fine.

12 Indeed that was an analysis that surprised some, but
13 it was a bit late because that's what people had already
14 signed up to in granting provincial Iraqi control to
15 Muthanna and Dhi Qar, provinces that were heavily run by
16 Badr Corps and SCIRI and alliance with the tribes around
17 there and working in tandem with the government.

18 So Jalil arrived. He recognised that the problem
19 with Basra polity, and, hence, the Basra police, was
20 that people were drawn from the Basra population and
21 reflected all the divisions within the Basra society,
22 and Basra society, drawn from all areas of the south of
23 Iraq, representing all kinds of tribal and religious
24 groups, was the most socially divided and incohesive
25 organisation.

1 Unfortunately, the same was true of the army as well
2 and that was the problem with 10 Division. It had all
3 kinds of divided loyalties and local loyalties and when
4 you remember that Iraq, like all Arab cultures, loyalty
5 starts from within. It is based on blood, it is not
6 institutions. Institutional loyalties have the weakest
7 attraction within Iraqi society. So we shouldn't have
8 been surprised.

9 The third thing that happened in June was the
10 arrival of General Mohan as the security supremo for
11 Basra, appointed personally by Prime Minister Maliki,
12 a man of enormous *wasta*, to use the local term, who
13 aspired to take over as head of the Iraqi army. He was
14 a four-star and he was a wheeler and dealer par
15 excellence, and what he did for us was, not only did he
16 share our analysis that the problem was loyalty and that
17 we, as the MNF, were a distorting factor to loyalty in
18 Basra, but he also shared our view on -- or decided to
19 embark on a political process of bringing everyone into
20 the system, trying to bring as many people within the
21 sort of political umbrella and make Basra work. So what
22 he really brought in was a mechanism for talking to the,
23 or dealing with the, political parties.

24 So, from his arrival, when he was trying to play his
25 political games and trying to achieve political success

1 and progress in Iraq, we started to view the political
2 impact of our military strikes through his prism, and
3 so, as well as there being the existing sensitivities of
4 Shia polity acting as a constraint on military strike
5 ops, what you also had was General Mohan giving advice
6 as to what he thought the impact of military strikes
7 would be and whether they would be good or bad.

8 And this was starting to generate a political
9 process within Basra which we felt quite optimistic
10 about, and add that to other developments, which we have
11 just been talking about, it presented us, I think, with
12 a very positive way forward for the politics, for a
13 political resolution of the violence problem, and that
14 violence problem itself being the biggest obstacle to
15 provincial Iraqi control because, as has been said, the
16 violence was stopping the redevelopment and the economic
17 development. Once the violence stopped, one of the
18 things about getting that larger political accommodation
19 was getting more people buying into the benefits of
20 economic reconstruction, and so reconstruction projects
21 started in the town.

22 So the whole place that was -- by the time I left,
23 I thought the groundwork had been done for Basra to
24 actually take off and for things to go well, and PIC
25 happened in -- provincial Iraqi control happened

1 in December.

2 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: We heard from General Shirreff about
3 his concerns that, without Sinbad, the standing and
4 morale of the British army would have been adversely
5 affected. In addition to this being a shame for the
6 British army, this might well also have affected our
7 influence in Baghdad as well.

8 Did you feel, by the time we left, that this danger
9 had passed, that we had recovered some of the lost
10 ground?

11 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: Yes and no. At the basic fighting
12 level, I think it was recognised that we were doing
13 strike ops at an unprecedented rate, that we had had
14 significant numbers -- I mean, the most significant --
15 I think two of the three most significant Iranian
16 operatives were arrested in our patch by us. I think
17 that, you know, impressed the Americans -- the Kazali
18 brothers. There were others that were arrested as well.
19 I think they were impressed by our fighting spirit and
20 they were impressed by the actions we were taking -- of
21 the soldiers.

22 So I think the British army's reputation was -- as
23 far as I could judge, was good, but that prism, the IO
24 prism, our reputation, was something that we held very
25 much in our mind, the reputation of the British army,

1 not just in Iraq but in the wider world. If you operate
2 a defence policy with a certain element of deterrence,
3 it helps if people respect you and slightly fear you.
4 So it is very, very important to us.

5 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: You said yes and no. We got the
6 yes; I'm not quite sure we got the no.

7 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: Oh, the no? The no was the whole
8 comfort with the reposturing. Go back to the question
9 earlier. I think to the -- to people back in
10 Washington, who, to quote General Petraeus, didn't even
11 know that Basra was in Iraq, the fact that we were doing
12 something different to what the Americans were doing was
13 concerning, and I think there was also the added concern
14 that, with the impending departure of Tony Blair, the
15 architect -- the co-architect of the war, if you like --
16 you know, that this was Tony Blair's war; would it be
17 Gordon Brown's war -- they read the press as well as
18 anyone else -- they saw, you know, the machinations in
19 politics, about people wanting a new direction, a new
20 break -- some people called it a "Love Actually"
21 moment -- there was concern in the American polity that
22 their closest allies might leave.

23 So -- this was nothing about the military
24 reputation, this was about the UK as a political
25 partner. I tried to argue that, from my reading of

1 Gordon Brown, he was a known Atlanticist and I was sure
2 he would honour the obligations of his predecessor.
3 Nonetheless, there was concern in the American polity --
4 and I didn't think it was coincidental but I can't prove
5 it -- strings of articles started to appear in American
6 newspapers by people who had never been within a million
7 miles of Basra, claiming to know all about it and how,
8 when the British pulled out, it would be not only
9 a British defeat but, you know, it would erupt like
10 Beirut, which I thought was nonsense because in my
11 judgment Basra was, as I have articulated earlier, more
12 like Palermo than Beirut.

13 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: But you were there during the
14 transition --

15 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: Yes.

16 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: -- our two prime ministers. Did it
17 make any difference?

18 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: No, in the end it didn't at all. So
19 in the end, I suppose, my sense that Gordon Brown was an
20 Atlanticist and would stick by his obligations and share
21 the same strategic view was vindicated, but it was a
22 tension at the time, and it was also -- we could read
23 from the intelligence that JAM were also reading the
24 newspapers and thought: ah ha, there is weakness here,
25 let's push for that, because, you know, our information

1 operation, UK-wide, is not that coherent.

2 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: So did you sense a surge from their
3 side?

4 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: Again, reading my notes last night,
5 there was a sense that there were days when the report
6 came through that that was what JAM were thinking. I'm
7 not sure the statistics actually on the ground show that
8 actually materialised but as a reading of intent I think
9 you could say that was there.

10 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Recognising some of the other issues
11 that were raised by General Shirreff in terms of
12 equipment and resources generally, I guess over this
13 period you wouldn't have needed extra troops but -- and
14 that the general trend was downward. Do you think, if
15 you had needed extra troops, you would have got them?

16 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: My sense was not. My sense was that
17 the UK had deployed its reserve. The TRB, the Theatre
18 Reserve Battalion from Cyprus had been deployed from
19 Cyprus for the Sinbad operation. There were no more
20 troops. The battle was to hang on, was to delay the
21 departure of the ones that people wanted to use
22 elsewhere and to try and extend the timelines.

23 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: How was that battle fought?

24 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: It was argued with the staff back at
25 PJHQ.

1 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: But was this hanging over you, that
2 if there had been real trouble, you might find it
3 difficult to respond?

4 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: There was always that worry. There
5 was always that worry. There was always an inherent
6 risk in moving to what was called "operational
7 overwatch", the ability to re-intervene. But the
8 difficulty was not so much numbers, it was more to do
9 with situation awareness and intelligence, and that was
10 always what concerned me most about the impending total
11 co-location at the COB -- was that our awareness of what
12 was going on inside Iraq -- inside Basra -- our
13 situation awareness, our soldiers' familiarity with the
14 streets -- these were all very perishable assets and
15 that, therefore, the posture of being in the COB while
16 still responsible for security in Basra was a policy
17 I said could be -- actually, there were good arguments
18 for it happening for a short time, but actually, as soon
19 as you could get PIC afterwards, the better, and so to
20 our minds the shorter the gap between relocating to the
21 COB and the granting of provincial Iraqi control for
22 Basra, the better.

23 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Because that would allow you to work
24 with Iraqi forces?

25 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: It would mean that the security

1 responsibility for the city would be -- de jure would be
2 Iraqi. I mean, actually, the logic of it I was quite
3 comfortable with. There is a sense -- and indeed many
4 Americans argued this case too -- that actually what you
5 needed to do was to transition to Iraqi primacy early,
6 at a time when you still had the capability to restore
7 the situation in case of a wobble. Don't leave it until
8 you haven't because then it is too late if things go
9 wrong. So do it early while you've still got the
10 strength.

11 So, actually, I was quite comfortable moving out
12 before PIC, while you still had the strength to
13 re-intervene, but, as I've said, the danger of that is
14 that you had the perishable assets of your situational
15 awareness, your knowledge, your intelligence. And so
16 there is a trade-off, there is a balance, and my
17 argument was for as short as possible a time between
18 repositioning and provincial Iraqi control. But the
19 decision for PIC was not ours. That's not our decision,
20 it was an American/Iraqi decision, and that kept
21 drifting to the right.

22 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: And then on questions of equipment,
23 we've heard about a plea for UAVs and so on. Did you
24 get UAVs?

25 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: We eventually got UAVs from the

1 Americans, from the Australians and then from ourselves,
2 and you are right, that was the major -- ISTAR as
3 a package was the major issue, and we never quite got as
4 much as we wanted. In the end what I wanted was two
5 permanent full motion video coverages, one to do the
6 force protection on the COB and one to do aggressive
7 action downtown in Basra. But we never actually got
8 that, for whatever reason.

9 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: But were you reasonably satisfied
10 with your position by the summer of 2007 or did you --

11 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: In terms of what?

12 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: In terms of getting the equipment
13 that you were needing, or was there --

14 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: The equipment kept coming through at
15 a remarkable rate: you know, new vehicles, new radars,
16 force protection against the IDF coming in,
17 extraordinary speed at which UORs were coming through.
18 So it would have been nice to have had that sort of
19 level of equipment in advance to prevent problems, but
20 certainly, when problems occurred and we asked for
21 things, we got things. I felt it was as responsive
22 a system as I could have realistically hoped, although I
23 would say that UAVs was probably -- you know, if you
24 asked me what was the big equipment shortage and
25 problem, then I would say UAVs and ISTAR coverage was

1 the big issue.

2 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Just finally on this, it is

3 striking, listening to you and the other evidence we

4 have heard, just how much we are dependent at times on

5 the largesse of the Americans, that if they had withheld

6 stuff or said they had got different priorities, we

7 could have been in quite serious trouble (inaudible).

8 Is that fair?

9 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: That is absolutely fair. But this

10 was a corps operation and we were part of the corps, and

11 they were very generous with their support, very

12 generous.

13 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: But if relations had broken down

14 between the various levels of command, we could have

15 been in some quite serious difficulty.

16 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: Absolutely, which is why it was

17 absolutely key that I worked within the tolerances of

18 the Americans and the Government of Iraq. But keeping

19 the Americans on side and happy was absolutely vital.

20 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Then just two other questions. The

21 first is on the relations with DFID and the

22 Foreign Office and so on and that aspect of the

23 operations there. We heard General Shirreff, who was

24 clearly concerned about the ability to get the different

25 parts of the team to work together. What was your

1 experience?

2 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: I think, if I can rephrase what
3 General Shirreff said in my language, I would say that
4 what we both aspired to was not so much a comprehensive
5 approach but a comprehensive plan, and that means that
6 you have someone -- a command and control system and you
7 have coherent methodology, and that's what I thought was
8 required there, because I viewed the situation, because
9 we viewed the situation, in Basra as being fundamentally
10 a political problem with a political end state, in which
11 the military were in support, instead of -- when it came
12 to the running of the southern Iraq steering group, an
13 organisation I inherited, that had co-ownership,
14 co-chairmanship, between the GOC and the Consul General,
15 because of the political dominance of the end state,
16 I decided that the Foreign Office should lead, they had
17 the political lead, and so I told the Consul General
18 that I thought she should take charge, and she said,
19 "Thank you very much." I said, "Right, what do you want
20 me to do?" And she said, "Well, I don't know." I said,
21 "Well, okay, let's work out a political plan."

22 So we worked out a political plan together, and the
23 way we created an executive structure out of the people
24 that were there was to have the Southern Iraq Steering
25 Group, which she chaired, making the decisions and

1 deciding the policy. You then had the -- my
2 headquarters to do the planning and work up the
3 execution of those plans and to be the co-ordinating
4 headquarters for the organisation and everyone would
5 abide, you know, by the orders that came out. And that
6 was the co-ordinating and resource-allocating mechanism
7 for the division -- or for the AO, for the Southern Iraq
8 Steering Group.

9 So that's how you created an executive model out of
10 a fundamentally unexecutive organisation, and the model
11 I took it on was based, I am afraid, on my experience
12 sitting in COBR watching the Foot and Mouth Disease and
13 the way that was handled in COBR in 2001, when I sat in
14 COBR through most of that and when 101 Logistic Brigade
15 came in and provided the coordinating and the command
16 and control planning methodology for the MAFF execution
17 of a pan-government operation. And that struck me as
18 the way you create an executive structure out of such
19 a thing, and that was very much the model that we worked
20 on and everyone was very happy with that.

21 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Thank you, that's interesting. My
22 last question, which I guess flows from that, is,
23 looking back, what worked? What did you think was
24 effective in the way that you were able to do your
25 business? What didn't work so well? What lessons would

1 you draw?

2 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: If I can just go back on that last
3 one, on the way the pan-government working worked, the
4 limitation and the reason that we couldn't do a grand
5 project, I suspect, was because back -- was problems
6 more back in Whitehall than out here. I was told that
7 Basra and Iraq came 17th on DFID's list of priorities
8 for operations, whereas for MoD and FCO it was number 1,
9 and I think that disparity in priority between
10 government departments limited the effect of our ability
11 to do redevelopment, and it was rather shaming that the
12 money that the Better Basra plan relied on came from the
13 Americans, not just the Americans but the American army,
14 who were empowered with money, to use their doctrine --
15 to use money as a weapon, in a way that we never were.
16 So that's, I think, one lesson.

17 What worked? I think the politics worked. I think
18 working with Iraqis and working through Iraqi tolerance
19 has worked. I think kinetics had its part to play but
20 it was more effective the more it was tuned to the
21 political objectives. Of itself, it was never going to
22 achieve success.

23 I think the soldiers were brilliant.

24 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Thank you very much.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Usha?

1 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: I think you said earlier that it was
2 Iraqi solutions to Iraqi problems and that was kind of
3 the objective in (inaudible) exit strategy. Was that
4 your personal view or was that kind of an agreed
5 programme or plan by Whitehall, in Basra?

6 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: It was certainly my view. There may
7 have been someone in Whitehall that shared it but it was
8 basically my own analysis of the issue and how to
9 confront it, and how to deal with it.

10 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: Do you think the fact that it was
11 your personal view, that that impacted upon what you are
12 saying about having a comprehensive plan and the way
13 DFID operated, the way FCO operated?

14 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: Well, the FCO were very happy with
15 it -- I mean, discussing it with the two Consul Generals
16 that I worked with, they were very happy with it and
17 indeed the DFID people. Their planning, their long-term
18 horizons for planning, was very much based on getting
19 the Iraqis and increasing Iraqi capacity to do things.
20 So I think we all broadly agreed that view, actually.

21 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: The fact that this was your
22 particular analysis and your plan, did that impact on
23 the way you operated on the ground? I mean, did that
24 actually determine your strategy or your tactics?

25 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: Yes, because it meant I paid a lot

1 of attention to, as I say, the Shia polity, how it was
2 working, how -- the impact of what I do on the way the
3 Shias worked and the local politics within Basra.

4 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: Did that in that respect differ from
5 your predecessors?

6 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: I couldn't argue -- answer that.

7 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: Because you heard him earlier,
8 because he was talking about exit strategy, and you were
9 working with him.

10 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: I succeeded him.

11 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: You succeeded but were you there for
12 a while -- you didn't overlap for a while?

13 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: No.

14 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: No. So you can't comment on the
15 fact that there was a different strategy?

16 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: No, I think he saw the view -- I
17 think that he saw the view, as you have heard, for the
18 reason that you gave, and that was his analysis of the
19 position and I can't fault the tactical actions that his
20 people did. I mean, I think the plan that he came up
21 with had many admirable features to it.

22 We took a different view. I think it was at
23 a different time. I think he could call on resources in
24 a way that I couldn't. There was still a sort of -- as
25 he discovered, an urge to put more troops in there, to

1 try a more forceful approach, and in a sense, because I
2 was -- that was my order, was to withdraw -- Op Zenith
3 was the issue -- I really had no option, because my job
4 was to get out. If you looked at the deliverables that
5 CJO gave me, it was to retire to the COB and move out;
6 it was absolutely not to get stuck into Basra, if you
7 like.

8 So in a sense we were faced with different issues at
9 different times, and my political approach very much
10 fitted those orders as given.

11 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: Okay, thank you.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: Martin?

13 SIR MARTIN GILBERT: You mentioned early on that the
14 Multi-National Force was what you called a distorting
15 factor with regard to loyalties in Basra. I wonder if
16 you could elaborate on that and explain how it actually
17 affected your mission.

18 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: Well, the question, as I said
19 before, is one of loyalty. What is it? What is it?
20 What was it to be an Iraqi nationalist? Was an Iraqi
21 nationalist someone who worked for the Government of
22 Iraq with the occupiers against -- you know, with the
23 British force against the nasty criminals of JAM, or are
24 JAM actually the liberators? Are JAM actually the
25 people who are getting rid of these occupiers, these

1 infidels?

2 It puts the people in charge in a very difficult
3 position. There was -- again reading my notes, there
4 was a report that I got there from the Council,
5 a meeting between the Council and JAM senior leaders,
6 who said, "Listen, we don't want to get you, we don't
7 want to attack the Iraqi army, we want to attack the MNF
8 because they are the occupiers and we are going to
9 liberate this town for you." Now, that puts the Council
10 in a very difficult position.

11 SIR MARTIN GILBERT: In other words, it is what you call the
12 narrative, that we were the occupiers; in a way it is
13 driving a wedge?

14 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: Exactly, and somehow you had to turn
15 that narrative round and say, "No, not at all, we are
16 here at the Prime Minister's invitation and, more to the
17 point, we will leave when you want us to leave, but the
18 Iranians won't." So it goes back to that point, what I
19 identified as the unifying factor: "Actually, if you
20 want to be a self-sustaining Iraqi, then you don't want
21 to be attacking us, you want to be attacking those
22 people, and by the way, if you want your place to be
23 successful, if you want everyone to be rich and happy,
24 which you all do, and you want your kids to go to
25 school, et cetera, et cetera, and you want girls to be

1 educated and not to be suppressed," which they did,
2 "then stop attacking us because, you know, you are
3 cutting off your nose to spite your face."

4 SIR MARTIN GILBERT: And were you able to make headway with
5 this argument?

6 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: Well, evidently, but let's talk
7 about that at another meeting.

8 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

9 I have only got one final question of my own and it
10 is more a request for reflection rather than for an
11 answer. But you have had a lot of experience in
12 Northern Ireland and Kosovo, as well as Iraq, and the
13 one thing that I thought might be different in Iraq was
14 that you had the twin chain of command: You had PJHQ
15 for the UK command and you had Corps in Baghdad in the
16 military chain of command. And you had, through both of
17 those chains, to communicate, as it were, a level above,
18 at the political level: to London, to Washington, the
19 Pentagon.

20 The invitation to reflect is: how do you, through
21 such a complicated set of communications, infuse a sense
22 of the complexities, the opportunities, as well as the
23 constraints, that those political/military complexities
24 on the ground in the theatre present, at such long
25 distances and at such long and indirect chains? Is it

1 done by sort of formal communication, by visiting, by
2 personal contact, by old pals? Is there a way to do it
3 better and faster? I would say that northern Ireland,
4 where it took us quite a long time, though we did it?

5 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: Yes, except Northern Ireland was
6 a national operation.

7 THE CHAIRMAN: Quite.

8 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: So it is correspondingly simple. I
9 mean, coalition operations are very difficult. I mean,
10 even on the Northern Ireland scenario, General Rupert
11 Smith used to argue that the Northern Ireland campaign
12 was run in four theatres: you know, Northern Ireland,
13 Britain, Ireland, the world, you know, et cetera,
14 et cetera. So even there there was a sort of element of
15 diverse command and control and the only people who were
16 unified were the opposition.

17 I think this was a standard coalition operation, so
18 it had all the complexities there involved.

19 My own personal view on this -- and I have had this
20 debate with the then CJO -- was that there would have
21 been -- it would have made my job easier, as the
22 deployed British two-star, had there been a more
23 permanent British voice in Baghdad, arguing our case
24 within the Corps, and there was a standard issue here
25 and I'm sure they will have told you but -- and it is

1 very much personality-dependent because the man up
2 there, the British representative up there, had two
3 roles, and it is a question of which role it is, and you
4 have had those people in. I'm sure you will have heard
5 that correspondence.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: The representative role was, if you like,
7 dominant, certainly much more reality-hit than the
8 nominal deputy commander of the Corps.

9 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: Well, not in my time.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: Oh, right, personality dependent.

11 Right. Any final reflection on that or other things
12 before we conclude?

13 MAJ GEN JONATHAN SHAW: I don't know. Can I ask my
14 Chief of Staff? Anything else? No.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: In that case, thank you very much indeed,
16 General Shaw. We have had a very useful and
17 illuminating session. Thank you for that.

18 Now, that concludes today's business, and tomorrow
19 we begin the next phase of the committee's hearings,
20 when the witness will be Alistair Campbell, who was
21 Prime Minister Tony Blair's director of communications
22 and strategy from 1997 to September 2003.

23 The hearing tomorrow will begin very promptly at
24 10 o'clock as there will be a very significant amount of
25 ground that the committee needs to cover in the course

1 of tomorrow.

2 With that, I will conclude today 's session. Thank
3 you.

4 (4.20 pm)

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

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