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Tuesday, 18th January 2011

(3.00 pm)

EVIDENCE OF

ACM SIR GLENN TORPY, GCB, CBE, DSO

ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Good afternoon.

SIR JOHN CHILCOT: Well, good afternoon and welcome. The Iraq Inquiry begins a short round of public hearings today. The Inquiry has spent the last few months analysing many thousands of documents. We have visited Baghdad, Basra and Erbil to hear from Iraqis themselves who told us how they feel about the UK involvement in their country. We were able to see for ourselves the consequences of the US and UK-led invasion of 2003. These visits have made a profound impression on my colleagues and me, which we will reflect in our report.

In the last few weeks the committee has taken further evidence in private from Sir David Pepper, former head of GCHQ, Sir Tony Brenton, who served in the British Embassy in Washington between 2001 and 2004 and Emma Sky, who has worked extensively for the British and American Governments in Iraq.

As we begin to write our report, there are a few remaining areas where we need to clarify exactly what happened. It is that which has determined the witnesses in this round. The majority of the 12 witnesses we will

1 see in public hearings over the next three weeks will be
2 new witnesses. We have also sought statements from
3 a number of witnesses and we have begun to publish
4 witness statements that we have received. There will be
5 more in the coming days.

6 I want to reiterate that I am satisfied that the
7 government has met and continues to meet its undertaking
8 to give the Iraq Inquiry full access to all the relevant
9 documents. In a few cases it has not yet been possible
10 to find every document. We will address these in our
11 report if we think it is significant. I must stress
12 that we attribute this to administrative shortcomings
13 and not the deliberate withholding of information. If
14 that were to change, we would say so.

15 The Inquiry will always seek to take evidence in
16 public unless there are specific grounds under our
17 protocols why it cannot do so. The inquiry is
18 determined to be as transparent as possible in its work.
19 I thought that was important when I took on the role of
20 Chairman, and our commitment to make public as much as
21 possible continues.

22 Yesterday we published the transcripts of five of
23 our private evidence sessions on the Inquiry website.
24 In places extracts have been redacted in accordance with
25 the protocol with the government. We are pleased we

1 have been able to make so much public. We will continue
2 to publish further transcripts and declassified
3 documents in the coming weeks to assist the public
4 understanding of our work.

5 There is one area I am sorry to say it has not been
6 possible to reach agreement with the government. The
7 papers we hold include the notes which Prime Minister
8 Blair sent to President Bush and the records of their
9 discussions. The Inquiry recognises the privileged
10 nature of those exchanges, but exceptionally we sought
11 disclosure of key extracts which illuminate Prime
12 Minister's Blair's position at critical points. The
13 Cabinet Office did not agree with this disclosure.

14 On 10th December last year, in accordance with the
15 protocol, I asked the Cabinet Secretary to review that
16 decision. I also made it clear that if we could not
17 reach agreement I would publish the correspondence
18 between us. I am doing so today.

19 The Inquiry is disappointed that the Cabinet
20 Secretary was not willing to accede to its request.
21 This means that in a narrow but important area the
22 Inquiry may not always be able to publish as fully as it
23 would wish the evidential basis for some of its comments
24 and conclusions. The Inquiry is free to say what it
25 thinks. We shall complete our task and make our own

1 independent judgments about the UK's involvement in
2 Iraq.

3 The Inquiry is now drawing together the evidence
4 that it has received and this round of public hearings
5 is a vital element of that. The Inquiry looks forward
6 to producing its report as soon as it is able.

7 With that I turn now to today's witness. I welcome
8 Air Chief Marshal Sir Glenn Torpy. Air Chief Marshal,
9 you were UK Air Component Commander for the invasion in
10 2003, Chief of Joint Operations from July 2004 to March
11 20th 06 and Chief of the Air Staff from April 2006 to
12 July 2009?

13 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: That's correct.

14 Q. This session will last up to three hours.

15 To coincide with today's session we have also
16 published a witness statement from Sir Glenn. Thank you
17 for that and a number of declassified documents, to
18 which we may refer during this hearing. As I say, on
19 each occasion we recognise that witnesses are giving
20 evidence based on their recollection of events. We are,
21 of course, checking what we hear against the papers to
22 which we have access and which we are still receiving in
23 some cases.

24 I remind each witness on each occasion he will later
25 be asked to sign a transcript of the evidence to the

1 effect that the evidence given is truthful, fair and
2 accurate.

3 With those preliminaries, I will turn to Sir Roderic
4 Lyne to start the questions. Roderic?

5 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Air Chief Marshal, I would like to start
6 with your period as UK Air Component Commander for
7 Operation Telic.

8 Can you just give us a brief description of the
9 scale and nature of the UK's air contribution to the
10 overall coalition plan, and in particular tell us
11 whether there were any areas where the British
12 contribution was essential to the coalition's ability to
13 mount the operation as a whole?

14 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Stepping right to the beginning, we
15 were clearly aware of US planning going on in 2002. We
16 had a very close relationship with the United States Air
17 Force, always have done for long historical reasons.

18 As a result of that we were able to gain visibility
19 of their -- some of their initial thinking.

20 We also at the request of the United States Air
21 Force, but also clearly with the approval of the MoD,
22 deployed a small team to Central Air Forces Command in
23 the United States so that we had some influence on the
24 planning and the visibility that we required.

25 In terms of the UK contribution, it was done very

1 much in consultation with the United States Air Force.
2 Requirements that they needed to undertake the campaign
3 they asked us for, and I would highlight I suppose
4 a number of examples.

5 The whole of the air campaign was reliant on the
6 availability of air-to-air refueling assets.
7 Notwithstanding the size of the United States Air Force,
8 they were very short of that sort of capability.

9 We provided 13 air-to-air refueling tankers and 40%
10 of the offload of our tankers went to the United States
11 Navy. That's a peculiarity of the way they conduct
12 their air-to-air refueling, which is the same as ours.
13 That's one good example I think.

14 General Buzz Mosley, who was the American Three Star
15 Air Component Commander, also asked if we would provide
16 some air defence aircraft for the start of the campaign
17 specifically. That goes back to the commitment the
18 United States had for its own air defence of the United
19 States following 9/11. So they were desperately short
20 of air defence fighters. We provided 14 Tornado F3s to
21 assist in that early part of the campaign.

22 We have made quite significant progress over the
23 years since the first Gulf War, the Kosovo campaign in
24 bringing in precision guided weapons, specifically a new
25 weapon called Enhanced Paveway, which was in some areas

1 better than the American weapons. It was carried by
2 principally our Tornado GR4s but also our Harriers. We
3 deployed 31 Tornado GR4s and 21 Harrier GR7s. That
4 precision capability was one of the things that he was
5 seeking.

6 Overall the UK -- all the weapons the UK delivered,
7 85% were precision-guided and that is against the
8 overall coalition percentage, which was about 75%. So
9 we had made very significant progress over the years.

10 The other capability that we brought into service
11 very quickly was effectively a Cruise missile we carried
12 on the Tornado, Storm Shadow. It had a very good
13 penetration capability against hardened buildings, and
14 that was one of the capabilities he was very keen to
15 have in the early days to start dismantling particularly
16 the command and control of the Iraqi forces.

17 So we deployed that capability out to theatre with
18 a lot of help from industry to get the capability
19 integrated on to the aircraft.

20 In terms of command and control I suppose, to step
21 back and explain, the whole of the air campaign is
22 supervised by the number of airborne early warning and
23 command and control aircraft. The UK is one of the few
24 nations aside from the United States to actually have
25 that sort of capability, and General Mosley asked if we

1 would be able to fill one of the four orbits over Iraq
2 for the whole of the duration of the campaign, because
3 he did not have enough of those assets. He had them
4 distributed around, global commitments, plus in Iraq.

5 So we took on what was known as the Western Desert
6 orbit for the whole of the campaign 24 hours of the day
7 with four aircraft. So again an essential part of
8 delivering the campaign.

9 One of the other areas the RAF had developed over
10 the years, and the United States Air Force for a variety
11 of reasons had given up, was our tactical reconnaissance
12 capability. We had PR9 Canberras. Our Tornado GR4s and
13 Harrier GR7s all carried sophisticated tactical
14 reconnaissance capabilities and indeed the Canberra had
15 strategic capability as well.

16 So that was much sought after by the United States.
17 Again intelligence and surveillance was one of the
18 critical capabilities which was required throughout the
19 campaign, not least because the Iraqis had become very
20 adept at moving equipment around very quickly.

21 I suppose the last point I would make is on command
22 and control. In the Combined Air Operations Centre,
23 which is the hub where the whole campaign is
24 orchestrated, the United States Air Force, as the other
25 American forces do, had great respect for UK staff

1 officers, and we had a number of embedded officers
2 within the control air operations centre, including one
3 of our One Star officers, and he took the role of
4 a battle commander for certain portions of the day.
5 There were three One Star officers, two American, one
6 UK, and they effectively ran the war and executed the
7 air war on behalf of the Three Star General.

8 So I think that summarises the main contributions
9 and the critical nature of them to the overall campaign.
10 We made other contributions. We required certain
11 capabilities to sustain -- get our own force there and
12 sustain it, like our strategic transport capabilities,
13 the rotary -- Helicopter Force supporting the British
14 Army.

15 We also deployed the RAF regiment for force
16 protection and RAF Rapier for force protection of
17 airfields as well.

18 SIR RODERIC LYNE: If when it came to 18th, 19th March 2003
19 a decision had been taken in the House of Commons such
20 that we had not been able to participate in Operation
21 Telic, would the Americans have been able, just looking
22 at the air component, to go ahead with it?

23 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: They would have gone ahead with it,
24 but they would have had significant difficulties in
25 filling the gaps if we did not have and that would have

1 introduced risk into the overall plan would be my
2 judgment.

3 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: Can I ask: risk and delay?

4 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: It would have probably taken longer to
5 execute. So I think they would have still started on
6 the dates that they were planning, but it would have
7 probably taken longer.

8 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: Thank you.

9 SIR RODERIC LYNE: What assumptions were made about the
10 capabilities of the Iraqi Air Force at the time of the
11 operation?

12 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Well, we had clearly been watching the
13 Iraqi Air Force since the first Gulf War, because we had
14 been flying in the no fly zones. So we had quite a good
15 measure of what they were possibly capable of.

16 One thing that we were aware of but not completely
17 sighted on was their integrated air defence system over
18 Baghdad, because the no fly zones, Southern No-Fly Zone
19 stopped well short of Baghdad and similarly with the
20 Northern No-Fly Zone in the north. So we clearly had
21 intelligence as to what they may be capable of, but not
22 certainty.

23 One thing we did know was that they were very
24 capable of dismantling their air defence radars and
25 their surface to air missile systems very quickly, move

1 them and reassemble them. We also knew from
2 intelligence that they modified some of their weapons
3 systems in quite a clever manner as well, which
4 presented a threat to us.

5 So we had quite a good measure of the Iraqi Air
6 Force. Not so clear about the Iraqi ground forces,
7 because of lack of presence on the ground,
8 notwithstanding the sort of intelligence that
9 particularly the US had been gathering over the years.

10 SIR RODERIC LYNE: But since the Gulf War the Air Force had
11 been significantly degraded. What ability did it have
12 to put aircraft into the sky against you or what did you
13 think it had at the time the operation commenced?

14 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: The biggest risk that General Mosley
15 felt existed was attacks against our own airfields, and
16 if you looked around the region in various countries
17 which were supporting the coalition effort, we had
18 a significant number of aeroplanes in particular
19 locations.

20 So there was one occasion when the Iraqis in the
21 build-up to the campaign transgressed some of the
22 airspace very close to one of those bases. That sort of
23 risk, and that could have done significant damage to our
24 overall capability.

25 The other area was as the coalition force assembled

1 in Kuwait, we went through a period where the Iraqis
2 were firing surface to surface missiles into Kuwait, and
3 there was a real risk to the land component at that
4 particular stage. That actually prompted
5 a re-evaluation of the whole campaign plan and
6 an acceleration of the intervention.

7 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Just on targeting we have heard from
8 a number of witnesses, including Air Chief Marshal
9 Sir Brian Burridge and the Right Honourable Geoff Hoon
10 about the targeting process.

11 Were you satisfied with the process and particularly
12 with the level of delegation that it afforded
13 operational commanders?

14 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: I think we made very significant
15 progress in the run-up to the second Gulf War building
16 on the experience we had had during the no fly zones,
17 the first Gulf War, and the Secretary of State, Geoff
18 Hoon, realised that the only way to maintain the tempo
19 of the campaign was to delegate responsibility down to
20 the lowest possible level. So I had a delegation.
21 Brian Burridge had a delegation, and I thought it worked
22 very effectively, and we cleared a lot of targets before
23 the campaign even started.

24 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Were there any ways in which you felt,
25 despite these improved procedures, that it could have

1 been further improved?

2 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: The only area which I think we could
3 have done more with, and that is the mechanisms by which
4 we assessed collateral damage. One of my roles I saw
5 was making sure that our targeting process was aligned
6 as closely as possible with the US system, but where
7 there were inevitably going to be differences, that
8 I sorted those out with General Mosley before the
9 campaign started, and we tried to find a mechanism for
10 solving those problems.

11 One of the issues was if the US use a particular
12 software system for working out collateral damage and we
13 use a different one that it comes out with slightly
14 different answers. Ours is slightly more conservative.
15 I think more work in trying to align some of that
16 methodology would have been helpful.

17 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: As a supplementary on that point, Air
18 Chief Marshal, I think we understand apart from the
19 necessary constraints of avoiding unnecessary damage in
20 targeting collateral decisions it is also constrained by
21 the type of hardware you could deliver. There was
22 perhaps less flexibility available to the British forces
23 than to the American in smaller scale, for example, of
24 explosive weapon.

25 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: I think we had a pretty good range of

1 weapons, but I agree with you that over time and
2 particularly in the light of operations in Afghanistan
3 we need a broader range of capabilities, but actually
4 I think the inventory that we had was very good
5 witnessed by the precision that we had -- a proportion
6 of our precision weapons in comparison to the US.

7 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: Thank you. I will turn now to Baroness
8 Prashar to ask questions.

9 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: Thank you. Can we now look at your
10 role and responsibilities when you were Chief of Joint
11 Air Operations?

12 We have been told by your predecessor and successor
13 that the role of Chief of Joint Operations is to provide
14 politically informed military advice. Could you explain
15 how the "politically informed" part of the statement
16 works in practice?

17 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Right. In the Permanent Joint
18 Headquarters we have always had a civil servant
19 political adviser, which helps us make those sort of
20 judgments, but in saying that we provide politically
21 aware military advice.

22 One of the things that I think everyone who has
23 filled a post at CJO has been very conscious of is we
24 provide unfiltered military advice, but it has to be
25 realistic against the political backdrop in which we are

1 operating. So, as I said, we use our own experience but
2 we also have a senior civil servant to provide that
3 assistance as well.

4 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: So this is kind of basically
5 provided by a specific civil servant?

6 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: A team of civil servants. In the
7 Permanent Joint Headquarters when I was CJO I had a two
8 star civil servant.

9 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: Just a supplementary on that, Air Chief
10 Marshal. Is this political awareness, political
11 information about what's going on in theatre in
12 a political sense or as well the politics surrounding
13 British Government's policy making?

14 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Both.

15 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: Both. Thank you.

16 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: And what visibility did you have of
17 ministerial thinking in MoD and the wider government?

18 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Really through the mechanism of the
19 briefings, regular briefings which took place between
20 the Permanent Joint Headquarters and the MoD, and
21 constant dialogue which went on between myself and
22 DCDS(C) Commitments and the staff at every single level
23 in headquarters, and that dialogue went on with the
24 Front Line Commands.

25 We had a process of ensuring that the MoD tended to

1 make sure it talked to capitals. That's the role of the
2 MoD. Permanent Joint Headquarters spoke to CentCom and
3 our in theatre commands and also clearly the Front
4 Line Commands as well. So there was this constant
5 dialogue going on, but formally there are regular
6 updates provided by the in theatre commanders. Those
7 came to me. They also went to the MoD.

8 I had a regular weekly VTC with the in theatre
9 commanders, and not just specifically in one theatre.
10 We would have the commanders for Iraq, Afghanistan when
11 we were in Afghanistan so that people in different
12 theatres understood the contexts and what was going on
13 in another theatre, particularly if there were pressure
14 on resources.

15 Then every week there was a video conference with
16 CDS and another one which was followed by -- for
17 Ministers. So I think everybody had very good
18 visibility of what was going on, gave me -- kept me in
19 touch with what was going on in the Ministry of Defence.

20 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: In case of Iraq what political
21 direction did you receive?

22 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: At the start of the operation and my
23 predecessor received it, it was clearly re-released when
24 I took over as Chief of Joint Operations, I received
25 a CDS directive directly from CDS which set out the UK

1 directives and what his guidance was to me.

2 I then turned that round and issued a directive to
3 the GOC and every successive GOC which set out what the
4 UK objectives were, to reiterating really what CDS had
5 produced, but then tried to articulate exactly what
6 I expected the in theatre commander to do.

7 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: Can I move on to the force level
8 review, because in your statement you say, and I quote:

9 "The role of the Permanent Joint Headquarters is to
10 act as the interface between in theatre force and the
11 Ministry of Defence and Front Line Commands particularly
12 in ensuring that in theatre force is provided with the
13 wherewithal to deliver its objectives. This required
14 constant dialogue at every level between the Ministry of
15 Defence, PJHQ, Front Line Commands and in theatre
16 force."

17 Now we have copies of some of the formal letters
18 that were sent from the GOC to you, but can you just
19 tell us what sort of dialogue would there have been
20 between you and them before those letters were sent?

21 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Right. Prior to every force rotation
22 -- basically a new brigade went in every six months --
23 prior to that we would set in train, first of all,
24 seeking guidance from the MoD, are there any major
25 changes, assumptions which are going to happen in that

1 particular period?

2 We would then put a team together from PJHQ and
3 between the PJHQ and in theatre force we would do
4 a rigorous analysis of the tasks that existed and the
5 forces which were required to fulfil those tasks. GOC
6 would send that back to me. We would then review that
7 in PJHQ, although we had clearly already been involved
8 in it so there were never any surprises and indeed the
9 MoD had been involved in that process as well.

10 I would then send a letter to CDS saying, "We have
11 just conducted the force level review for TELIC 7 or
12 TELIC 8. These are our recommendations". Hopefully he
13 would agree.

14 If they were force level increases or decreases,
15 they would always have to be cleared by Ministers. So
16 Ministers would have visibility of what we were
17 recommending to do.

18 That happened not just with the land components, so
19 the GOC. Exactly the same happened with the air
20 component and the maritime component as well. So every
21 six months a force level review, and in just reviewing
22 my notes, we did four force level reviews in my time as
23 CJO.

24 There was clearly an opportunity in between a force
25 level review if something on the ground had changed

1 unexpectedly to do some work in the intervening period.
2 I believe we did one what we call interim force level
3 review at the back end of '04, because a couple of new
4 tasks came up. First of all, we had greater granularity
5 on what was required for election support, for the
6 elections in the beginning of '05 and we also had a new
7 task, which was to protect the UN as they set up their
8 organisation down in Basra. So we did an interim force
9 level review at that particular stage, which made some
10 recommendations.

11 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: Did you have a sense that in theatre
12 commanders were requesting what they thought they would
13 get rather than what they really wanted or needed?

14 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: No, no. Generally I don't think that
15 was the case. I think we were completely transparent.
16 I think the in theatre commanders knew that certainly
17 the PJHQ would -- provided the request was justified and
18 we validated it, that we would support them, and that's
19 reflected in the GOC's witness statements that were
20 given to you. So we would always fight for what they
21 needed to deliver the tasks they were mandated to
22 deliver. In my time we were always supported by the MoD
23 as well.

24 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: So you were confident you were
25 getting the true picture?

1 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Yes.

2 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: Thank you.

3 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: I will ask Sir Martin Gilbert to pick up
4 the questions. Martin.

5 SIR MARTIN GILBERT: Air Chief Marshal, I'd like to turn to
6 the question of how progress and performance in MND
7 (South-East) was assessed and how you were kept informed
8 of the campaign progress.

9 We are aware of the weekly reports sent to you from
10 GOC and of the statistics on incident levels, and also
11 in your statement you mention your own visits. Was
12 there any other reporting?

13 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Significant. The first thing I think
14 is to just set in context the UK's operation down in MND
15 (South-East), because we were clearly part of the
16 overall coalition operation. The campaign plan was
17 owned by General Casey, who was the Four Star Commander
18 in Baghdad. He had developed a campaign plan with the
19 assistance of the coalition as well. So this is not
20 just a US plan, although as the major contributor they
21 had the major say, but we had a number of staff officers
22 embedded in General Casey's headquarters, in the Corps
23 headquarters, who contributed to first of all
24 development of the campaign plan and adjusting the
25 campaign plan, depending on what was happening on the

1 ground.

2 So MND (South-East) on a weekly basis were providing
3 statistics to General Casey's headquarters through the
4 Corps headquarters, and one thing the US are very good at
5 is collecting statistics and producing an analysis of
6 those statistics. It didn't cover just build-up and
7 training of the Iraqi security forces. It looked at
8 other parts of the campaign. In simplistic terms the
9 way I have always explained the campaign, there are
10 three lines of operation: security, which comes down to
11 providing a secure environment, and training the Iraqi
12 security forces, improved governance, so capacity in
13 central government, provincial government, and assisting
14 with the reconstruction effort and building the --
15 building back the economy of the Iraqi people.

16 Every single facet of that campaign plan they were
17 doing an analysis against. We had complete visibility
18 of that, both in the PJHQ and back in London as well.
19 So there was complete transparency on the judgments that
20 the US were making as well as we were making and we were
21 contributing to that as well.

22 SIR MARTIN GILBERT: Perhaps I could take up the point you
23 made about the statistics. We will be talking about the
24 IED threat in more detail shortly, but during your
25 tenure as the CJO the IED threat became increasingly

1 sophisticated and lethal and the statistics on incident
2 levels which we have seen and which are part of the
3 statistics that you saw tend to mask this fact because
4 they record every incident as of equal importance.

5 What were you able to do to ensure that the
6 statistics were interpreted in the detail and
7 correctness that was needed?

8 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: I think the person who had most
9 contact with that was clearly the GOC and he -- it was
10 a topic which was clearly dear to all of their hearts.
11 It didn't matter which of the GOCs, if it was a risk to
12 their people they would make sure they kept a very close
13 grip of it.

14 Again if I just put things into context, because
15 I do think it is important to view where MND
16 (South-East) stood in relation to broader Iraq, and
17 I was looking back through some of my notes and some of
18 the slides which I managed to review and there's
19 a snapshot, and I have it available if the committee
20 would be interested in due course which was taken in
21 October 2005, which showed the level of incidents in
22 each of the provinces, 19 provinces. 91% of the
23 incidents which took place, security incidents which
24 took place, happened in five provinces. Those five
25 provinces were Baghdad, the ones in the north, around

1 Mosul and the ones in the west around Anbar. The ten
2 provinces where there was least activities, in fact,
3 1.2% of the incidents included Maysan, Al-Muthanna and
4 Dhi Qar, so three of the provinces in MND (South-East)
5 and Basra actually only just failed to go into that
6 category as well.

7 So overall the level of incidents in MND
8 (South-East), even as we progressed into that period in
9 2005 and into 2006, in relation to the north, centre and
10 west were very low indeed. That did not, of course,
11 mean that the threat from IEDs, which changed over time,
12 didn't lessen in importance at all.

13 SIR MARTIN GILBERT: In terms of the civilian population
14 protection how were you able to measure and assess that,
15 given that the statistics again which we have seen
16 report essentially incidents noted by the multi-national
17 force as opposed to those reported to the Iraqi police
18 and, of course, those which weren't reported? What
19 visibility did you have in terms of what was needed for
20 the civilian population?

21 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Again the coalition were very keen to
22 try to keep a close grip on civilian casualties, because
23 one of the whole tenet of the campaign was to maintain
24 the consent of the Iraqi people and you don't achieve
25 that by civilians being killed.

1 I think one aspect which -- and maybe we will touch
2 on later -- and that is if there is an incident when
3 civilians are killed or property is damaged, how do you
4 rapidly compensate them for that so that you maintain
5 their consent? So there was a real focus at every
6 single level on civilian casualties, and again the GOC
7 was really the person on the spot to keep track of that.
8 Because there were again few in number down in MND
9 (South-East) it was reasonably easy to keep track of.

10 SIR MARTIN GILBERT: Just two more questions on this point.
11 The senior ACPO representative, Paul Kernaghan, told us
12 in his evidence that he felt that the reporting being
13 provided by personnel in theatre was, as he put it,
14 unrealistic and not consistent with reality on the
15 ground, which he saw as being far worse than the
16 impression given. What's your view of that?

17 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Difficult for me to judge, because the
18 occasions when I was on the ground in Iraq were clearly
19 during my visits, so I had to rely really on the GOC's
20 judgment. I had absolutely no reason to doubt GOC's
21 judgment. I see no reason why they would gloss over
22 incidents on the ground. It was not in their interest
23 to do so.

24 SIR MARTIN GILBERT: From your position at PJHQ what were
25 you telling the Defence Minister and Number 10 and other

1 parts of government about the situation, about the
2 security situation?

3 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Well, if I go back to when I started
4 or took over as CJO, the environment in MND (South-East)
5 was very quiet, and again particularly in relation to
6 the rest of Iraq, but if I can characterise the four
7 provinces, Al-Muthanna in the west, very small
8 population, very, very few incidents throughout my time
9 as CJO and indeed after that.

10 Dhi Qar, again responsibility of the Italians, was
11 very quiet as well.

12 Maysan, a bit of a basket case. Always had been
13 under Saddam Hussein as well. Definitely an influence
14 from Iran, long border with Iran. So there were more
15 incidents in Maysan.

16 Then Basra. The rural area of Basra relatively
17 quiet. Potential within Basra City for incidents.

18 My very first visit, though, to MND (South-East)
19 when I took over, I can remember walking around Basra
20 city talking to the locals and very benign indeed. Over
21 time that did change, and I think that characterises
22 what happened in Iraq, where increasingly the coalition
23 was viewed as an occupation force and part of the
24 problem, and that drove some of the way we approached
25 our transition and an acknowledgment that the longer we

1 stayed the more difficult it was going to get, but we
2 couldn't leave until we trained the Iraqi security
3 forces so that they could provide security in their own
4 right.

5 SIR MARTIN GILBERT: Thank you very much.

6 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: Roderic, back to you.

7 SIR RODERIC LYNE: I'd like to look at an incident that
8 happened in Maysan province that you described as a bit
9 of a basket case in August '04, when the UK base in Al
10 Amarah which was called CIMIC House, was effectively
11 under siege from 5th to 23rd August and couldn't be
12 resupplied according to one of the people who was in it
13 and subsequently wrote a book about it, Sergeant Dan
14 Mills, for ten days.

15 Sergeant Mills in his book says:

16 "At one point the forces were told that they could
17 abandon the base",

18 or were given an order to that effect.

19 Do you recall an incident and do you recall the
20 possibility of the base being abandoned?

21 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: I don't remember the specific
22 incident. There were -- I mean, there was a period when
23 CIMIC House was under significant threat. There's no
24 doubt about it, but it was never raised -- it was
25 clearly raised by the GOC that there was a problem in

1 Maysan, never to the extent that we should be abandoning
2 the location at all, not that I recall anyway.

3 SIR RODERIC LYNE: If Sergeant Mills' description is
4 accurate, this was a pretty serious sort of incident if
5 it had got to the point where abandonment was being
6 considered?

7 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Yes.

8 SIR RODERIC LYNE: We have been surprised in the papers that
9 we have seen at the CJO level and the upward briefing
10 from PJHQ that it doesn't feature and you don't have
11 a recollection of it either.

12 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: I don't, no, no. As I say, Maysan was
13 a problem, Al Amarah was a problem, but manageable from
14 a GOC perspective, otherwise he would have highlighted
15 that he couldn't cope.

16 SIR RODERIC LYNE: So the decision not to report this
17 incident further up would have been one that rested with
18 the GOC?

19 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: With the GOC, certainly.

20 SIR RODERIC LYNE: If we had been forced to abandon, how
21 serious would that have been from a strategic
22 perspective?

23 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Well it, would have been serious,
24 because it clearly would have removed our ability (a) to
25 know what was going on in Maysan. It would have been --

1 prevented our ability to do any security sector reforms
2 and training of the forces up there. We would have lost
3 visibility of what was go going on in the areas and
4 I think would have handed the initiative to the people
5 perpetrating that sort of activity as well.

6 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Now what actually happened in the month
7 after this incident was that we did, in fact, hand over
8 CIMIC House in September 2004 to the Iraqi security
9 forces?

10 Do you recall the timing of that handover?

11 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: I don't, I'm afraid.

12 SIR RODERIC LYNE: I was going to seek an assessment from
13 you as to whether the Iraqi security force in this
14 basket case of a province were up to the task that
15 early, but if you don't recall the specific incident you
16 wouldn't be able to answer that question.

17 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: No, I am afraid I can't help. I am
18 sorry.

19 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Does this all imply that what's happening
20 in Al Amarah in this period is at such a granular level
21 that it just doesn't get up on to, to mix the metaphor,
22 the radar screen of the CJO?

23 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: I think that's a very fair assessment,
24 and the GOC, if he can manage within his resources, he
25 feels he has control of the situation, then that's

1 exactly what he would feel is within his
2 responsibilities.

3 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Would you have felt that the highest
4 levels of command, those above you, political and
5 military, should have been aware -- should have been
6 more aware of some of these serious incidents in our
7 Area of Operations, or were they content, were they
8 sufficiently informed if the GOC was covering this but
9 didn't deem it necessary to report upwards this kind of
10 incident?

11 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Well, the only thing -- the only thing
12 I can assume is that in relation to everything else
13 which was going on in the -- in MND (South-East) the
14 relative importance of that, the GOC deemed it wasn't
15 necessary to raise.

16 I mean, I actually recall going to Al Amarah on one
17 of my fairly early visits, going to see, dare I say, the
18 Chief of Police. So conditions wouldn't have been that
19 bad.

20 SIR RODERIC LYNE: That would have been when? You took over
21 in July.

22 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Yes. So it would have been the back
23 end of 2004.

24 SIR RODERIC LYNE: But there was a sudden upsurge in
25 incidents in precisely this period, wasn't there?

1 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: There was, yes.

2 SIR RODERIC LYNE: The GOC reports in the week up to 15th
3 August the number of hostile incidents was an increase
4 of 300% over the previous peak in April 2004. So there
5 was a spike.

6 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Yes, as a result really of activity up
7 in Najaf and that clearly had a feedback into MND
8 (South-East) as well, but again I think looking at the
9 context of MND (South-East) in comparison to what was
10 going on elsewhere in Iraq, it was at a relatively low
11 level, not discounting it at all, but a relatively low
12 level.

13 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: We noticed that the Al Amarah base
14 incident that Sir Roderic referred to generated not only
15 a number of gallantry awards but also the only Victoria
16 Cross in the campaign, Johnson Beharry.

17 I just wondered how long it takes for that kind of
18 recognition to become noticed up the chain of command
19 and through the system. It clearly starts in theatre,
20 but what happens then?

21 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Well, I mean, anything which is raised
22 to PJHQ by the GOC, if it was going to have strategic
23 importance, or indeed media importance, then we would
24 make sure that the MoD were aware of that. There was no
25 point in hiding anything from anybody. It was in our

1 interest to make sure that we shared information and,
2 dare I say, there was no way that something which had
3 been raised by the GOC would not have visibility in the
4 MoD, because the GOC's report went to CDS. It didn't
5 come through me going to CDS. It went in parallel to
6 CDS. That was exactly the way all of our reporting was
7 conducted.

8 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: I don't want to pursue the point, but if
9 the GOC doesn't raise it in a weekly or less frequent
10 report, even an incident such as one that will attract
11 the award of a Victoria Cross in due course, PJHQ will
12 not be conscious of it. It won't have visibility at the
13 time?

14 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: If it is not raised by the GOC, but we
15 also have in the PJHQ a small team who coordinate the
16 whole headquarters' activity on Iraq and operations
17 which are going on. So it is not just a case of GOC
18 informing myself or indeed my number two. There is that
19 constant dialogue going on with the staff as well. So I
20 am surprised that nothing would have filtered through
21 the staff and every single day my deputy, at that
22 particular time a two star Army General, who I think you
23 have taken a witness statement from, General Wall, he
24 held a daily meeting where all the divisions in the
25 headquarters basically laid out all their particular

1 issues for the day or the coming week, and there would
2 have been a review of any serious incidents as well.

3 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: Okay. Thank you. I will turn back to
4 Sir Martin Gilbert now. Martin.

5 SIR MARTIN GILBERT: If I could turn to the question of
6 increased force levels and also the operation of armed
7 forces outside MND (South-East).

8 During the course of 2004 there was, of course,
9 serious consideration in MoD and wider government about
10 substantially increasing our force levels in Iraq and
11 taking on an extended area of operations.

12 What was your advice on this?

13 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: It didn't happen during my time.

14 I understand the period you're talking about. As far as
15 I am aware it actually happened in General Reith's time.
16 I am aware there were requests from the US could we take
17 on greater responsibility in could we go further north?
18 There was a reluctance to do that by the Ministry of
19 Defence, because of the additional risk. As I said, the
20 number of incidents which happened the further you went
21 north increased. Associated with that there was clearly
22 additional political risk. There was the logistic
23 sustainment task, the additional logistic sustainment
24 task. So a reticence to take on greater responsibility.

25 SIR MARTIN GILBERT: That ties in really with my next

1 question, my next document. In February 2005 a document
2 entitled "Iraqi strategy for 2005" recommended that we
3 should not increase our force numbers in Iraq and that
4 we should not anticipate providing personnel assistance
5 teams or operations extra material outside the current
6 areas of operation. Do you know where that
7 recommendation came from?

8 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: I would have thought from the MoD,
9 because they provided the overall strategic guidance.
10 The only time that we did provide not additional forces
11 but we moved forces out of MND (South-East) to support
12 US operations further north was the Blackwatch
13 deployment in the back end of '04.

14 SIR MARTIN GILBERT: The North Babil deployment?

15 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Correct, yes.

16 SIR MARTIN GILBERT: Did that decision have an impact on not
17 deploying forces outside MND (South-East) subsequent to
18 that?

19 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: No, because the requests that had been
20 made from the US had all pre-dated North Babil, and when
21 we were approached by the US first of all in theatre
22 from MNCI down to the GOC, but also then there was
23 a dialogue between myself and General McColl, who is the
24 three star deputy up in Baghdad, there was a view that
25 the operation that we were going to support, which was

1 effectively to try to resolve the problems in Fallujah
2 was strategically important, and the US were asking us
3 to effectively provide a blocking force to the south of
4 Fallujah. So it wasn't involved intimately with the
5 clear-out operation, which went through Fallujah. So it
6 was a manageable risk.

7 We felt on this occasion -- my recommendation to the
8 MoD, in consultation with General McColl, was we should
9 do this. The US needed our help.

10 There was considerable debate in the MoD, but having
11 looked at circumstances, the CDS agreed to the
12 deployment. The US provided us with very significant
13 logistical support to get us up to North Babil. I think
14 -- I know the US were very grateful for the support that
15 we provided. We did sustain some casualties. It is the
16 first time we ever encountered suicide bombers, but, as
17 I say, I think the US were very grateful for the effect
18 that we delivered as part of that overall operation.

19 SIR MARTIN GILBERT: By this stage plans were, of course,
20 beginning for us to emerge for us to take part in the
21 expanded NATO operation in Afghanistan. What impact did
22 that have with decisions regarding force levels in Iraq?

23 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: At that stage absolutely none at all,
24 because we are now talking about 2004, if my memory
25 serves me correctly, and Afghanistan really came on the

1 radar scope as a result of the potential to deploy the
2 army headquarters. Our operations in Afghanistan were
3 relatively small scale up to that particular stage. We
4 were providing resources for the two PRTs, one in
5 Meymaana, another in Mazar-e-Sharif. We had another
6 small contingent in Kabul providing force protection.

7 The deployment of the ARRC headquarters was debated
8 in the context of both Iraq and Afghanistan. There was
9 a thought that it could be used in Iraq. It was viewed
10 in NATO as the most capable of the NATO headquarters.
11 In trying to judge the balance between Iraq and
12 Afghanistan it was judged that the ARRC headquarters
13 could offer maximum effect if it was deployed to
14 Afghanistan rather than Iraq.

15 So at that juncture, I think in June of 2004, the
16 Prime Minister announced that for planning purposes the
17 ARRC headquarters would go to Afghanistan in 2006, so
18 quite a long way in advance. So at that stage we were
19 still debating about what to do about Afghanistan in the
20 context of NATO expansion.

21 SIR MARTIN GILBERT: So finally a question in two parts
22 about the -- having made this decision not to increase
23 our forces in MND (South-East), were you satisfied that
24 this gave us enough force to fulfil our objectives
25 there?

1 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Very much so, because we had
2 a rigorous process through the force level review
3 process to make sure that the tasks which were giving
4 the GOC, he was satisfied he had the forces to deliver
5 those tasks.

6 SIR MARTIN GILBERT: Did the decision affect our relations
7 with the United States in any way?

8 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: No. Not at all. I mean, the United
9 States understood our position. They were very content
10 for us to effectively look after MND (South-East).
11 Would they have liked additional forces? Possibly, but
12 when it was explained to them that we weren't willing to
13 do that, they accepted that.

14 SIR MARTIN GILBERT: Thank you.

15 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: Right. Back to Baroness Prashar.

16 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: Thank you. Can we now move on to
17 the question of security sector reform, because in your
18 statement you say the two main tasks of the UK landforce
19 component in MND (South-East) was the framework security
20 operations and training of the Iraqi Security Force.

21 In a letter from the Secretary of State for
22 Defence's Private Secretary to the Prime Minister's
23 Private Secretary, which was dated 13th May 2005, he
24 says:

25 "The UK forces are shifting their main effort from

1 framework security to security sector reform such that
2 60% of troops would focus on social security reform."

3 Previously it was about 33%. What had changed at
4 that stage which allowed for the shift -- to shift your
5 efforts away from the direct provision of security
6 reform to the Iraqi security forces?

7 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: It would have been purely the security
8 situation as viewed from MND's south-east GOC's
9 perspective. He would have felt that the security
10 situation allowed him to transfer some of those
11 resources across into more focus on the actual training
12 of the Iraqi army and supporting the training for the
13 Iraqi police, and that would have been a judgment that
14 he would have made.

15 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: Would it have been made by any
16 advice you may have given or something you heard from
17 theatre?

18 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: No, because in my directive to him to
19 GOC, and I put in my witness statement my individual
20 objectives for him, and the guidance was security sector
21 reform and focus on the Iraqi army as the priority over
22 the Iraqi police.

23 So he had that guidance, and he would have shifted
24 those resources across as a means of filling that
25 guidance.

1 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: Because the exact wording of the
2 force level review says:

3 "This means that about 60% of our troops will be
4 fully dedicated to security sector reform and available
5 for security sector reform work alongside other tasks."

6 Could you help clarify whether they were indeed
7 fully dedicated or fitting in this work alongside other
8 tasks?

9 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Well, security sector reform entails
10 different facets. There were some people who were
11 purely dedicated to basic training of Iraqi soldiers.
12 There was a large barrack/academy that was built at
13 Talil by the Americans using American funding for the
14 infrastructure and all the equipment that was being
15 given to the Iraqi forces. We had dedicated soldiers,
16 trainers doing that task, but another facet of security
17 sector reform is going out on patrol, British units
18 alongside Iraqi units, and that's still part of security
19 sector reform, but at the same time it is providing
20 a secure environment because you are both out there
21 doing the job that the military should be doing,
22 providing security.

23 So there's a sort of gradation of the amount of what
24 I would call sort of pure training, which I would class
25 at what's done at Talil and security sector reform which

1 is out on patrol leading by example, I suppose you would
2 say.

3 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: So what you are really saying is
4 something was done alongside other work and there was
5 direct training?

6 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Absolutely. So they were providing
7 security sector reform merely by being out on patrol
8 with Iraqi forces that you are partnering with.

9 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: What I don't understand is that the
10 security sector reform, what was called Iraqisation,
11 was one of the government's key objectives as early as
12 2003. Why did it take so long for the military to
13 conclude it should be their main effort? That was in
14 2005. Why did it take two years for it to become the
15 main effort?

16 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Well it always was going -- the exit
17 strategy for the coalition was to train the Iraqi forces
18 to such a standard they could take over responsibility
19 for their own security. So at the back of everybody's
20 mind the main effort was training the Iraqi forces, but
21 you also had to provide a secure environment for that
22 training to be undertaken and for the other activity.
23 So improvement of governance and the whole of the
24 reconstruction effort as well.

25 So I wouldn't characterise it as starkly as saying

1 suddenly there was a great change from providing
2 a secure environment to security sector reform. I think
3 it is a gradual process. As security improved -- and
4 indeed that is different over the whole of MND
5 (South-East). As I said, I characterised Al-Muthanna,
6 there was really no problem with security in Al-Muthanna
7 at all. Nearly from day one you could do security
8 sector reform. In other parts of the divisional area
9 then you had to focus much more on security, could not
10 do as much direct training of the Iraqi forces.

11 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: Okay. Colin Smith, the civilian
12 Chief Police Adviser for the majority of the time you
13 were in post, told the Inquiry:

14 "As security deteriorated, police officers needed
15 increasingly to be escorted by substantial military
16 resources. Their priority was, however, increasingly
17 lowered by the military."

18 How does this sit against making security sector
19 reform your main effort?

20 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Well, as I say, if you make -- still
21 the underpinning is we need to train Iraqi forces but
22 you can't do that unless you have a secure environment.
23 So if you went through a period of activity where
24 security had gone down, you would have to divert
25 resources which were previously devoted to training, you

1 would have to switch them back on to the security tasks.
2 So it was a continual balance which the GOC and his
3 subordinate commanders would have been making on
4 a nearly daily basis.

5 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: So what you are really saying is
6 that the security situation was so bad that you were
7 constantly diverted from that from the security forces
8 reform?

9 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: No. There were periods when security
10 deteriorated and I think the areas where we had Najaf
11 when there was spill over back into MND (South-East),
12 around Fallujah period, because of what was going on in
13 the north, there was some spill over down to the south,
14 and in the lead-up to the elections there was attempted
15 disruption, which went on. So those particular periods
16 quite rightly the GOC would have diverted resources away
17 from pure training to more security activity.

18 Could I just use preparation for the elections as
19 an example, because the Iraqi forces during that period
20 went through a number of exercises with our own forces
21 to make sure that we were well prepared to play their
22 part in the security of the elections, and the aim was
23 always to make sure the Iraqi forces were at the front
24 of the election, so around the polling stations and such
25 like, to put an Iraqi face on it, and that the coalition

1 forces would be in the background as much as possible.

2 So I can distinctly remember discussing preparation
3 for the election was the GOC and they went through
4 a number of mission rehearsal exercises. That is part
5 of security sector reform. This is demonstrating to
6 them this is the best way of continuing.

7 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: My final question is that in your
8 statement you say that the UK is poorly placed to
9 deliver the type of police training required in the
10 likes of Iraq and Afghanistan, which is more akin to the
11 Parliamentary police forces found in Spain, Italy and
12 France.

13 Now other witnesses would disagree with the nature
14 of policing required for Iraq.

15 Was there ever an agreement about the type of police
16 force that the coalition were trying to establish?

17 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: I think police training in Iraq was
18 confused. I think there was lack of clarity on what
19 sort of policemen we were trying to create. I don't
20 think the UK is in a particularly strong position to be
21 able to conduct a sort of expeditionary police training
22 in a non-benign security environment that we faced in
23 Iraq and indeed face in Afghanistan today. I don't
24 think internationally there is a robust method of doing
25 it either. We went through quite a difficult period in

1 Bosnia and in Kosovo trying to do exactly the same,
2 although there is an embryonic training capability.

3 From my personal perspective I stand by what I said
4 in my witness statement. I think the sort of policemen
5 you need at that particular juncture in Iraq was more
6 akin to the paramilitaries, gendarmeries we see in
7 France, Spain, Italy. That doesn't mean that's the sort
8 of police force that Iraq needs forever, and maybe there
9 is a transition from there to something more akin to
10 what we have in the UK, just as we were trying to
11 produce a more democratic process within Iraq as well.

12 So I still personally believe that we needed
13 something which leans towards the paramilitary rather
14 than the British bobbies.

15 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: From your point of view who should
16 have brought that clarity to it? I mean, was anybody
17 responsible for that? Was there any coordination?

18 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: There was a lot of effort, a lot of
19 focus in Baghdad. It was an integral part of the
20 campaign, because security is not just the Iraqi Army.
21 It is the Iraqi Police. It is the border security as
22 well, the DBE, which again we put a lot of effort into,
23 because of the long borders we had in MND (South-East).

24 I think -- I know the US struggled with police
25 training, how to bring it together. There was wide use

1 of contractors both by the US and by ourselves as well,
2 many of whom were ex-policemen, but there was that lack
3 of clarity. There was that lack of organisation, and
4 I think we were not well organised back in the UK to
5 identify how best we should be delivering our bit of
6 police training in MND (South-East). Interestingly in
7 Dhi Qar province responsibility of the Italians, they
8 had the Carabinieri there and the general judgment was
9 they had done a pretty good job. Ronnie Flanagan
10 certainly felt they had, although I know he was not
11 totally convinced by paramilitary force doing it.

12 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: Thank you.

13 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: I'd like to take up myself a couple of
14 aspects of security sector reform and, as Baroness
15 Prashar has been talking about the police, perhaps I can
16 start with that. It is really the problems of
17 corruption and capability that infused the Iraqi Police
18 Service, if that's not too grand a term.

19 You said in your statement that priority was given
20 in terms of security sector reform to the Iraqi army,
21 because they were the most capable, less corrupt, most
22 trainable. That left a fundamental problem of the
23 police unresolved, did it?

24 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Well, we were trying to support as
25 best we could the UK police contingent who had been

1 deployed out by the FCO, and we did that by
2 predominantly using RMPs, who had the sort of skills
3 required.

4 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: And could carry arms and protect
5 themselves?

6 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Correct.

7 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: The Jameat incident was clearly a crucial
8 moment in changing perception at different levels of
9 government and the armed services about the policing
10 problem.

11 Before it would you have said that the MoD's role
12 was essentially a supplementary role to the main
13 policing effort led from the FCO, but, in fact, in
14 October 2005 the MoD took over responsibility as the
15 lead department from the FCO? There is the Jameat
16 incident and a good deal else lying behind that. Did
17 that make a difference to you as the CJO in terms of the
18 balance of effort and responsibility?

19 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: In reality no. It was in the time
20 when Jim Dutton was the GOC, if I recall. Jameat
21 happened because of a completely unrelated incident to
22 the actual Jameat police station, but what it
23 highlighted to us was the level of corruption within
24 particularly that particular police station, and
25 certainly there was a view from theatre not that that

1 was isolated, it was the worst, and other police
2 stations around MND (South-East) there were various
3 gradations of corruption within them.

4 I think you characterising that we focused on the
5 army because they were better and such like, well, they
6 were. They were better quality people. They were
7 better paid than they had historically been, and, of
8 course, the military understand how to train other
9 armies, other airforces or other navies.

10 So I think it was always going to be a struggle
11 training the Iraqi Police, particularly sort of given
12 the numbers we were trying to generate as well.

13 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: You touched briefly in the course of that
14 on Afghanistan too. Since this is a lessons learned
15 Inquiry, are there lessons yet still to be learned and
16 refined about how you build or rebuild an effective
17 police service in a country that's failing or has
18 failed?

19 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: I personally think I agree totally.
20 We recognised that we were going to face very similar
21 challenges in Afghanistan. We knew something of the
22 Afghan army and we also knew the Afghan police were in
23 a similar situation to the Iraqi police.

24 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: It is tempting to ask a question which is
25 how does it come about that militias often serving

1 different political factions infiltrate a police
2 station, but I agree that you can't really draw
3 a distinction between a militia body of people on the
4 one hand and the police on the other. They are the same
5 body of people in part?

6 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: I think that is a fair view, and, of
7 course, in looking at what motivates these people, some
8 of it is pure criminality. Some of it is political.
9 A lot of it is also tribal and jockeying for positions
10 as well, jockeying for position and influence.

11 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: Given all that, what was it possible to
12 do in your time as CJO and what is it possible to do
13 since then and for the future to tackle the problem from
14 the standpoint of the British armed services and the
15 British Government and policy makers? Is there
16 an answer?

17 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: You could create a larger number of
18 military police specifically to take on that sort of
19 role. I personally don't think that is a viable
20 position for the UK military to take. You could create
21 something in the UK which would -- some sort of standing
22 force, which would be able to go and do that. I doubt if
23 that's realistic. So I think you are then looking at is
24 there any scope for somehow creating an international
25 capability which draws on the likes of the Italians, the

1 French, the Spanish, that sort of experience, plus
2 ourselves, because I wouldn't like to not give credit to
3 the police trainers who went out. I mean, they were
4 trying to do a very difficult task. They bring
5 particular skills as well which some of the other police
6 forces, foreign police forces, don't have to the same
7 extent. So I think personally some sort of
8 international police training structure needs to be
9 created.

10 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: Finally on this, drawing on your
11 experience as CJO looking at that unresolved set of
12 problems on police reconstruction, government policy and
13 certainly US policy was, was it not, train as many
14 police officers as you can as quickly as you can through
15 a sausage machine process.

16 We have had our evidence which personally could be
17 persuasive that it takes much longer to create
18 an effective police officer who has to live in his/her
19 community subject to intense pressures from all sorts of
20 political, family, tribal qualities. How does one deal
21 with that other than accepting the fact you can't do the
22 job very quickly?

23 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: I think you have to strike a balance,
24 and if I can use an analogy in Afghanistan, the Germans
25 have the lead for -- had the lead for training the

1 police force in Afghanistan. They produced an excellent
2 policeman at the end of it, but it took a long time. If
3 you want to run these sort of campaigns, there is a time
4 imperative, not least -- one of the things we touched on
5 earlier was increasingly a force is viewed as
6 an occupation force. So I think you have a limited
7 amount of time to create the effect you need to achieve.
8 That may mean that you have to compromise on what you
9 deliver at the end of the day and you have to take
10 a judgment is it good enough? It may not be perfect,
11 but is it good enough?

12 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: Thank you. I'd like just to turn briefly
13 to one other, a military aspect of security sector
14 reform. This is the difference that emerged between the
15 US military and our own in terms of military transition
16 teams and how you work it.

17 They from the time of General Luck's review in early
18 2005 were embedding more and more. We for our part
19 because of force protection and, indeed, very proper
20 small people considerations were reluctant to do that in
21 the sense it would draw fire on to the Iraqi forces you
22 were embedded with.

23 Is that a lesson which has simply now been learned,
24 because we took a different approach later and have
25 taken that different approach into Afghanistan.

1 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: I think the lesson has been learned
2 and I think on reflection we realised that embedding
3 people at pretty low level in training formations you
4 deliver a more rapid and a better qualitative effect but
5 there are risks and I suppose it's the appetite for risk
6 at a particular moment and the political appetite for
7 risk as well.

8 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: We have had evidence now from yourself
9 and also from General Dannatt and from General Peter
10 Wall about the risk element. There is also a cost
11 element, isn't there? If you are going to put quite low
12 ranked soldiers embedded in local forces, there is
13 interpretation, there is medical, there is all sorts of
14 tactical air control considerations. Costly.

15 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: There are. I am not sure that would
16 feature heavily in a decision to do it that way,
17 because, as I say, creating effective forces is your
18 exit strategy, and the quicker you can do it, the
19 quicker you get out. The less cost the whole operation
20 is.

21 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: I think we will -- I will turn to
22 Baroness Prashar for another set of questions on
23 security sector reform and then we will take a break.

24 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: In your statement you say that
25 significant progress on security sector reform was made

1 during the first half of 2005. I mean, on what did you
2 base that judgment and how were you able to assess
3 progress, performance, capability and capacity?

4 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: I suppose I go back to what I was
5 saying. First of all, direct feedback from GOC and then
6 what was being provided back up to the coalition,
7 because there were a myriad of statistics, metrics, (a)
8 created and then (b) assessed against, and it was on
9 that basis. A lot of it had to do with equipment. Are
10 they -- physically do they have the right equipment,
11 very much a function of the US. They have funded the
12 creation of the Iraqi forces in reality. We contributed
13 to a degree, but it pales into insignificance in
14 comparison to what the US have done.

15 So many criteria against which they were judged, and
16 GOC had a responsibility for passing that up to MNFI and
17 the Corps as well, and that was the same information we
18 were getting. So we were relying very much on the
19 assessment from the in theatre force.

20 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: Did you have any data on the
21 performance of the Iraqi security forces at all, because
22 we were told by Colin Smith that there was too much
23 focus on quantity rather than quality?

24 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: I think to a degree there is always
25 going to be a focus on have you created the numbers,

1 because you need a certain number of bodies out on the
2 ground to create an effect.

3 One of the weaknesses that we discovered, it was
4 relatively straightforward to create a basic soldier.
5 Where the Iraqis, like the Afghans, found one of their
6 fundamental weaknesses is in their senior NCO/Junior
7 Officer leadership. That takes time. So if there was
8 a weakness it probably lay in that sort of area. One of
9 the reasons that we shifted to their MiTT concept for the
10 brigades and provisional headquarters was to try and
11 plug that gap and make sure you were actually producing
12 some good leaders as well as some reasonable foot
13 soldiers.

14 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: And what about corruption and
15 militia infiltration? How did that you factor that into
16 your assessments?

17 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: The Iraqi army was viewed as
18 "reasonably" good. It was certainly not under the same
19 sort of influence as elements of the Iraqi Police force.
20 So there clearly would inevitably be some people, but we
21 didn't view it as widespread or indeed as a serious
22 problem.

23 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: What about the police force?

24 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: No, the police force was a problem,
25 but again in certain pockets. I don't think anybody

1 would have characterised the police across MND
2 (South-East) as what was magnified in Jameat.

3 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: Was this factored in your
4 assessment? Was it something you took into account when
5 assessing progress?

6 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: For the police it certainly would have
7 been, yes.

8 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: In August 2005 Major General James
9 Dutton wrote to you about the latest force level review,
10 warning about the levels of uncertainty and urging
11 considerable caution, given the political uncertainty.
12 He concluded, and I quote:
13 "The last thing I want to do is to appear to
14 question my predecessor's optimistic assumptions but
15 I feel I must inject a note of caution in recognition of
16 the risks and uncertainties involved. We must not allow
17 efficient staffing processes to get ahead of reality.
18 If we do we will find ourselves having to explain
19 apparent failure in MoD and Whitehall because we
20 ourselves raised expectations unrealistically."
21 How did you react to this warning?

22 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Well, I think a perfectly reasonable
23 statement to make by GOC and I think he would have been
24 characterising it --this is from memory -- there was
25 clearly in the back of his mind Afghanistan sitting out

1 there. There was an imperative from everybody, I mean
2 from General Casey downwards, to make transition happen
3 as quickly as possible because it was seen as progress.

4 One of the reasons why there was a lot of focus down
5 in MND (South-East) and why in reality the planning and
6 concept for transition was created down in MND
7 (South-East) by General Riley back in 2004 was because
8 it was viewed as "this is the first place where we are
9 going to be able to transition, and if we can transition
10 in MND (South-East), then it's a good sign of progress,
11 and are then opportunities in other areas over Iraq to
12 be able to do the same process?"

13 A slightly long-winded answer here, because I think
14 it is quite important. General Riley I think had quite
15 a key role in developing the concept of transition. He
16 saw that because of the relatively benign environment
17 that we were operating in, that by transferring that
18 responsibility to the Iraqis momentum could be created,
19 and it would start the Americans thinking longer term,
20 "How are we going to transition out of Iraq?", because
21 they were very heads down on some pretty serious
22 problems they were grappling with in the west with the
23 Sunnis, Al Qaeda and with Baghdad, and they haven't
24 given what we thought was sufficient attention to how we
25 were going to transition out of Iraq in a reasonable

1 timescale where you get over this problem of
2 an occupation feeling, where you are inevitably going to
3 lose the consent of the local people.

4 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: So these things were relative,
5 because the final recommendation which went to Number 10
6 on 12th September 2005 said again that considerable
7 progress had been made with security sector reform and
8 that a reduction of about 500 troops would be possible.

9 Now is that -- how was that judgment reached and the
10 warnings of Major -- Major General Dutton transformed
11 into a positive assessment?

12 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: I think again he was looking ahead,
13 because we would have mapped out -- and some of the
14 assumptions -- I will have to review the papers -- he
15 would have been looking ahead to the following force
16 level review. I mentioned earlier that the MoD would
17 have given PJHQ some assumptions. What is the likely
18 force levels we would be looking at around that period
19 if things remain on track? I think he was probably
20 flagging up a warning that we shouldn't be too ambitious
21 and we must be prepared that -- don't rush into assuming
22 those force levels will be delivered.

23 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: In the event the expectations were
24 demonstrated to be unrealistic, what should they have
25 been?

1 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: I think at that particular stage that
2 we were still -- we had a pretty optimistic -- not
3 optimistic -- we could see that there was progress being
4 made, and I was reviewing preparation for the committee,
5 just reading General Houghton's statement and some of his
6 reports as well. He was up in Baghdad, and there was
7 a general feeling which was coming out of General Casey
8 of political progress, and I think everybody realised
9 that the only solution to Iraq was politics, and you had
10 to have that capacity, that direction, ownership from
11 the Iraqi politicians, and because of the elections, we
12 were making positive progress, and that had spilled over
13 I think into a general feeling that things were going in
14 the right direction. There were difficulties.
15 Everybody acknowledged those, but things were going
16 generally in the right direction.

17 Was it unrealistic? Well, we can all look on
18 hindsight. I think faced with the situation as it was,
19 the facts that we were seeing on the ground, reports
20 back from people in theatre, I don't think it was an
21 unrealistic aspiration to have.

22 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: It is not the aspiration. It is
23 really the demonstration that turned out to be
24 unrealistic. It is not with hindsight, it turned out to
25 be unrealistic.

1 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: But we always had, as we did, the
2 opportunity to reinforce if we want to.

3 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: But we didn't do that.

4 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: No, because at that particular
5 juncture we started to look at an alternative way of
6 transitioning out of Iraq.

7 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: Thank you.

8 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: Thank you. Let's break until, say, 4.35
9 for a cup of tea. Thank you.

10 (A short break)

11 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: Thank you. Let's resume and I will turn
12 straight to Sir Martin Gilbert to reopen. Martin.

13 SIR MARTIN GILBERT: Air Chief Marshal, just before the
14 break you referred to the eventual consideration of an
15 alternative way to transition. Could you explain that
16 for us?

17 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: I mean, it happened after my time as
18 CJO, if I am honest, so I can't comment in great detail,
19 but it was a recognition that we were beginning part of
20 the problem and that by taking an approach where we
21 again forced the pace on the Iraqis to take more
22 responsibility that we would be able to step further
23 into the rear and that would reduce the risk to our own
24 forces, reduce casualties, and it would remove us from
25 direct confrontation with some of the militias who were

1 causing the problem. That was a very conscious decision
2 and I think it was very comprehensively described by CDS
3 when he gave a statement to the inquiry.

4 SIR MARTIN GILBERT: To go back to your time as CJO, I'd
5 like to focus on the growth of the militias, on
6 criminality generally in MND (South-East).

7 We have a report here, a typical weekly report dated
8 March 2005, which is described as a quiet week:

9 "Over the past week there were significant
10 explosives, weapons and ammunitions finds. Criminal
11 activity continues to dominate road communications with
12 hijackings and attacks against civilian convoys. One
13 aspect of the continued violence is religiously
14 motivated attacks by Islamists. This resulted in the
15 death of a young Christian woman. IPS were present and
16 looked on without doing anything. The current protests
17 and demonstrations orchestrated by militia groups,
18 particular the Office of Martyr Sadr is of concern."

19 Did reports like this give you cause for concern?
20 What were you able to somehow do about it?

21 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Well, clearly they did give us cause
22 for concern, but I have to go back to this needs to be
23 reviewed in the context of what was going on across
24 Iraq. Everybody knew that there was criminality, there
25 was jockeying for position, for influence, there was

1 tribal difficulties, there were religious difficulties
2 as well.

3 So none of this is a surprise. The relative
4 levels -- clearly that was portrayed as a quiet week.
5 It would have been probably a quiet week, but
6 particularly in the context of what was going on in
7 Baghdad or in Anbar, but I think that's what life in
8 an environment like that is like.

9 SIR MARTIN GILBERT: During your regular visits which I
10 think you describe in your statement at roughly every
11 six to eight weeks, did you get a sense of a growing,
12 insurgent violence?

13 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Well, without doubt. You only have to
14 look at the statistics to see from 2004 through 2005
15 there were spikes, as I have mentioned, coincident with
16 things like Fallujah, election build-up. But the trend
17 was upwards.

18 Should we have been surprised? Probably not given,
19 as I said, a growing sense amongst the Iraqi people that
20 whilst they could see the benefits of having the
21 coalition there, their life was not improving, and I
22 think that goes back to some of the more fundamental
23 pieces of the campaign plan, the reconstruction effort.

24 The military were in support on the reconstruction
25 of an improved governance, but they could see this was

1 all part and parcel of delivering consent and keeping
2 the population on side. So they put a lot of effort
3 into improving water, decent water, sewerage, a lot of
4 effort into improving electricity and power, and again
5 I think I recall General Riley having a particular focus
6 on putting generators into a number of locations in
7 Basra and other parts of the other provinces, because
8 during the summer months in particular this was a cause
9 of aggravation, got everybody irritated. The level of
10 incidents went up.

11 So the military was involved in a number of
12 different areas, not just on providing security and SSR.
13 They were trying to support the other lines of
14 operation, and I always characterise it as you can
15 deliver security by putting a soldier on every street
16 corner, or you can keep the population on side by having
17 their lives improved and they will become your friends.
18 As I say, you only have a finite of time to do that. If
19 you are not seen to be delivering improvements then
20 inevitably people will say, "What are you delivering for
21 me?"

22 SIR MARTIN GILBERT: Does that create a tension between the
23 need to actually actively check the militia, that you
24 haven't got the force to deal with both these aspects?

25 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Clearly you have to try to address

1 that, but I think it goes back to a much more
2 fundamental issue, and that is synchronisation of
3 campaign activity. How do you bring into step delivery
4 of effective Iraqi security forces? How do you keep
5 that in synchronisation with improvements in the
6 capacity of the ministries up in Baghdad? How do you
7 keep it in synchronisation with the capacity of
8 provincial government? Can you connect them together?
9 Huge difficulties there can, as we saw during Jameat,
10 where effectively the Iraqi Ministry of the Interior
11 sacking the governor, but he takes no notice, and then
12 how can you try to bring on a reconstruction effort? We
13 were continually saying, "Can't we bring in some oil
14 experts to regenerate the oil infrastructure and that's
15 a major source of revenue for the country" but progress
16 was very slow.

17 It is the rates of progress and it is the
18 synchronisation of all of the activity which is
19 I personally think one of the key things that we somehow
20 need to address. Great effort down in theatre in trying
21 to join this all up. I still think a lot of work to be
22 done back in capitals to achieve it.

23 SIR MARTIN GILBERT: Thank you very much.

24 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: I think it is Sir Lawrence Freedman's
25 turn now. Lawrie.

1 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Thanks very much. I want to ask
2 about the improvised explosive device, IED, threat and
3 in particular the explosively formed projectile, EFP.
4 When did you first become aware of this as a threat
5 to Iraq and in particular MND (South-East)?
6 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: I think if I recall, Sir Lawrence, it
7 was during 2005 that we started to see this appear. We
8 had IEDs, but they were not explosively formed
9 projectiles, and initiation changed over time as well.
10 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: We have actually published
11 declassified extracts of documents from August 2004.
12 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Okay. Right. I stand corrected.
13 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: You stand corrected -- which
14 indicate that EFPs had been used in MND (South-East) in
15 May 2004 and there was -- DIS, Defence Intelligence
16 Staff, had predicted the growth in the use of ever more
17 sophisticated IED technology.
18 Do you recall being briefed on this in July 2004
19 when you took over as a coming threat?
20 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Not specifically EFPs. IEDs, yes, and
21 the initiation I say changed over time. I don't recall
22 it being -- well, it was not a significant threat in
23 2004 when I took over and it grew during my period, the
24 whole IED threat and particularly EFP.
25 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: I mean, how did you adjust -- how

1 were activities adjusted to take account of this threat?

2 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: A combination of things really. GOC

3 clearly focused on protection of the force anyway, but

4 changes in -- defeating a threat like this takes

5 a combination of things: tactics and procedures, which

6 clearly is an in theatre responsibility, improved

7 technical means to defeat the threat, and that formed

8 two areas I suppose. First of all, counter measures,

9 depending on the sort of initiation that is being used.

10 As I say that changed over time. Increased protection

11 in terms of physical protection on vehicles,

12 up-armouring things, and also, and I think some good

13 progress was made on personal equipment for people,

14 particularly vulnerable areas of the body, round the

15 neck, underarms and such like. There was again some

16 good progress made. That I think is a combination of

17 responsibilities with the equipment capability area with

18 the research establishments as well and again I think we

19 were reasonably well served -- we were well served in

20 that context.

21 Then finally, and again an in theatre

22 responsibility, you have to go against the perpetrators,

23 so the networks of people who are actually carrying out

24 these sort of attacks. So increased intelligence

25 activity and then focused operations. Very much all of

1 the GOC's work were focused on. So a combination of all
2 of those sorts of activity. You will never be able to
3 physically protect people from some of these devices.
4 As we saw, an EFP went into a Challenger tank.

5 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: I mean, you described quite a number
6 of things there to be done and different agencies that
7 might be involved.

8 For the commanders on the ground there is a range of
9 possibilities there. As CJO what direction were you
10 giving them about appropriate levels of risk priority in
11 this, because clearly going after the threat may raise
12 certain sorts of risks and have consequences. Receiving
13 the threat obviously has others. So how as CJO do you
14 give direction in matters like this?

15 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: I honestly do not believe it is CJO's
16 role to be giving direction to the in theatre commander
17 as to the levels of risk he should be taking with his
18 people. He was I think well in tune with feelings in
19 the PJHQ and the MoD. Clearly we wanted to minimise the
20 risk to people, but recognising that we had a job to
21 deliver as well, and that comes down to him being able
22 to execute the tasks on the ground.

23 So we would do the utmost we could possibly do in
24 terms of providing improvements in capability, so
25 technical means, through equipment capability area,

1 tactics and procedures, I have to say I left very firmly
2 to the GOC because I think that was his rightful role.

3 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Just a sort of more general point.
4 You are there for a couple of years. Your GOCs are
5 every six months. So you have a sort of continuity of
6 view. Different GOCs may take different views. Did you
7 see it as part of your role to ensure a degree of
8 continuity in UK policy here? Presumably you are giving
9 some direction?

10 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Absolutely, but not in the -- I view
11 that as day-to-day activity. The bread and butter of
12 a GOC is to be able to take judgments on the level of
13 risk and the way he goes about his particular tasks.
14 That is the role of a GOC and a commander on the ground.

15 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Given they have that responsibility,
16 General Riley told us that the army had forgotten a lot
17 of lessons learned from Northern Ireland with regard to
18 countering IEDs.

19 Did you think the GOCs had sufficient access to
20 weapons intelligence analysis and scientific support in
21 theatre to help them deal with the problems they were
22 facing?

23 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: They had scientific support. I think
24 that's recorded by one of the GOCs in his witness
25 statement. There was never a complaint from a GOC that

1 he was not adequately supported, and indeed again
2 I think I read in one of the witness statements that the
3 GOC said he thought the support he got from the defence
4 and intelligence community was very impressive.

5 So if there had been a complaint from theatre, we
6 would certainly have done something about it.

7 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: What about the ability to train --
8 the sort of countermeasures you have mentioned. Those
9 would require a degree of specialist training. Do you
10 think that there was -- they had sufficient support in
11 that matter as well?

12 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Again not a weakness which was
13 identified to me as CJO that we had to have -- I mean
14 training of people going into theatre was clearly the
15 responsibility of front line commands. It certainly
16 didn't mean they didn't have an interest in it. If
17 somebody had raised the point such as the GOC said "I am
18 receiving people who are not adequately trained in these
19 particular skills", then we would have fed that back to
20 the front line commanders to make sure it was rectified.
21 I mean, the army had actually a very, very good system,
22 which we translated across into the Air Force and to
23 a lesser extent into the Navy if there were people being
24 deployed down on the ground, because the OpTAG
25 training which the army go through was viewed as a gold

1 standard to be quite honest.

2 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Following then from your answers you
3 seem very reliant on what the GOC is saying to you
4 coming up. Do you have a means of challenging GOC
5 judgments? Did you challenge GOC judgments?

6 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Well, I think that goes back to, you
7 know, regular visits by senior officers. So not just me
8 going out to theatre but CINC LAND going out to
9 theatre, General Jackson went out on a regular basis,
10 and these are very experienced army officers.

11 So I would have hoped if there was concern about
12 what they were seeing on the ground that they would have
13 put that in a visit report or come and tapped me on the
14 shoulder and said, "Torpy, why hasn't this been
15 addressed?" and that never happened.

16 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Just the point that you are
17 an airman and you are in a position where there's
18 a major land campaign going on.

19 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Uh-huh.

20 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Do you think that was a problem for
21 you?

22 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: No.

23 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: You were perfectly --

24 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Because I had a very skilled joint
25 headquarters which delivered that sort of expertise. My

1 Two Star deputy was a very experienced army officer,
2 General Wall. We had a front line command who used to
3 watch us like a hawk, and if we were not doing what they
4 felt was right for their people on the ground, as
5 I said, I would have been tapped on the shoulder very
6 quickly I imagine and that didn't happen.

7 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Well, how --

8 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Indeed, sometimes I think having
9 somebody from another service brings a different
10 perspective on particular issues as well.

11 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Indeed. Can we talk therefore about
12 an area where there was concern that we have taken a lot
13 of evidence on, which is the Snatch land rover and its
14 use in Iraq. Now this became acute, as we just
15 discussed, in 2005, although there was evidence of it
16 before, and even vehicles again, as you've mentioned,
17 Challenger, with a greater level of armour, were
18 vulnerable to EFP/IEDs.

19 What discussions were you having with commanders on
20 the ground about Snatch? Were they telling you they had
21 confidence in it?

22 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: They saw it as a capability that they
23 needed to fulfill the task as they saw it, and again
24 I think repeated GOCs have given evidence to say that
25 sort of light vehicle, which can get into some narrow

1 bits of urban areas in Basra and built up areas, was
2 absolutely a requirement, and they clearly would have
3 liked a vehicle which offered better degrees of
4 protection and extra armour was put on to Snatch
5 vehicles. They had alternatives. I mean, the next
6 thing up was clearly Warrior or, if necessary,
7 a Challenger, but that then has perception problems in
8 delivering the effect that you are trying to achieve
9 with the local population as well.

10 So, as always, there is a balance to be struck, and
11 there's a risk balance to be taken, and the only person
12 I believe who could take that is the commander on the
13 ground. I would not wish, and I don't think an army
14 officer in my position would want to be taking
15 a different view to the advice that he's getting from
16 the person on the ground.

17 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: But that's in terms of the use of
18 what is available to the commander on the ground?

19 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Yes, yes.

20 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Did you discuss with Generals
21 Jackson or Dannatt whether something else was needed for
22 Snatch or did you order any review of Snatch?

23 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: There was work going on. I mean,
24 Snatch had always been identified as a problem and I was
25 very, very aware of the work which was going on in the

1 equipment capability area and in the front line command
2 to look at what alternatives there were.

3 The message coming out of the equipment capability
4 areas is there is not another vehicle on the market
5 which can provide that sort of mobility which we could
6 go out and procure tomorrow. We looked at the
7 Americans. The Americans didn't have anything. They
8 were still using Humvees, which was -- they were having
9 similar problems with as well.

10 So everybody was aware this was a problem. We need
11 to try to solve it. There was a lot of energy going
12 into it, and from a PJHQ perspective we have a certain
13 amount of expertise, but we rely on the expertise which
14 is in the equipment capability area and the Front
15 Line Commands to deliver the requirements of the in
16 theatre force. So I think that the problem well
17 articulated by a commander in the field for their
18 requirements could in the equipment capability area come
19 up with a technical solution or another alternative.

20 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Had you actually received formally
21 or informally any requests for the provision?

22 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: No. Not that I recall.

23 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: So why -- I mean, you can see why
24 GOC would work with what he had and had to make the best
25 of what was available, but you could imagine that he

1 might be asking if there was something better.

2 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Well, I mean, everything at that

3 particular time said if there is something better, then

4 we will consider it and there was work going on to look

5 at what more could be done with Snatch as well. So it

6 wasn't because it hadn't been raised. Everybody was

7 working on this as an issue. It was just there was not

8 a solution which anybody could pull out of a hat at that

9 particular moment.

10 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: General Dutton told us in the second

11 half of his tour:

12 "My vehicles never left the compound. We had all

13 movement by air, or if the vehicles did move, they were

14 in convoy protected by armoured vehicles."

15 That in itself seems grounds to look for something

16 heavier?

17 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: And that's exactly what is going on.

18 So I think what you reflect there is Jim Dutton

19 modifying his tactics and the way he was approaching the

20 whole hub issue by using here vehicles with a high

21 degree of protection or trying to use helicopters to

22 move around theatre.

23 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: How much of the problem was there

24 was not an agreement on what an alternative needed to

25 do?

1 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: I know this has been raised as
2 an issue in the context of well, you talked to one
3 commander. He had a particular view. Another commander
4 had another view. Possibly that was part of the
5 problem. I wouldn't say it was the problem. I think
6 genuinely there was a lack of a product on the market
7 which we could replace Snatch with.

8 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: I mean, we have released a statement
9 by Lord Drayson and you have seen some of this, and also
10 we had evidence from Des Browne. From that it seems
11 there is ultimately pressure from Ministers coming down
12 on to the military chain of command which led to the
13 acquisition of a heavier patrol vehicle, and given your
14 position as CJO was that your impression of what was
15 going on at the time?

16 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Well, again the -- Lord Drayson
17 obviously was the driver behind this and he or his
18 intervention really created momentum for Mastiff to be
19 introduced. What that provided to the in theatre
20 commander was another medium weight vehicle with higher
21 levels of protection. So you are now entering into the
22 bounds of -- it is not a lorry, a big track vehicle, but
23 it's a pretty massive vehicle, and I go back to the
24 perception issue. Where can you use these vehicles in
25 a particular theatre to deliver the task you are trying

1 to deliver? I mean, there is no doubt that Mastiff was
2 welcomed by the people on the ground. They could
3 undertake certain tasks with that but they could not do
4 what they were doing with Snatch previously.

5 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Previously. Because of the IED
6 threat Snatch had become harder to use.

7 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Absolutely, yes. So what -- sorry,
8 Sir Lawrence. I was just going back to what you were
9 saying.

10 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Carry on.

11 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: I think you will probably come on to
12 it in terms of rotary, helicopters as well. I do think
13 that Lord Drayson provided the leadership in the MoD to
14 make sure something was delivered.

15 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: I am just still a bit puzzled as to
16 how the chain of command is working here. You have got
17 a clear problem remaining with Snatch. We understand
18 the value, the tactical value that Snatch had and may
19 still have in certain sorts of roles, but those roles
20 were becoming more difficult. We eventually come up
21 with Mastiff, which is a heavier patrol vehicle,
22 somewhere in between Snatch and Warrior.

23 Why hadn't it come from a senior Minister or even
24 not the most senior Minister rather than through the
25 military chain of command, the pressure for this heavier

1 vehicle?

2 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: I think there was always pressure from
3 the in theatre force upwards to the MoD. I think the
4 problem actually arises where you have an equipment
5 programme which is under-funded and a desire on behalf of
6 the equipment capability areas who was responsible for
7 ensuring that we have the right capabilities in defence,
8 a desire on the one hand to make sure that the
9 capabilities we have to sustain our long-term defence
10 capability against Defence Planning Assumptions, you
11 have that conflict against today's problem in
12 an operational theatre, and how do you balance the
13 money? It took the Minister to say, "We are going to do
14 this".

15 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: We will talk more about this but
16 I think there are two more issues I would like to ask
17 about.

18 The first is related, which is ISTAR. You said in
19 your statement that one of the responses to the IED
20 threat was the use of intelligence-led operations to
21 disrupt the supply of IEDs. Did you have sufficient
22 ISTAR assets to do this as effectively as you would
23 wish?

24 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: I don't think you could ever have
25 enough ISTAR. I think we were lacking certain

1 capabilities, and one I would particularly identify is
2 UAVs, but there's a lot of history behind -- well,
3 there's a long story to it.

4 First of all, I think there's an impression created
5 that UAVs were ubiquitous in Iraq in that particular
6 period. They were not. The first time that Predator
7 was used in anger was in the second Gulf War. It is
8 an American platform. We saw it used in very small
9 numbers. Given the success and the obvious advantages
10 UAVs deliver, then the Americans were putting a massive
11 amount of energy into trying to roll out Predator as
12 rapidly as possible, but were having significant
13 problems because of pure capacity out of the one company
14 which builds Predator, General Atomics.

15 Actually before the second Gulf War because of what
16 we -- sorry -- after the second Gulf War when I was
17 Deputy Commander at High Wycombe, we had done a deal
18 with the United States Air Force which brought us into
19 the Predator programme. We didn't have any money to buy
20 platforms, but we -- the Americans were very short of
21 people for their Predator programme. So we provided
22 them with 40 people, a mix of engineers, sensor
23 operators and pilots. In return for that we got to fly
24 their aircraft and operate their aircraft. They also
25 gave us the ability to fly those aircraft in Iraq, and

1 it would have been fantastic if we had been able to fly
2 those aircraft over MND (South-East) of the problem is
3 that when an asset is in very short supply, it is
4 controlled at the highest level and it goes to the
5 highest area of demand, and that was not MND
6 (South-East). That was Baghdad and other areas.

7 We eventually persuaded the MoD to buy some large
8 UAVs. That took the intervention of CDS, Jock Stirrup
9 when he arrived as CDS, to effectively order the MoD to
10 buy.

11 So UAVs have brought a quantum improvement in ISTAR,
12 but delivering that capability quickly left some real
13 constraints over.

14 In terms of other ISTAR capabilities I think we
15 actually made some pretty good progress, particularly in
16 bringing some of the airborne platforms and integrating
17 it with the land component in much better ways than we
18 had done in the past. Indeed, we put a lot of energy
19 into air/land integration, making sure MND (South-East)
20 and the air component were very effectively joined up.
21 They knew how to task the Tornados, Harriers, PR9, if
22 necessary. ISTAR was always in short supply.

23 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: So that's your answer in a way to
24 the point that General Shirreff made to us when he
25 couldn't understand after four years the UK still had no

1 UAVs capable of flying in Southern Iraq in the
2 summertime?

3 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: UAVs -- well, because Phoenix was
4 withdrawn because of its lack of capability and
5 robustness, but we also need to recognise that UAVs come
6 in different sizes and shapes from very small handheld
7 ones, which we did have, to the more capable Predator
8 class.

9 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Sure. We have had a number of
10 witnesses, General O'Donoghue, Sir Peter Spencer, Lord
11 Drayson, who have all argued that the MoD's procurements
12 system operation critical items such as helicopters and
13 asset tracking, which lack a clear sponsor, tend to fall
14 down the priority shopping list in favour of big ticket
15 platforms for the single services.

16 Now you will have seen this as Chief of Air Staff as
17 well, because you sat on the Defence Board and the Chief
18 of Staff Committee. Do you think there is some truth in
19 that as an interpretation of how the MoD attributes its
20 resources?

21 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: I think there are certain capabilities
22 which are cross-cutting capabilities across defence, and
23 I would put it down to information systems in particular
24 which go across everything. There is an advocate. It's
25 the Vice Chief. I think we should also not overplay

1 what a Chief of Staff can achieve. A Chief of Staff
2 doesn't have any money to buy any equipment. He advises
3 on what equipment -- what requirements there are, and
4 a Chief of Staff is only one of twelve on the Defence
5 Board, and if I can characterise it, I was pushing hard
6 for two extra C17s, because there was known and
7 recognised and acknowledged weakness in our strategic
8 airlift, but my voice was listened to. It didn't
9 deliver me two extra C17s.

10 So whilst it is helpful to have an advocate,
11 somebody clearly in the lead, it doesn't ensure you are
12 going to deliver the product or the requirement that you
13 want.

14 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: It is relevant to the question of
15 helicopters?

16 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Yes.

17 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: What was your view about the number
18 of helicopters once it was difficult to operate on the
19 ground?

20 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Again a long story really. When I was
21 CJO a study was done in the MoD which looked at our
22 helicopter requirement against our Defence Planning
23 Assumptions and it identified a shortfall, which was
24 then picked up by the PAC. I actually wrote to the MoD
25 planning part of the MoD and said, "I don't think this

1 is a shortfall that we can live with, particularly in
2 support of Special Forces". My point was noted, but it
3 didn't change that we didn't have sufficient
4 helicopters.

5 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: When actually was this?

6 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: This was 2004.

7 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: I just wondered.

8 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: At the beginning of my time as CJO.

9 What I will say is that I -- and I have the figures
10 here -- there was a steady increase in helicopter
11 capability which was delivered to MND (South-East).
12 I think in October 2004 there were 10 helicopters in MND
13 (South-East) and by early 2006 it had risen to 26 or 27.

14 So there had been a marked increase in the physical
15 number of helicopters, but also a lot done on flying
16 hours and dare I say improvements in the way the
17 helicopters were used as well as in the tasking of them.

18 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: This was one area where you did flag
19 up the concern that had been passed to you from the GOC
20 from General Dutton, who highlighted in 2005 the
21 shortfall in helicopter capacity, and you flagged this
22 up to CDS and we have the declassified letter.

23 Did you take any other action to try to ensure
24 helicopter support was available to the campaign in
25 Iraq?

1 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: We did a specific review in -- I am
2 just trying to figure out exactly when it was -- oh,
3 yes -- in October '05. We did a specific review which
4 looked at helicopter numbers and recommendations came
5 out of that.

6 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: And what were those recommendations?

7 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: I don't have them to hand, to be
8 perfectly honest, but because we ended up with 27
9 helicopters in theatre by end of that period, we clearly
10 made sure that they were delivering exactly what the GOC
11 wanted.

12 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: How was the balance between
13 Afghanistan and Iraq affected by --

14 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: The force structure in Afghanistan was
15 really built around an acknowledgment that we had to
16 deliver certain capabilities in Iraq, and that went
17 across the number of battle groups we could support and
18 things like helicopters as well, and again if my memory
19 serves me correctly, they were pretty robust for the
20 size of force we were planning for Afghanistan of
21 helicopters, which, if my memory serves me correctly,
22 was eight Apache, six Chinook and four Lynx helicopters
23 to go and support a force of about 3000 people. That
24 was done in consultation with Joint Helicopter Command
25 and with Land Command.

1 So I think we struck the right balance. We put
2 Chinook into Afghanistan, where the hot and high
3 conditions and terrain demanded that sort of heavy lift
4 and excess performance which you didn't have with the
5 likes of Puma and Merlin at that particular stage.

6 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: The Chinook would have been quite
7 useful in Iraq as well?

8 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Only up to a point. What we had done
9 when we rebalanced, we had seen the introduction of the
10 Merlin helicopters and one of the things actually
11 sometimes Chinook was rather too big in the built-up
12 areas that we were operating in in Iraq, and Merlin,
13 slightly smaller, was actually a rather more suited
14 aircraft, just as we tended to use Pumas up in the
15 Baghdad area.

16 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Obviously it takes a long time not
17 only to procure a new helicopter but train the crews up
18 and so on.

19 Lord Drayson suggested that the procurement of
20 additional helicopters was hampered by the fact that the
21 Joint Helicopter Command was not owned and therefore
22 championed by a single service. Do you have a view on
23 that.

24 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Actually it was owned by a single
25 service. It was Operational Command CINC Land Forces.

1 As CAS or the C-in-C I had
2 administrative command of the RAF people to ensure their
3 terms and conditions of service and such like were to
4 the standard I expected. So there was an advocate for
5 Joint Helicopter Command, and if I look at the interest
6 that the three chiefs took in Joint Helicopter Command,
7 it was pretty key. I mean, you had a big chunk of my
8 people there and a big chunk of my resources there in
9 terms of Chinook, Pumas and Merlin. So I took a pretty
10 keen interest in that.

11 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: But did that translate into advocacy
12 of procurement.

13 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: It certainly did. We were always
14 pressing for more Chinooks because of the shortfall we
15 identified in 2004 and the PAC had reinforced as well.

16 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Lord Drayson again seems to have had
17 to play a role.

18 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: He acted as the catalyst quite rightly
19 really I think to break the logjam of this mismatch in
20 resources and trying to maintain as much balance in the
21 full equipment programme as we could to meet our defence
22 planning assumption for structure.

23 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: To conclude, is the lesson from this
24 you really need quite an activist senior Minister,
25 because you can't rely on the chain of command as

1 structured at the moment to come up with the outcomes
2 that are necessary?

3 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: I think the Minister has a role to
4 play. I think CDS and the PUS have a role to play as
5 well.

6 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: I think before turning to Sir Martin,
7 Sir Roderic has a supplementary.

8 SIR RODERIC LYNE: I want to ask, so we are clear about
9 this, a very, very basic layman's question, having
10 listened to this conversation about how decisions were
11 taken not to prioritise helicopters, C17s, ISTARs,
12 Snatch replacement whatever, and how this was not
13 something that a CJO or Chief of Staff could determine,
14 Lord Drayson acting as a catalyst, the CDS, PUS having
15 important roles.

16 The very simple question is: who was actually
17 responsible or should be responsible for deciding on the
18 priorities within the defence budget?

19 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: The Defence Board and ultimately PUS
20 and CDS on the recommendation of the equipment
21 capability area, who produce a joint equipment plan.

22 SIR RODERIC LYNE: So ultimately the PUS, who is a civil
23 servant, and the CDS, who wears a uniform, but also
24 ultimately the Defence Board or on the recommendation of
25 the Defence Board, which is predominantly military?

1 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Not predominantly military.

2 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Not predominantly.

3 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: I mean, they are in the majority, but

4 not significantly.

5 SIR RODERIC LYNE: All right. They are not majority. Okay.

6 Thank you.

7 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: Over to you, Martin.

8 SIR MARTIN GILBERT: If I could just go back for a moment to

9 the question of the IED threat and the growing IED

10 threat as it grew, did force protection become your main

11 effort?

12 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Well, it was a very important facet of

13 our operations both in terms of providing the best

14 possible equipment we could and obviously the tactics

15 which were being used by the in theatre force. So yes,

16 it did.

17 SIR MARTIN GILBERT: Was there -- sorry.

18 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: I mean, just like any change in the

19 threat, you would take that into account in determining

20 how you approach particular tasks.

21 SIR MARTIN GILBERT: Right. In approaching the task did you

22 ever consider increasing the overall force levels to

23 meet the increasing force protection demands?

24 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: I don't think increasing the force

25 levels would actually have achieved that. What we did

1 was adjust the focus. So on one of my visits discussing
2 with GOC what more could we do in terms of intelligence
3 gathering against one of the networks we suspected of
4 undertaking the attacks, and I redirected a particular
5 part of our force structure, which I can't really
6 discuss in this forum, to make sure that we were putting
7 maximum effort into disruption of the networks.

8 SIR MARTIN GILBERT: So the force protection measures were
9 proportionate?

10 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Yes, I think they were.

11 SIR MARTIN GILBERT: And we touched on this before, but
12 perhaps just to recap, to what extent did the impact and
13 increased requirements for force protection affect the
14 security sector reform aspect?

15 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Well, it clearly slowed things down
16 and I have a slide which shows the transition plan we
17 had in September 2005, which had certain dates which we
18 had identified at that stage as realistic for transition
19 in the various province. Clearly -- I haven't got
20 a plan, but I'm sure there is a plan out there which
21 reflects the actual dates, and they were significantly
22 delayed because of the progress we were able to make.

23 SIR MARTIN GILBERT: Thank you.

24 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: Transition is designed to lead eventually
25 to exit. Are there other factors pressing in on that

1 approach, namely an increasing demand pull from Helmand
2 and indeed the increasing and I think it is fair to
3 describe it as unpopularity at home of the Iraq campaign
4 after three, four years as against the Afghanistan
5 commitment? Were those part of the context?

6 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: I don't think that drove a particular
7 exit strategy. I think the adjustment in the way we
8 approached things, which CDS described, was a reaction
9 to what was happening on the ground, and it clearly
10 expedited our transition out of Iraq, which was helpful
11 in the context of reducing the stretch on the force of
12 having to support both Iraq and Afghanistan.

13 I mean, we had shaped the force structure in
14 Afghanistan to make it manageable to do both theatres.
15 So we had constrained the size of it.

16 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: One more point on that. So there was
17 not, as it were, a demand pull from the commitment to
18 the Afghanistan campaign that was drawing, sucking
19 resources, commitment, time away from the Iraq campaign?

20 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Not during that initial insertion. Of
21 course, what happened subsequently, once forces were on
22 the ground, then we were presented with some slightly
23 different challenges, and over time we were able to
24 rebalance across to Afghanistan. I think you will have
25 heard from some other witnesses that effectively British

1 Army could generate eight battle groups.

2 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: Yes.

3 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: And sustain eight battle groups, and

4 it was a decision made between where you actually

5 located those. We effectively started off with six in

6 Iraq and a maximum of two in Afghanistan.

7 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: Yes. Then you have to sustain them.

8 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Correct, yes.

9 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: Sir Roderic, over to you.

10 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Just following through in that point, in

11 his recent book General Sir Richard Dannatt on this very

12 subject of the balance between Iraq and Afghanistan,

13 talking about the timing of the Prime Minister's

14 announcement in 2004, exactly the time you became CJO,

15 that we were go going to deploy in mid-2006 in much

16 greater numbers to Helmand, he writes in his book:

17 "The assumption had to be that if the UK was going

18 to increase its force levels in Afghanistan in 2006,

19 then we would be substantively out of Iraq by then."

20 This was an assumption that stemmed, of course, from

21 the Strategic Defence Review. Again to quote him:

22 "A new commitment to Afghanistan would have to

23 replace that to Iraq, not be added to it."

24 Now at the time that the decision was made in 2004

25 were those the assumptions that were made? You were

1 CJO. You attended presumably quite frequently the
2 Chiefs of Staffs' meetings. Was it quite clear to the
3 policy makers that this was the case, these assumptions?

4 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: I mean, 2004, the whole Afghanistan
5 debate was really undertaken during 2004 into 2005
6 and --

7 SIR RODERIC LYNE: You mean after the Prime Minister
8 announced the decision then the debate happens?

9 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: No, no, because the Prime Minister's
10 announcement in 2004 was only about the ARRC
11 headquarters. What was going on is then how could we
12 exploit the arrival of the ARRC Headquarters in 2006 to
13 maximum effect.

14 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Doesn't the deployment of the ARRC
15 headquarters imply there is going to be a substantive
16 deployment of British troops as well?

17 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: No.

18 SIR RODERIC LYNE: So Dannatt got that wrong?

19 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: If I just go through the sequence of
20 events, because it's a pretty complex set of dynamics.
21 In Afghanistan in 2004 UK were, as I mentioned,
22 running two PRTs. The north of the country was being
23 run by NATO, benign environment, effectively doing
24 stability operations. The east of the country was being
25 run by the Americans under a completely separate

1 operation. It was focused on counter-terrorism and AQ.
2 The south of the country there was nobody or hardly
3 anybody. There were a few people operating down there,
4 a few Americans. There was always an aspiration within
5 NATO for the whole of the country -- sorry, step back
6 one -- there was no unity of command. So you had the
7 Americans with certain objectives, NATO with other
8 objectives. There was always an aspiration both on
9 NATO's behalf and on US's behalf to bring the whole of
10 Afghanistan under NATO command, align the objectives,
11 better operation.

12 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Hence the decision for the ARRC
13 headquarters?

14 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Correct. Well, because it was always
15 going to take its place in the rotation.

16 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Okay. So then there is a debate going
17 through, as you said, into 2005, and that leads to
18 a decision beyond the decision to deploy the ARRC that we
19 are going to deploy large numbers of troops into Helmand
20 province. That decision is taken around the middle of
21 2005 from memory and the deployment takes place in the
22 middle of 2006.

23 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Correct.

24 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Now when that decision is taken in the
25 middle of 2005, is it clear to those taking the decision

1 that this implies that we will be out of Iraq by the
2 middle of 2006, which is what Dannatt says it should have
3 been?

4 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: I was just reading his transcript in
5 preparation for this. I think the planning assumption he
6 was given, the transition would proceed and by the end
7 of 2006 we would have about 1,000 people still in Iraq.
8 So a battle group and four sub units I think he actually
9 said in his statement. So there was an expectation that
10 on the progress that we saw when we were making the
11 decisions on Afghanistan that transition would proceed
12 in the way that we thought it would, but also we
13 acknowledged that there was always a risk that we could
14 be delayed and that would put pressure on the force
15 structure, but the feedback or the advice from LAND
16 Command, who were the main deliverer of capability, was
17 that this was manageable.

18 SIR RODERIC LYNE: From what you say does this mean that the
19 decision now taken from 2005 on to increase in
20 Afghanistan becomes a driver for the exit strategy in
21 Iraq to get us down at least to 1,000?

22 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: It becomes a factor, but, as I say, we
23 were -- we were sizing the initial force into
24 Afghanistan to minimise the risk that things got delayed
25 in Iraq. So -- now this is always going to be

1 a difficult judgment to be made, and why people you have
2 interviewed have all said exactly the same thing from
3 CDS downwards. It was trying to balance making sure
4 that we delivered, as we said we were going to deliver
5 in Iraq, but strategically Afghanistan was felt to be
6 important. We had come to a stalemate in effect in
7 Afghanistan. It was important that NATO expansion
8 happened. We had the coincidence of deployment of the
9 ARRC and also the Dutch, the Canadians, ourselves and the
10 Americans all agreeing that in that period of the ARRC's
11 deployment we could put additional forces into
12 Afghanistan and that would complete stage three
13 expansion.

14 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Look at this from another angle now. In
15 October 2005 General Sir Mike Jackson pays one of his
16 visits to Iraq and at this point he concludes, and
17 I quote again:

18 "The possibility of strategic failure" -- this is in
19 his debriefing report when he comes back -- "was
20 mentioned in earnest on this visit more than on any
21 before."

22 Now what had brought us to this point of the
23 possibility of strategic failure? To what extent was it
24 external intervention by Al Qaeda and in our sector
25 perhaps more Iran, which had brought us to that point?

1 To what extent was it the factors you talked about
2 earlier, the internal jockeying for position, the
3 criminality, the sectarianism, the tribal conflict, all
4 the factors you have mentioned, what were the critical
5 factors at this stage?

6 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: All of the above I think.

7 SIR RODERIC LYNE: All of the above, not just two -- it
8 wasn't just the Iranian intervention in MND south-east?

9 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: No, no.

10 SIR RODERIC LYNE: He is talking about particularly, I
11 suppose, the area we are covering.

12 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: No, and I think -- I read that extract
13 from his visit report. I think he was talking about the
14 feeling he was getting in Baghdad.

15 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Yes.

16 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Having talked -- he would have gone
17 and seen General Casey and others up there and talked to
18 our Three Star, because there was a feeling around that
19 period that the violence in Baghdad across in Anbar and
20 the western provinces was getting pretty serious. Al
21 Qaeda were more active, Sunnis more active. Sunni/Shia
22 violence as well. So I think there was a genuine
23 concern of civil war at that stage, which is well
24 documented.

25 SIR RODERIC LYNE: And a civil war essentially is something

1 by definition that is internally-driven. I mean, you
2 can get external interference in a civil war, but it is
3 basically that we had an internal situation with
4 external elements that got out of control.

5 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Yes, I think you can describe it in
6 that manner.

7 SIR RODERIC LYNE: If I can now turn to MND south-east at
8 this point, Basra in particular. We had all these
9 problems in Basra, corruption and the police, Basra
10 council disengaged with us, the 10th division not yet
11 able to operate effectively, ie, increasingly
12 sophisticated, the situation deteriorating in Basra but
13 we were locked into an exit strategy with pressures on
14 it, including, of course, the Afghan factor.

15 Was this really a genuinely conditions-based exit
16 strategy or were we really by now very much trying to
17 achieve it within a set timeframe? Were the conditions
18 going against us?

19 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: I don't think we were trying to
20 achieve it against a set timeframe. Clearly some of the
21 criteria that had been set in the initial transition
22 planning had to be modified. I mean, there is no doubt
23 that we changed the way that we were going to approach
24 it, but I don't think it was driven by a timeline except
25 you have to factor in, and I go back to what we were

1 saying earlier, that we were increasingly being viewed
2 as part of the problem, and that drove the withdrawal
3 out of Baghdad Palace back to the airport at Basra, so
4 that we effectively forced the pace for the Iraqis.
5 They had been trained to a degree. Were they trained as
6 well as we had hoped? Possibly not, but good enough.
7 So it was pushing them to the fore and, dare I say,
8 driving the timeline, because -- and I go back to
9 something I said earlier -- I do think you have a finite
10 amount of time when you are trying to conduct
11 an operation like this because of consent of the people.

12 SIR RODERIC LYNE: We have heard from a number of the senior
13 military personnel who were in post in 2006 and 2007
14 that by this period it was the militias who had control
15 of Basra City rather than the British forces or the
16 Iraqi security forces. Was that the point we had
17 actually reached? I mean, this is towards the end and
18 indeed past the end of your time -- or rough the end of
19 your time as CJO?

20 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: I am not sure I would characterise it
21 as the militias in control. Security clearly had
22 deteriorated quite significantly, but I think it
23 overlooks exactly what the Iraqis were able to do as
24 well. So I would not characterise it like that.

25 SIR RODERIC LYNE: But for the reasons you yourself gave

1 about becoming the target and having, as it were, our
2 window of opportunity having expired, we were certainly
3 not in control at this point.

4 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: No, and there was always going to be
5 a moment or moments when the Iraqis had to take
6 responsibility for their own security?

7 SIR RODERIC LYNE: But to do what we were supposed to be
8 doing in the period running up to the transition to
9 control with the Iraqi security forces and thereafter
10 supporting them, did you feel as CJO that we had
11 sufficient troops on the ground?

12 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Well, during my time as CJO --

13 SIR RODERIC LYNE: If we just take the end of your time as
14 CJO, we are about February/March 2006, General Shirreff
15 told us he only was able to put 200 troops on the ground
16 at any time to cover a city of 1.3 million. Is that
17 enough?

18 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Well, General Shirreff was after my
19 time. I can only speak for General Cooper, who was my
20 last GOC. Again I think I read in his statement
21 notwithstanding the -- what happened after Jameat, he
22 felt that the situation was manageable. If he had felt
23 that he needed more troops he would not have been
24 bashful about flagging it up. They don't become Two
25 Star army generals being shrinking violets.

1 SIR RODERIC LYNE: No. We have seen lots of these
2 unshrinking violets and they have been pretty forthright
3 in their opinions.

4 Final question from me, given that the objective of
5 our transitional strategy that was going, as you said
6 very clearly, to allow us to exit was to be able to hand
7 over to sufficiently trained Iraqi security forces, had
8 we actually achieved that?

9 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Well, we continue to achieve it,
10 because when we withdrew out of all the locations in
11 Basra, consolidated on the airport, we continued to
12 train not only 10 Div. but also 14 Div. as well. In
13 many respects we were able to undertake a much more
14 focused SSR because of that. I can distinctly remember
15 the three tasks and I was Chief of Staff at that stage.
16 Tasks which were left the GOC were ensure that you train
17 10 Div --

18 SIR RODERIC LYNE: We were going on with the training. My
19 question was really were they up to speed in sufficient
20 numbers to do the job?

21 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Yes, they were good enough, otherwise
22 the Americans I don't think would have let us go.

23 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Okay. Thank you.

24 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: Sir Martin. Thank you.

25 SIR MARTIN GILBERT: The advice given to the Defence

1 Secretary by CDS on 19th September 2005, which we
2 published on our website and which you in your statement
3 indicate you made a contribution to, states that the
4 Afghan deployment is still deliverable if the situation
5 in southern Iraq deteriorates. It doesn't offer advice
6 about what happens if the security situation in
7 Afghanistan deteriorates. Was this a scenario which had
8 been considered at PJHQ?

9 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: We had clearly looked at it first of
10 all in terms of constructing the full structure. We
11 recognised it was relatively small. It was relatively
12 light. That was one of the rationales for putting
13 an Apache helicopter in, one of the rationales for
14 making sure that had UK Close Air Support, and I have to
15 say it took quite a lot of convincing of the MoD and
16 Treasury to ensure that had Harriers deployed. I was
17 insistent, and I put my air hat on I am afraid and said,
18 "If you have got a relatively light force, you need to
19 be able to back them up with decent fire power", which
20 is where Apache and close air support aircraft came in.
21 Notwithstanding though that there are the coalition
22 assets in there as well, but the Harrier was the only
23 aircraft that could operate from Kandahar airfield
24 because of the very poor state of the airfield or the
25 surface of the runway.

1 So I think we had a force which given the
2 intelligence and what we knew about Helmand was
3 appropriately sized, and again I think CDS mentioned
4 that we knew very little about Helmand province. There
5 had been about 100 Americans who had been operating in
6 the area. We ourselves put a very small force in to do
7 preliminary operations to try to build up our
8 intelligence picture, but it was acknowledged to be
9 a very limited scale.

10 SIR MARTIN GILBERT: But without --

11 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Until you get there you don't know.

12 SIR MARTIN GILBERT: But without having a serious impact on
13 Iraq.

14 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Yes.

15 SIR MARTIN GILBERT: In your visit report in
16 October 2005, which was declassified last summer,
17 General Jackson's report, which we declassified, he
18 highlighted that the support helicopter fleet was facing
19 shortfalls in Iraq and his air bridge was already
20 creaking. You stated in your statement to us:
21 "The fragility of the RAF's aging air transport
22 fleet undermined the robustness of the strategic air
23 bridge to the region."

24 Bearing in mind that you were going to become Chief
25 of the Air Staff, were you concerned that this was going

1 to stretch UK forces beyond what they could sustain?

2 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Not beyond what they could sustain,
3 but it was clearly going to cause us added pain, and
4 there was relief and there is always relief with
5 a strategic air bridge of using charter aircraft, which
6 is exactly what do, what we did and what we do as well
7 to supplement our own assets, but what that means is it
8 makes life more complicated because those aircraft don't
9 have defensive aid so they can't go into certain
10 airfields and such like so it means the air bridge is
11 made more complex.

12 SIR MARTIN GILBERT: Is that what you did to ensure that it
13 sustained the two operations?

14 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: It is exactly what we did. When
15 I took over CAS we did a complete review of the way we
16 were doing the air bridge to make sure the process was
17 right, make sure that people were treated properly, but
18 that didn't get over the fact that we had old aeroplanes
19 like the DC10, Tristar, which inevitably broke down.
20 That created friction within the force, but that was
21 part of the communications we had to do.

22 I go back also to what I was saying, why
23 I continually said we really do need some more C17s,
24 because they were modern, very effective, huge capacity,
25 all the right equipment on them, and we did get an extra

1 two.

2 SIR MARTIN GILBERT: Thank you.

3 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: Last question from Baroness Prashar.

4 Then I have one or two.

5 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: A couple of questions really on the

6 campaign continuity at PJHQ. We had a lot of evidence

7 of tour length and their impact on the campaign

8 continuity. To what extent was the conduct of the

9 campaign determined by individual GOCs as opposed to by

10 you at headquarters?

11 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: In terms of the overall campaign

12 objectives set by CDS and then down through myself to

13 the GOC, so broad framework that you have seen

14 encapsulated in the directive, that provided a degree of

15 continuity, but there is no doubt we had a debate over

16 how long tour length should be. Army had an internal

17 debate should tour length be four months, six months and

18 came down on six months, but we still had this debate as

19 to how long should commanders stay in theatre. There

20 were army reasons for keeping it at six months. That's

21 what we stuck with. In hindsight and what we have now

22 shifted to is much longer between nine months, a year,

23 maybe even longer for certain key people. At the

24 command level and in the staff where you need that

25 continuity.

1 So I think that is an acknowledged lesson out of
2 Iraq and indeed out of Afghanistan.

3 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: But you personally didn't take any
4 action at the time to address the issue of campaign
5 continuity at the time?

6 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Not in terms of insisting that a GOC
7 stayed for a year, because at that particular stage
8 I didn't think -- I don't think we viewed it as
9 a particular issue and there were good personnel reasons
10 for looking at it from a personnel perspective as well.

11 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: Do you think they would have
12 benefited from having a long continuity?

13

14 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Yes, in terms of some of the
15 commanders, because it gives you an opportunity to build
16 relationships, understand the environment. As I said,
17 I think it's an acknowledged lesson out of the campaign.

18 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: At that time there was more concern
19 about personal issues rather than continuity of the
20 campaign on the ground?

21 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: No, I don't think it was viewed in
22 those stark terms. We were trying to -- for good force
23 generation reasons from the Army and it is predominantly
24 driven by the Army, that is the way they wanted to
25 conduct the rotation of their personnel and their units.

1 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: So there was flexibility on the
2 ground? Was there flexibility on the ground? Could
3 they stay longer if they wished?

4 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: No. I mean, because it was an Army
5 and from the top of the Army and, indeed, endorsed in
6 the MoD that those were the lengths of tours.

7 BARONESS USHA PRASHAR: Thank you.

8 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: You could do shorter ones.

9 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: Coming to a few questions on reflections
10 looking back over this whole set of events, I have
11 a couple of things that the Inquiry were told first by
12 Lord Walker, who summing up the situation in mid-04 to
13 early 05, we recognised that exemplary was dead,
14 adequate was going to be not what most of us wanted but
15 was good enough, and Lieutenant General John Cooper told
16 us pretty much the same, that history will say the
17 British overall effort in southern Iraq could have done
18 better but actually we produced the effect that we set
19 out to do.

20 I wonder what your own assessment would be looking
21 at it?

22 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: I think that is a fair reflection and
23 I think it's a reflection which the US would probably
24 agree with as well, that when we went into Iraq we
25 probably had unrealistic aspirations as to what could be

1 achieved and the speed with which it could be achieved.
2 It plays back again, I do firmly believe you have
3 a finite amount of time to deliver an effect and that
4 feedback into the military only one part of the solution
5 in any of these conflicts, a very important part coming
6 from other Government Departments, how do you make sure
7 they deliver their bit of the campaign in a synchronised
8 manner?

9 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: I would like to pick up that very point,
10 because you mentioned that coordination and delivery of
11 the non-military elements of the campaign plan,
12 reconstruction, governance, nation building, as we now
13 call it, and part of the military mission was to support
14 the development of the reconstruction Government
15 lines of operation.

16 There are two points there I think. One is how far
17 is it given that the responsibility of the military to
18 enable that civilian line to develop, and specifically
19 does that carry with it a necessary acceptance of
20 military responsibility for staff protection on the
21 civilian side when the security situation requires it?

22 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Well, I think you have two options.

23 If you have got civilians out on the ground, who you
24 clearly need because they have the necessary skills, if
25 the security environment is non-benign then you have two

1 options. You either get the military to do it or you
2 employ civilian contractors to provide that level of
3 security, and we are -- we did both effectively in Iraq.

4 I mean, I think that's a reality. That's what you
5 are going to have to do if you're going to operate in
6 that sort of environment.

7 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: Yes. Evidence from Colin Smith, of
8 course, from the policing side was that that projection
9 was not available in the degree needed to make his
10 police support work possible. So it needs to be looking
11 ahead, something that's taken into the broad assessment
12 of what's possible to do both on the military and on the
13 civilian side, but the two together.

14 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: But I think that also goes back to, if
15 you talk specifically about police, what is the
16 character of the individuals that you are going to
17 employ to do police training. Can they protect
18 themselves?

19 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: Yes.

20 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: So, I mean, I think there's an issue
21 there and there will always be an issue with civilians
22 delivering civil effect and such like. You are probably
23 always going to have to protect them.

24 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: I think I would just like to register as
25 we come to a close that we have talked about policing,

1 but the broader context of the whole of the rule of
2 lacks, the justice system is an essential.

3 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: It is, exactly.

4 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: It is not enough --

5 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Sorry, Sir John. If I could just
6 continue?

7 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: Please.

8 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: That's clearly one of the areas where
9 considerable focus was made in terms of building
10 capacities in the ministries, not just the Ministry of
11 Defence the MOI. It was down to the lowest levels. How
12 do you create a prison system? How do you create
13 a justice system?

14 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: Judges, prosecutors, courts.

15 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Yes.

16 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: One other question and then I am going to
17 ask you what reflections you may want to offer.

18 This is apparent disparity we have observed between
19 reports of the situation on the ground and the
20 optimistic nature of assessments made on them.

21 Now it's really whether the information that flows
22 up the system from field theatre through your
23 headquarters up to MoD was actually translating
24 accurately the reality of the ground situation, the
25 situation awareness.

1 Are there lessons to be had here about how you
2 manage that process and where you place responsibility
3 and accountability at different levels?

4 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: I do not -- I genuinely do not think
5 there was a filtering of what was coming from theatre as
6 it went up through the MoD. As I say, there were too
7 many opportunities for senior visitors who were going
8 into theatre, talking to GOC, talking to troops on the
9 ground. They were never bashful about saying what they
10 think is going on.

11 So I don't think there's -- there are just too many
12 opportunities to sort of recalibrate people if there was
13 a view that things were being filtered as they went
14 through. As I say, it wasn't a binary system that
15 a report went from the GOC through me to CDS or the
16 Secretary of State. They went sometimes rather
17 frustratingly direct from GOC to the Prime Minister. So
18 I think there was complete situational awareness and
19 a view of what was going on in theatre.

20 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: Thank you. Last question really to seek
21 two things at the same time. Your final reflections and
22 remembering we're a lessons learned enquiry essentially,
23 though we also have to tell the tale, and also your
24 sense of what your own personal achievement was in your
25 time as CJO through these difficult years.

1 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: I think if inevitably the UK will get
2 involved in types of operations like this in the future,
3 we have to have -- we have to understand that, as I said
4 at the beginning, the military can only deliver part of
5 the solution to this. I think the military is pretty
6 good at delivering the bit of its equation.

7 There are things which have got to be delivered by
8 other people. Police training is one we have spoken
9 about. No need to say any more about that. We have to
10 have a more joined-up way, a method and process of
11 joining up the effort back in Whitehall. I do think
12 that the PCRU was a major step forward and the way it
13 has transformed into the Stabilisation Unit.

14 On a positive move the planning that was done for
15 Afghanistan learnt many lessons from Iraq. We sent out
16 preliminary Ops. We sent out what was an embryonic PRT
17 to try to develop a genuine cross-government campaign
18 plan for Helmand province. So I think that was a major
19 step forward for the UK, but that was at the tactical
20 end of the spectrum. Do we get all government
21 departments marching in a synchronised manner? No.

22 I think there's another issue with funding. I think
23 the UK still has a pretty parsimonious view about
24 funding and it goes again back to something I said. You
25 can put a soldier on every street corner to deliver

1 security, or in effect you can buy security. In reality
2 it's a combination of both, but you have to be much
3 more -- you have to provide greater delegation to the in
4 theatre commander to use money to support his campaign
5 plan.

6 You look at a different approach from the US and the
7 UK, very marked, and I can categorically say the
8 Americans created a greater effect more quickly because
9 they are willing to spend more, and that's something
10 which I think we have to accept is a fact of life.

11 So I think those are sort of major reflections in
12 terms of how we deliver this sort of operation in the
13 future.

14 We do also need to set realistic aspirations,
15 because I think we probably set a gold standard which
16 was never going to be achievable.

17 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: And your own sense of what you were able
18 to do in that time.

19 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Well, a fascinating period, managing
20 not only Iraq but Afghanistan, the remnants of the
21 Balkans at that particular stage, plus other operations
22 which popped up.

23 I think PJHQ, and I was involved nearly at the
24 beginning of PJHQ, is an essential part of our overall
25 force structure. I know some people have different

1 views. I think we would never have been able to cope
2 with the volume and complexity of operations that the UK
3 has managed over the last ten years without that
4 intermediate headquarters, which can act as a robust
5 interface between the MoD, the in theatre force and the
6 Front Line Commands, and it's a coordinating body, and
7 it can deconflate requirements which are brought up from
8 the in theatre force, ensure they are delivered from the
9 front line command resources as effectively as possible.

10 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: And fulfilled that in your judgment in
11 your own time in that role as CJO.

12 ACM SIR GLENN TORPY: Well, I hope to the best of my
13 ability.

14 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: I thank our witness, Air Chief Marshal
15 Sir Glenn Torpy, for a long session. Thank you very
16 much.

17 We resume at 10 o'clock tomorrow morning, when we
18 shall take evidence from Mr Tom McCain in his role as
19 Deputy Head of the Defence and Overseas Secretariat in
20 the Cabinet Office from 1999-2002, and then in the
21 afternoon we shall take evidence from Sir Stephen Wall
22 in his role as the Prime Minister 's adviser on European
23 issues and head of the Cabinet Office's European
24 Secretariat from 2000-2004.

25 With that, I'll close this session. Thank you.

1 (5.55 pm)

2 (Hearing adjourned)

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