



House of Commons
Defence Committee

Iraq: An Initial Assessment of Post- Conflict Operations

Sixth Report of Session 2004–05

Volume I



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Report, together with formal minutes

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The Defence Committee

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Conclusions and recommendations

Pre-war Planning for the Post-Combat Phase

1. The post-conflict situation with which the Coalition was faced did not match the pre-conflict expectations. The strategic centre of the Coalition in Iraq was inevitably the Coalition Provisional Authority in Baghdad. To some extent this complicated the task of British forces in the south. Taken together these factors contributed to delays in post-war stabilisation. It is not difficult to understand how mistakes could have been made in planning and executing Iraq's post-conflict reconstruction. No post-conflict mission in the last 60 years has been as challenging as that which faced the Coalition in June 2003. (Paragraph 26)
2. The considerable success that has been achieved in Iraq—especially in the areas controlled by the UK—can, in large part, be traced to the British forces' ability to adapt to changing circumstances. Suppleness and pragmatism are at the heart of the British forces' professionalism. (Paragraph 26)

The Insurgency

3. It is difficult to avoid concluding that the Coalition, including British forces, were insufficiently prepared for the challenge represented by the insurgency. A wide range of predictions for the post-conflict situation in Iraq were made in advance of the conflict. We are concerned that there is some evidence that the extensive planning, which we know took place in both the US and the UK, did not fully reflect the extent of that range. We also believe that the Coalition should have foreseen that its presence would be resented by some Iraqis, particularly Sunni Arabs and some Shia nationalist elements, and portrayed as cultural and economic imperialism. (Paragraph 36)
4. We note that there is not one anti-Coalition insurgency in Iraq, as frequently portrayed in the media, but several, anti-Coalition, anti-Iraqi Government movements. These different movements are conducting operations with very different objectives. (Paragraph 43)
5. We note that the scale of the anti-Coalition, anti-Iraqi Government insurgency movements was underestimated by the Coalition. At the same time, we acknowledge that a fixation simply on the number of insurgents does not necessarily, by itself, provide insight into their effectiveness and resilience. (Paragraph 47)
6. We are concerned at the continued influx of foreign fighters into Iraq through neighbouring countries, particularly Syria and Iran, and note that this was probably facilitated by the inadequate attention paid to border security by the Coalition immediately following the invasion. More broadly, it appears to us that the Coalition failed to appreciate the potential for an insurgency in Iraq to attract foreign fighters, both from the Middle East and further afield (e.g. Chechnya). (Paragraph 51)
7. We note that the various insurgency movements have been structured, motivated and resourced to inflict significant military and civilian casualties. They have

employed a range of tactics from assassinations to suicide bombings depending on their motivations and goals, but foreign fighters, such as Musab al-Zarqawi and other Islamic extremists, have been particularly skilled at using psychological operations such as kidnappings and beheadings. In the foreseeable future, MNF-I and the Iraqi Government will continue to be attacked, but the various insurgency movements have not developed into a genuine national war of liberation and are unlikely to do so in the future. (Paragraph 56)

8. We commend British forces for their approach to counter-insurgency in their areas of operations. We are convinced that their approach has been a contributing factor in the development of the more permissive environment in southern Iraq, which has resulted in relatively little insurgent activity. We do, however, remain concerned about a number of tactics employed by the MNF-I generally. We urge MoD to use its influence to affect MNF-I's posture and approach. We also encourage MoD to ensure that the Iraqi civilian powers are given a prominent role in the counter-insurgency campaign. Finally, we emphasise and endorse the need to combine politico-economic and military strands of the counter-insurgency campaign. We have been told that this approach was adopted following the appointments of General Casey and Ambassador Negroponte, but we are concerned about the state of civil-military cooperation in the counter-insurgency campaign preceding their appointments, i.e. from May 2003 until June 2004 when Ambassador Bremer was head of the Coalition Provisional Authority. (Paragraph 73)

Challenges in Southern Iraq

9. We note that the relatively stable security environment in southern Iraq has been caused by a number of factors, including population density, topography and the attitude of the Shia population to Coalition forces. But we are also in no doubt that the approach and tactics of the British Armed Forces have played a major part. (Paragraph 84)
10. We condemn any abuse of Iraqi civilians by British forces. We believe, however, that coverage given to these cases has been magnified because British forces are known—both in Iraq and beyond—for the professionalism and sensitivity which they bring to their tasks. As such, we trust that the actions of a few soldiers will not be allowed to overshadow the contribution made by the many soldiers who have served in Iraq. (Paragraph 90)
11. We welcome a review of the circumstances that led to the incidents in March 2003. We have noted previously that the Coalition did not expect—and did not have adequate facilities to deal with—large-scale looting and looters. The consequent pressure on individuals may have been a contributing factor in some of the cases. But we are also concerned that the incidents may have been connected to the way in which soldiers and officers are instructed in their legal obligations during post-conflict operations. We therefore urge the senior officer leading the lessons-learned process established by the Chief of the General Staff to approach the review of the issue of abuse by British service personnel in Iraq as broadly as possible, examining not only the circumstances in Iraq, but also more generic questions related to the

policies, preparations and pre-deployment training provided for Peace Support Operations. (Paragraph 91)

12. We accept that circumstances in Iraq currently call for the limited use of internment of civilians by MNF-I. We believe, however, that this extraordinary power needs to be reviewed regularly and should only be maintained for as long as there is a compelling operational need for it. MNF-I should, as matter of priority, assist the Iraqi Government in developing the capabilities to detain, prosecute and imprison those who are judged to present a serious threat to the country. (Paragraph 101)
13. The cost of UK military operations in Iraq for the three years 2002–03 to 2004–05 is expected to be in excess of £3.1 billion—equivalent to the target acquisition cost for the two future aircraft carriers for the Royal Navy. The 2004–05 Spring Supplementary Estimates provide only limited information on the costs of operations in Iraq. We consider that a more detailed breakdown of costs, for operations involving such substantial sums of money, should be provided in future to facilitate effective parliamentary scrutiny. (Paragraph 109)

Security Sector Reform

14. We conclude that the successful conduct of the elections to the Iraqi Transitional National Assembly on 30 January 2005 will go down as a turning point in Iraq's post-conflict development. Their success demonstrated not only that Iraqis have an appetite for democracy and an enthusiasm to be involved in shaping their country's future, but also that the Iraqi Security Forces have begun to develop the capabilities to provide effective security for their own people. (Paragraph 120)
15. We believe that Security Sector Reform should have been given greater priority by Coalition and British forces before and immediately after the invasion in March 2003. Only belatedly, did the Coalition begin building the Iraqi Security Forces. Even then, a bottom-up, numerically-focused approach meant that the Iraqi military, security, and police did not develop in a well-coordinated manner. We are pleased to see that a more realistic approach to the build-up of the Iraqi Security Forces is now being taken with much greater emphasis on capability, effectiveness and long term sustainability. (Paragraph 129)
16. The need for political oversight by the Iraqi Ministry of Defence over the Iraqi Security Forces is a crucial part of Iraq's post-Saddam Security Sector Reform and we remain concerned about the slow institutional development of the Ministry. (Paragraph 135)
17. We welcome the creation of the Ministerial Committee of National Security as a mechanism for the Iraqi Government to begin taking control of the Iraqi Security Forces and to coordinate military and security policy with political and economic policies. These mechanisms now need to be developed further by the Transitional Iraqi Government as well as at working-level. (Paragraph 139)
18. Parliamentary oversight must be a central feature of the 'new' Iraq's security arrangements, and we call on Coalition partners and the UK Government to provide

assistance to the Transitional National Assembly in establishing mechanisms for parliamentary oversight of the Iraqi Security Forces. (Paragraph 142)

19. Ensuring appropriate oversight over, and coordination mechanisms for, the Iraqi Security Forces that mirror Iraq's decentralised political system is important, but we believe care needs to be taken not to undermine the Iraqi Government's control of its national security apparatus. (Paragraph 145)
20. The command chain of the Iraqi Security Forces cannot yet sustain responsibility for operations carried out in its name. At this stage of the Iraqi Security Forces development this is unsurprising. It is important, however, that we recognise the limitations which this places on the current and future capabilities of the Iraqi Security Forces. (Paragraph 150)

Naval Forces

21. It seems clear to us that MNF-I—and, by extension the UK—will need to assist Iraq in protecting its sea-based assets and territorial waters from terrorist attack or incursion for the foreseeable future. (Paragraph 153)

Iraqi Police Service

22. The Coalition's early efforts at Security Sector Reform—particularly in the civil policing area—were characterised by short-termism and indecision. Weaknesses in that reform programme came close to undermining the success of the initial military operations. We are disappointed that two years after the start of those operations the Government's response to the systemic shortcomings, which contributed to those weaknesses, has amounted only to the establishment of a 'Strategic Task Force' to examine the deployment of UK police to post-conflict situations. (Paragraph 169)
23. We welcome recent initiatives by the Government and the EU to train the Iraqi Police Service in complex policing techniques. We note, however, that assistance to develop Iraq's policing arrangements was not incorporated in the post-conflict planning. As a result, there was an absence of strategic policing advice at senior levels in the Coalition while the policing policy was unduly 'militarised'. Consequently, the kind of police forces that were established in Iraq were unprepared for the complex policing tasks subsequently expected of them. (Paragraph 170)

Iraqi National Intelligence Service

24. We accept that there was good reason for the Coalition not to retain the intelligence apparatus, which Saddam Hussein used to terrorise Iraq's citizens. At the same time, we acknowledge that developing indigenous Iraqi intelligence capabilities is necessary for the Iraqi Security Forces to engage the insurgency. We call on MoD to provide assistance to the Iraqi Transitional Government and National Assembly so that the need for intelligence is balanced with the need to maintain judicial and political oversight of all intelligence activities. (Paragraph 177)

Iraqi Army

25. The Iraqi Army is a central element of the Iraqi Security Forces both at the present time and in the future. We note that time has been lost in establishing the Iraqi Army and that changes in policy have slowed down its full establishment. It will be important to ensure that the future development of the Iraqi Army, including its prospective merger with the Iraqi National Guard, does not compromise its operational effectiveness or organisational coherence. (Paragraph 183)

Judicial Reform

26. Reforming the Iraqi judicial system is key to the country's post-Saddam transition. We welcome MoD's assurance that progress is being made. It is moreover essential that Iraqi Security Forces act within the parameters of the judicial process and it is incumbent upon MNF-I to do what they can to ensure that they do. (Paragraph 190)

Militias

27. Paramilitary militias continue to exercise considerable power in Iraq. We understand the need to prioritise MNF-I's limited forces in the counter-insurgency campaign and we realise that some militias made a contribution to the stabilisation of the country. But militias exist to protect particular sectional interests and we believe that until all Iraq's militias are disbanded, questions will continue to hang over the Iraqi Security Forces' authority. We welcome MoD's assurance that MNF-I will be willing to assist the Iraqi Government in dismantling the militias if circumstances should so require. (Paragraph 195)

Disarmament and Small Arms

28. Understandably, small arms were low on the list of Coalition priorities, which, in the initial stages, were focused on finding weapons of mass destruction and securing heavier conventional weapons. But the well-armed insurgency, which subsequently emerged, suggests that focusing on small arms could have been beneficial in the longer-term and that in the medium-term ways must be found to reduce the very large amounts of small arms in circulation. It also appears that more planning and resources should have been devoted by the Coalition to securing Iraq's many arms depots immediately following the invasion. These arms depots have now become a key source of the insurgency's material for Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and heavy weapons. (Paragraph 200)

Private security companies

29. It is now three years since the Government published its Green Paper on private military companies. We recommend the Government urgently brings forward proposals for the regulation of the overseas activities of private security and military companies. We do not believe that the current reliance on contracts is sufficient. We are well aware of the complexities involved in a licensing regime for individual contracts not least from our experience of the export control regime. We suggest that the FCO should enter into discussions with the Security Industry Authority to find

ways in which its offices could be used. Once a mechanism has been established to regulate these companies, Parliament should consider how best it could undertake the necessary oversight. (Paragraph 211)

Civil-Military issues

30. Non-governmental organisations, the private sector, international organisations, all have a crucial role to play in addressing matters of governance, justice and reconciliation, and economic and social needs in Peace Support Operations. (Paragraph 215)
31. In MND (SE), British forces have carried out their reconstruction-related tasks admirably. But we remain concerned about the support offered by other departments. (Paragraph 220)
32. We are pleased to hear of the improved cooperation between DFID and MoD since the publication of our *Lessons of Iraq* Report in March 2004. In this light, we welcome DFID's participation in planning and command exercises. Once the Government has made a commitment to post-conflict stabilisation, as it has in Iraq, that commitment will only be effectively delivered through the planned and coordinated effort of all the relevant government departments. (Paragraph 227)
33. New ways of describing military activity in the transition from war-fighting to Peace Support Operations, i.e. the "three-block war", illustrate how the Armed Forces are presented with a more complex range of tasks than previously; they require the military to work more closely with NGOs and other non-military actors to fulfil their objectives. This, in turn, requires a level of mutual understanding, which has not always been present. We hope Operation Telic has provided a degree of mutual insight as well as an opportunity to improve cooperation between British forces and key NGOs. (Paragraph 231)

Broadening the Coalition

34. We strongly urge the United Nations to expand its presence in Iraq especially in the southern governorates, and engage actively in the reconstruction effort. (Paragraph 235)
35. We welcome the Government's support for NATO's technical assistance programmes in Iraq. We remain concerned by the slow manning of NATO's mission and the fact that the majority of assistance provided by NATO takes place outside Iraq. We urge the Government to lobby for an expansion of NATO's programmes in-theatre. We are also concerned that the countries contributing to MNF-I may be tempted to 'switch' their support to the NATO mission and thereby deprive the MNF-I of front-line capabilities before the Iraqi Security Forces are ready for their increased responsibilities. We also urge the Government to examine the scope for offering the prospect of Partnership-for-Peace-like arrangements to Iraq. (Paragraph 241)

36. We urge the Government and our NATO allies to give early consideration as to how NATO might be able to assist a democratic Iraq to play some role in a regional security arrangement. (Paragraph 242)
37. We welcome the increased involvement by the EU in the non-financial aspects of Iraq's reconstruction, including the deployment of a mission to train Iraqi judicial, police and prison personnel. We note, however, that this training is to take place primarily outside Iraq and we urge the Government to lobby for an expansion of the EU's programmes in-theatre as soon as possible. (Paragraph 246)

Future Commitment to Iraq

38. Until such time as the private sector is confident that the necessary security can be provided by the Iraqi Security Forces, British troops are likely to be invited by the Iraqi Government to stay in Iraq. This may be a substantial period of time. (Paragraph 254)
39. In light of the state of the insurgency and the condition of the Iraqi Security Forces, and subject to the continuing agreement of the Iraqi Government, it seems likely that British forces will be present in Iraq in broadly similar numbers to the current deployment into 2006. We support this commitment and believe that calls for a withdrawal of British forces are premature. Experience has taught us that, if nation-building exercises, such as that in Iraq, are to succeed, they must have a serious commitment of time, energy, financial resources and political resolve. (Paragraph 255)
40. We welcome the Government's announcement that the lump sum benefits under the existing Armed Forces pension scheme are to be at least doubled. We also welcome the announcement in the Budget that compensation payments for injured serving personnel will not be taxed in future. We regret, however, that these changes are effective only from 6 April 2005. We urge MoD to consider making them retrospective to the start of combat operations in Iraq. (Paragraph 257)

Whitehall Issues

41. The first step to achieve a systematic and multifaceted post-conflict planning process will be for MoD to conduct and publish a comprehensive study on all the lessons of the post-conflict period in Operation Telic. Such a report should cover the post-conflict challenges faced not only by British forces, but also by British civilian organisations that have operated in Iraq alongside the military. In particular it should examine relationships with other Coalition partners, including the United States, and what lessons can be learned for future Coalition operations. Without a clear baseline of the problems encountered, it is near-impossible to correct failures. (Paragraph 260)
42. MoD's own analysis of the international security environment '*Delivering Security in a Changing World*' envisages that the UK will be regularly engaged in stabilisation and post-conflict efforts for the foreseeable future. Successfully meeting this challenge will require effective planning and preparations well in advance of the outbreak of hostilities. The establishment of the Post-Conflict Reconstruction Unit

(PCRU) should contribute significantly to the creation of capabilities to do this. But the PCRU faces a number of challenges in establishing itself. We are concerned that it may not achieve its initial operating capability by the target date of Spring 2005. (Paragraph 270)

43. If the Government manages to establish a cross-departmental capacity to coordinate the UK's post-conflict activities, then the House of Commons will need to consider how best to provide oversight of this work. This is likely to include the Defence, Foreign Affairs and International Development Committees. (Paragraph 271)

1 Introduction

1. In our report *Lessons of Iraq*, published on 16 March 2004, we examined the British military contribution to operations against Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq in 2003. We concluded that the United Kingdom's (UK) military operation in Iraq was a significant achievement, a demonstration that the soldiers, airmen and sailors of the British Armed Forces remain among the best in the world. We did, however, point out that a more capable enemy could have exposed serious weaknesses in the preparedness and resilience of UK forces. We also noted that preparations for pre-war planning for the post-conflict period by both the United Kingdom and the United States, could have been improved.

Developments in Iraq

2. On 8 June 2004, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1546 endorsing the formation of an Interim Iraqi Government and on 28 June 2004, the Coalition Provisional Authority ended the country's occupation and transferred authority to the Interim Iraqi Government headed by Interim Iraqi Prime Minister Iyad Allawi.

3. On 30 January 2005 elections were successfully held to the 275-person Transitional National Assembly, which is charged under the Transitional Administrative Law with drafting the country's constitution.¹ Shia, Kurdish and Sunni parties participated in the elections and those, mainly Sunni parties, who did not support the elections, are now reportedly being drawn into the political process. The proposed constitution will be submitted to a nationwide referendum no later than 15 October 2005. If the Iraqi voters approve the document, national elections based on the provisions of the new constitution will be held by 15 December 2005, and a new government will take office on 31 December 2005. The first meeting of the Transitional National Assembly was held on 16 March 2005.

4. UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1546 also extended the mandate of the Coalition's military force in Iraq under the title Multi-National Force-Iraq (MNF-I) and its subordinate command called Multinational Corps Iraq.² Until then, Coalition forces had operated in what was known as Combined Joint Task Force 7, whose mandate derived from UNSCR 1511.³ The Coalition comprises some 25 countries which have deployed forces to Iraq. The United States, however, remains by far the principal contributor with over 150,000 service personnel out of a total of around 175,000.⁴ Annexed to UNSCR 1546 was an exchange of letters between Prime Minister Iyad Allawi and United States Secretary

1 Nearly 8.5 million Iraqis voted, which represents 58% of the registered electorate. The United Iraqi Alliance will take up 140 seats, the Kurdish parties came second in the poll, winning 75 seats, and Interim Prime Minister Iyad Allawi's party won 40 seats.

2 In terms of a division of responsibilities, Multinational Force Iraq focuses on the strategic aspects of the military presence while Multinational Corps Iraq focuses on the tactical aspects—the day-to-day military operations.

3 United Nations Security Council Resolution 1546 stipulates that the mandate of the Coalition's forces "... shall be reviewed at the request of the Government of Iraq or 12 months from the date of this Resolution". The Resolution was adopted on 8 June 2004.

4 As of 18 February 2005, in addition to the UK and US, the contributions were Italy (3116), Netherlands (1368), Denmark (485), Lithuania (131), Czech Republic (102), Romania (747), Japan (536), Bulgaria (495), Mongolia (130), Poland (2500), Slovakia (105), Ukraine (1589), Albania (74), Kazakhstan (29), Macedonia (34), Azerbaijan (154), Estonia (47), Latvia (117), El Salvador (380), South Korea (3700), Australia (282), Armenia (46). Norway retains 9 staff officers in Multinational Division South East. Ev 127

of State Colin Powell outlining the terms of the relationship between the Interim Iraqi Government and MNF-I.

5. Progress in Iraq has come at a considerable human cost. Several thousands of Iraqis are believed to have died from the beginning of the invasion in March 2003. The United States have reported 1500 fatalities in its own forces. Eighty-five British service personnel have lost their lives. We extend our deepest sympathies to the families of those who have lost their lives in Iraq.

The UK Contribution

6. The UK provides the leadership of MNF-I's Multi-National Division (South-East) (MND(SE)) which covers the southern Iraqi provinces of Basra, Maysan, Dhi Qar and Al Muthanna. As well as the UK, MND (SE) includes Italian, Norwegian, Romanian, Danish, Dutch, Czech, Portuguese, and Lithuanian troops. On 14 March 2005, the Minister for the Armed Forces informed the House that as of 1 January 2004, some 8,700 British personnel were deployed on Operation Telic, of which some 7,650 were serving within Iraq. On 1 January 2005, some 9,150 were deployed, of which some 8,000 were serving within Iraq.⁵ The figures can rise or fall by a matter of several hundreds depending on circumstances. The UK has also retained significant representation in the US-led MNF-I headquarters even after the draw down of British force levels (in proportion to US Force levels) following the end of major combat operations; significantly, a three-star Senior British Military Representative serves as Deputy Commander of MNF-I and a British two-star general serves as Deputy Commander of Multinational Corps.⁶

The Importance of Post-Conflict Operations

7. The transition from war-fighting to peace enforcement has proved to be one of the major challenges for MNF-I and British forces more generally. We believe that there are important lessons to be learned both by MoD and by the other institutions in the UK's foreign and security policy nexus. The opening line of MoD's Peace Support Operations Doctrine, updated in June 2004, notes: "For the foreseeable future, United Kingdom foreign policy is likely to underpin its conflict prevention activities with the regeneration or sustainment of fragile states". Similarly in the United States the Defence Science Management Board wrote that the Department of Defence and the Department of State needed "to make stabilization and reconstruction (S&R) missions one of their core competencies".⁷ Closely related to this, the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit has published a report *Investing in Prevention* in which it notes that "instability and crises are likely to be an enduring part of the international landscape for the foreseeable future".⁸ It goes on to note that "looking ahead, stabilising future trends are likely to be counterbalanced by a number

5 HC Deb, 16 February 2005, col 29W

6 There have been three British Deputy Commanders of MNF-I: Major-General Freddy Viggers, HC Deb, 27 May 2004, col 1725, Lieutenant General John McColl and Lieutenant General Sir John Kiszely.

7 'Transition to and from Hostilities', *Defence Science Board*, 2004 Summer Study, December 2004

8 *Investing in Prevention: A Prime Minister's Strategy Unit Report to The Government*, February 2005

of powerful destabilising forces”.⁹ This will make it imperative not only to engage in preventive diplomacy, but also to improve the United Kingdom’s post-conflict capabilities.

Our Inquiry

8. In light of the continuing UK military contribution in Iraq, we decided to continue our inquiry into Operation Telic and the wider effort of which it is a part. Operations since May 2003 saw the Coalition confronted by a range of post-conflict challenges many of which it seemed not to have foreseen. In this report we examine the main strands of the UK military’s work in Iraq and, at the same time, seek to identify the weaknesses in the UK’s capabilities for managing post-conflict situations. As Operation Telic was part of a larger, US-led effort and the United Kingdom was an a Occupying Power alongside the United States, we have approached the relevant issues from an Iraq-wide perspective, highlighting, where relevant, the differences in the UK area of operations.

9. Unlike *Lessons of Iraq*, this inquiry is not a comprehensive examination of all the post-conflict changes confronted by UK forces nor of all the generic post-conflict lessons that operations in Iraq have—or should have—yielded. Nor is it a chronological account of developments in Iraq since May 2003. The parliamentary calendar did not permit such a far-reaching approach.

10. We visited Iraq in May and December 2004. These were our second and third visits to the theatre of operations: we first visited Iraq in July 2003. The visits afforded us a unique opportunity to see for ourselves the work and conditions of UK service personnel. The value of these visits was aptly described by the Minister for the Armed Forces, Rt Hon Adam Ingram MP, when he told us: “I appreciate when you do the visits, as I do, that you pick up a lot of ground truth and a lot of reality of what is happening which does not always match up to the briefing one gets”.¹⁰ We also visited UN headquarters in New York and the US Administration in Washington in March 2005 to discuss issues about Iraq’s transition with UN and US officials.

11. We would like to express our gratitude to all those involved in arranging our visits. Our admiration for the professionalism and dedication of UK service personnel was only further enhanced by what we saw.

12. On 23 June 2004 we took evidence from MoD officials on preparations for the transfer of authority, scheduled for 30 June 2004. On 2 November 2004 we took evidence from the Secretary of State on the deployment of the Black Watch to Camp Dogwood.

13. In early 2005 we took evidence from Rt Hon Adam Ingram MP, the Minister for the Armed Forces, Mr Martin Howard, Director-General, Operational Policy, MoD, and Dr Roger Hutton, Director, Joint Commitments. Lieutenant General John McColl, who served as Deputy Commander MNF-I, Major-General Bill Rollo who served as General Officer Commanding MND (SE) and Major General Nick Houghton Assistant Chief of Defence Staff (Operations) (ACDS (OPS)) were also examined.

9 *Ibid*

10 Q 591

14. We heard from Mr Jim Drummond, former Iraq Director, Department for International Development, Mr Stephen Pattison, Director of International Security at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Mr Stephen Rimmer, Director Policing Policy at the Home Office and Chief Constable Paul Kernaghan from the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO). We also took evidence from Dr Owen Greene from Bradford University. We are grateful to all of those who submitted evidence, both written and oral. We also express our thanks to our specialist advisers: Mr Paul Beaver, Professor Michael Clarke, Rear Admiral Richard Cobbold, Air Vice Marshal Professor Tony Mason, Dr Andrew Rathmell and Brigadier Austin Thorp. We are grateful to them.

2 Pre-War Planning for the Post-Conflict Phase

15. The combat phase of Operation Telic did not lead to a permissive environment in which the country's post-war rehabilitation could proceed in an orderly and planned manner; but rather to a much more complicated and unpredictable range of circumstances too frequently characterized by violence and civil disorder. The Coalition's honeymoon period was shorter than most had expected before the beginning of hostilities. As Mr Martin Howard, the Director-General of Operational Policy in MoD, told us: "We found ourselves in a situation where there was a very large security vacuum. There was a vacuum in other areas as well in terms of civil governance".¹¹ In *Lessons of Iraq* we concluded that while the Government clearly undertook considerable post-conflict planning in the run-up to military action, a number of important areas were overlooked and the entire planning process was affected by misjudgements about the nature of the task at hand.

16. Our original assessment was echoed by the National Audit Office, which concluded in their report on Operation Telic: "Our experience from the field visit to Iraq was that the Government had not fully anticipated the consequences of a total collapse of the Saddam regime and what the United Kingdom's obligations would be once hostilities had ceased".¹² The Government, in its response to *Lessons of Iraq*, conceded that the post-conflict planning was not sufficiently comprehensive and agreed that a comprehensive effort could have jeopardized Coalition-building efforts in early 2003. It argued: "we felt that overt planning for the post-conflict would make it appear that military action was inevitable (which it was not) and could seriously prejudice ongoing attempts to reach a diplomatic solution".¹³

Key Planning Misjudgements

17. The Coalition's strategists believed that ordinary Iraqis would welcome liberation from dictatorship, and they seemingly overestimated the ease of the transition from war to post-conflict rehabilitation. More specifically, they appear to have made five key planning misjudgements. We identified three of these in our report *Lessons of Iraq*; two more have since become apparent.

18. First, instead of the grateful, amenable population, which the Coalition had apparently hoped to find, many Iraqis sought actively to take advantage of the power vacuum that followed the combat phase. Regime supporters, military personnel in civilian clothing, and irregular forces such as the Fida'iyin Saddam ("Saddam's Martyrs") conducted a harassing campaign in the third week of March 2003 against Coalition forces.¹⁴ The looting which

11 Q 309

12 'Ministry Of Defence Operation TELIC—United Kingdom Military Operations In Iraq', Report By The Comptroller And Auditor General, 11 December 2003

13 Defence Committee, First Special Report of Session 2003–04, *Lessons of Iraq: Government Response to the Committee's Third Report of Session 2003–04*, HC 635, para 174

14 "The Sunni Insurgency in Iraq," Ahmed Hashim, Middle East Institute Policy Brief, 15 August 2003.

followed has been well-documented.¹⁵ Mr Jim Drummond, former Director, Iraq Directorate, Department for International Development, told us: "... should we across government—and indeed across the Coalition—have anticipated better that there would be large-scale looting? Hindsight is wonderful, but yes, I guess we should".¹⁶

19. Second, and perhaps most importantly, the Coalition underestimated the insurgency—or, at least, its potential. Even when signs appeared that the general disorder was being orchestrated into more organized anti-occupation activities, the Coalition seemed to deny or underestimate the threat, and to have believed for a long time that killing or capturing Saddam Hussein and a number of his allies and relatives, would solve the problem. Consequently, the Coalition misjudged the impact of some of its decisions. In his evidence to us, Major (Ret) Christopher Lincoln-Jones, a military analyst, highlighted some of the mistakes that allowed the insurgency to take root, including failure to establish order after the collapse of central authority, and a failure to re-establish an infrastructure that was able demonstrably to improve the lot of the Iraqi population.¹⁷

20. Third, the Coalition seemed to be unable to decide what to do about the Iraqi military and security forces. On the one hand, Coalition planners seemed to expect that a significant portion of Iraq's police and army would emerge after the combat phase able and willing to be transformed and democratised and quickly deployed to assist the Coalition in its stabilisation duties. Referring to the MoD's perceptions in March 2003, Mr Howard said: "I was certainly aware of intelligence assessments of the possible course of conflict if it should start. I do not recall anything from those assessments which suggested the complete disintegration and disappearance of the Iraqi security forces that we actually experienced".¹⁸ On the other hand, there seems to have been considerable pressure on the Coalition Provisional Authority, particularly in Washington, to disband Iraq's military forces entirely and re-build the security forces from scratch. In June 2003, Ambassador Paul Bremer, Head of the Coalition Provisional Authority, disbanded the 400,000-strong Iraq army.¹⁹ As a result, insufficient effort was put into developing the Iraqi Security Forces to deal with, or even assist the Coalition in dealing with, the insurgency. It appears that only gradually, as the insurgency developed and the extent of the threat to Iraq's post-conflict stabilisation became apparent, did the Coalition address in earnest the development of the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF).

21. Even then, the process of building the ISF was slow and *ad hoc*. General Houghton conceded as much: "the nature in which the Iraq security forces were being equipped, trained and developed did have an element of the *ad hoc* about it. It was being driven bottom-up in response to local circumstances".²⁰ This, and the original belief that more elements of Saddam Hussein's forces would remain in existence than turned out to be the

15 Defence Committee, Third Report of Session 2003–04, *Lessons of Iraq*, HC 57-I, paras 376ff; Foreign Affairs Committee, Seventh Report of Session 2003–04, *Foreign Policy Aspects of the War against Terrorism*, HC 441-I, paras 4ff

16 Q 433

17 Not printed

18 Q 311

19 'Bremer defends disbanding Iraqi Army; Ex-US administrator: Immediate postwar decisions were correct', *Reuters*, 12 January 2005

20 Q 17

case, led to more delays in building the ISF. It has also meant that priorities for the development of the ISF focused on recruitment targets and getting ‘boots on the street’ rather than a mission-oriented, centrally-controlled institution-building process.

22. Fourth, the Coalition did not appear to plan adequately for the scope of the reconstruction task that lay before it nor did it seem to realise how quickly it would be expected to act to ameliorate the situation. Even with knowledge of the extent of Saddam Hussein’s under-investment in the Kurdish north and the Shia south from the end of the 1991 Gulf War, the extent of the dilapidation of Iraqi infrastructure was not fully appreciated and the Coalition was therefore not able to restore basic services during the first few crucial months following the invasion when many Iraqis’ expectations of the Coalition were still being formed. Mr Drummond told us that planning for the humanitarian phase of the operation was successful and that many of the humanitarian issues the Coalition thought it might face did not, in fact, transpire. This meant, however, that the Coalition was confronted with the need to undertake reconstruction activities much sooner than it expected.²¹

23. Finally, the Coalition underestimated the number of troops required to meet the challenges of Iraq’s post-conflict transition. Commenting on this, Professor Schlomo Avinieri, Herbert Samuel Professor of Political Science at The Hebrew University in Jerusalem, wrote in his submission to us: “The Coalition planned for one kind of war—which it has won handily. It was totally unprepared for the kind of war which it found itself eventually confronted with”.²² Other analysts we have heard from have made the same point, derived from the same set of doctrinal assumptions: that technologically advanced forces, capable of high-tempo operations do not necessarily need large numbers when set against a technologically inferior enemy, but will need large numbers to stabilize the post-conflict phase.²³ Colonel (Ret) Christopher Langton, Head of the Defence Analysis Department at the Institute for International Strategic Studies elaborated on this point:

Another well-documented shortfall in the Coalition’s military operation in Iraq has been in failure to deploy the right number of personnel to carry out the myriad tasks that characterise this phase of the conflict. Apart from counter insurgency, nation-building and reconstruction are manpower-intensive military activities as are most operations in which the civilian population is the critical element. The US administration was convinced that military technological solutions would overcome the Iraqi military, and then the Iraqi nation would fall in behind the Coalition in rebuilding the country, despite the well-known fact that the military leadership requested many more troops. Therefore, although they were right to a greater or lesser extent on the first point concerning numbers for the military campaign, a miscalculation of the cultural dimension in Iraq, and the nature of post-conflict operations allowed the insurgency to grow whilst there were insufficient numbers to deal with it.²⁴

21 Q 428

22 Ev 138

23 Not printed

24 Ev 140–141

24. Numbers by themselves are not a ‘silver bullet’ solution and any forecasts of troop numbers made before the post-war situation develops would be, by their very nature, speculative.²⁵ Furthermore, assuming that problems emerge only as a result of policy errors or strategic misjudgements, such as inadequate troop levels, is wrong. As Dr James Jay Carafano, of the Heritage Foundation, has written:

The enemy gets a vote, and how indigenous opposition forces or outside agitators choose to defy the occupation authorities will, in part, determine the course of events.²⁶

25. Nonetheless, the Government to an extent accepted that the level of forces was not sufficient for the task that they faced. In its response to our report, *Lessons of Iraq*, the Government wrote:

The establishment of basic law and order was initially hindered both by the other demands on Coalition manpower, including continuing combat operations, and by the unexpectedly large-scale disintegration of local Iraqi authorities including the police...²⁷

26. The post-conflict situation with which the Coalition was faced did not match the pre-conflict expectations. The strategic centre of the Coalition in Iraq was inevitably the CPA in Baghdad. To some extent this complicated the task of British forces in the south. Taken together these factors contributed to delays in post-war stabilisation. It is not difficult to understand how mistakes could have been made in planning and executing Iraq’s post-conflict reconstruction. No post-conflict mission in the last 60 years has been as challenging as that which faced the Coalition in June 2003. Mr Drummond acknowledged this, telling us that “the challenges that we faced in Iraq were more difficult than we have faced in other places”.²⁸ The considerable success that has been achieved in Iraq—especially in the areas controlled by the UK—can, in large part, be traced to the British forces’ ability to adapt to changing circumstances. Suppleness and pragmatism are at the heart of the British forces’ professionalism.

27. In this report we focus on the Coalition’s response to the insurgency and Security Sector Reform.

25 ‘Reconstructing Iraq: Insights, Challenges, and Missions for Military Forces in a Post-Conflict Scenario’, Strategic Studies Institute, February 2003, Conrad C Crane & W Andrew Terrill

26 ‘Post-Conflict Operations from Europe to Iraq’, James Jay Carafano, Heritage Institution, Lecture No. 844

27 *Lessons of Iraq: Government Response to the Committee’s Third Report of Session 2003–04*, First Special Report of Session 2003–04, HC 635, para 183

28 Q 428

3 The Insurgency

Planning and Expectations

28. The range of scenarios planned for by the US has been widely reported in the press. We were also briefed on them by the State Department when we visited in February 2003. Clearly given the fact that the US was the lead element in the Coalition the effectiveness or otherwise of its planning was particularly important for the post-conflict phase. The UK Government anticipated a range of post-conflict insecurity and disorder scenarios, including looting and ‘anti-occupation’ sentiment. The prospects for a major insurgency, however, “were not the main focus of [MoD’s] attention”.²⁹ Some type of insurgency, or anti-Coalition terrorist activity was anticipated. Lord Butler’s report on *Review of Intelligence on Weapons of Mass Destruction* refers to the Joint Intelligence Committee’s (JIC) warning of the possibility of terrorist attacks on Coalition forces—specifically related to individuals associated with Al Qaeda operating in Baghdad.³⁰ Similarly, MoD have told us that: “Specific threats to Coalition Forces were expected from Al Qaeda-linked or sympathetic terrorists and from criminal violence”³¹; and a leaked FCO document, referred to in a press article in September 2004, was reported to have warned of an insurgency, which could persist for a long time.³² It is clear therefore that some level of insurgency or terrorist activity was foreseen. However, there is no evidence that plans were developed to meet the range of possible terrorist threats and MoD concede that “an insurgency of the scale that subsequently developed was not foreseen before the end of major combat operations.”³³ The Prime Minister told the Liaison Committee on 8 February 2005: “... you cannot foresee the particular nature of the insurgency and actually its link with international terrorism”.³⁴ The Minister for the Armed Forces similarly told us:

... no matter what you plan for and see if it could happen, you almost always tend to be surprised at the intensity and the focus and the direction and ability and intelligence that they [the insurgents] bring to all of this.³⁵

29. In a memorandum submitted to us, MoD conceded that only limited effort was spent planning for contingencies, including the prospects of an insurgency:

The prospects for a major insurgency were not the main focus of the MoD’s attention at the time and there was very limited relevant intelligence ... an insurgency on the scale that subsequently developed was not foreseen before the end of major combat operations.³⁶

29 Ev 145

30 Rt Hon The Lord Butler of Brockwell, *Review of Intelligence on Weapons of Mass Destruction*, HC (2003–04) 898, paras 483–484

31 Ev 145

32 Fresh hostilities don’t alter the justice of deposing Saddam, *The Daily Telegraph*, 21 September 2004

33 Ev 145

34 Liaison Committee, 8 February 2005, HC 381-i, Q 34 (uncorrected evidence)

35 Q 609

36 Ev 145

30. Many commentators, especially in the United States, have been very critical of this underestimation of the insurgency.³⁷ Professor Anthony Cordesman of the Centre for Strategic and International Studies has been particularly unfavourable:

As late as July 2004, the Administration's senior spokesmen still seemed to live in a fantasyland in terms of their public announcements, perception of the growing Iraqi hostility to the use of Coalition forces, and the size of the threat. They were still talking about a core insurgent force of only 5,000, when many Coalition experts on the ground in Iraq saw the core as at least 12,000–16,000.³⁸

31. Many analysts now consider that parts of the insurgency were planned and prepared by Saddam Hussein and that the Coalition's strategists should at least have predicted the emergence of a type of insurgency if not its exact nature. In his evidence to us, Professor Avinieri argued:

What appears not to have been imagined was that Saddam would decide not to waste his efforts on a futile conventional defence—but prepare for a War After the War—i.e. a guerilla war, in which the resources, manpower and expertise of the Iraqi military machine in its different formations would be switched to a kind of warfare which would make Coalition control of the country impossible. Such guerilla tactics would make not only holding elections impossible, but would further alienate the population from their 'liberators'.³⁹

32. He goes on to argue his case:

It is obvious that the current violence in Iraq is the war Saddam and his regime have been preparing. What the Coalition—and the Interim Iraqi Government set up by it—are now facing is not a spontaneous rebellion by the Iraqi "people" against "occupation". It is the rear-guard war waged, quite successfully, by the Arab Sunni minority to hold on to its power by making a relatively smooth transition to another form of government impossible. The sophistication of the attacks, their coordination, the training of suicide bombers, the availability of materiel and intelligence, all point to the professional branches of Saddam's security apparatus which has just gone underground, living—in Maoist fashion—like fish in water.⁴⁰

33. This may be stretching a reasonable argument too far. First, Saddam Hussein's regime did, in fact, make a number of stands against the advancing Coalition and did not immediately dissolve its forces into the population in order to fight an insurgency or more conventional urban warfare. In some cases, rather than retreat into Baghdad and wait for the advancing Coalition, Saddam Hussein decided to mount a defence in the south. And when the forward deployments initially slowed the Coalition's advance, Saddam Hussein reinforced his forces in southern Iraq thus emptying Baghdad of the commands and forces necessary to stage an urban defence or an insurgency. Second, the fact that Saddam Hussein's military establishment dissolved (or was dissolved) and that many of its former

37 *'Insurgency In Iraq: A Historical Perspective'*, Ian F W Beckett, Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, January 2005

38 *'The Developing Iraqi Insurgency: Status at End-2004'*, Anthony H Cordesman, 22 December 2004

39 Ev 138

40 *Ibid*

members associated with each other and used their skills, and equipment does not mean that they reconstituted themselves *en masse* and in a coherent organisational form. In fact, evidence suggests that their coherence was exaggerated by the Coalition itself in the early stages of the counter-insurgency campaign. Then, as we noted earlier, many believed that once Saddam Hussein and his sons were captured, the insurgency would fizzle out. This turned out to be an erroneous assumption as it overestimated the homogeneity of the insurgency.

34. Major Lincoln-Jones supported the view that the insurgency could have been predicted:

It is likely that the Saddam regime had laid plans for post-invasion ‘guerrilla’ activity. This is normal for any country faced with an invasion—Britain in World War Two is an example. Furthermore, Saddam knew he would not prevail in the face of a vastly superior professional and modern force, making it more likely that plans for the post-invasion phase were well-established, and centred on the organs of power which had governed the country such as the Special Security Organisation (SSO),—a body which controlled a highly capable internal security network, but was also constituted a military body well-trained in several aspects of warfare, both conventional and unconventional.⁴¹

35. Colonel Langton of the Institute for International Strategic Studies agrees, but paints a more nuanced picture:

In a country where loyalties follow ethnic and religious lines rather than any unified idea of nationhood, the overthrow and the attempt to dismantle the Ba’athist regime by the US-led Coalition was bound to raise the real possibility of a backlash or an insurgency by those who were overthrown. The same people—the Sunni Ba’athists—provided the web which held the disparate ethnic and religious groups together as a nation; and when they were overthrown, the state structures disappeared along with the brutal stability they provided. The Sunni-led army melted away with its weapons only to re-emerge as an insurgent base with the knowledge and capability to arm itself from the many arms dumps across the country which were left unsecured by the Coalition forces.⁴²

36. He goes on to argue:

Also, fuelling the insurgent campaign is an influx of foreign fighters from neighbouring and other countries who were sucked into the vacuum created by a successful military campaign which was not followed up by a robust post-conflict plan.⁴³

It is difficult to avoid concluding that the Coalition, including British forces, were insufficiently prepared for the challenge represented by the insurgency. A wide range of predictions for the post-conflict situation in Iraq were made in advance of the conflict. We are concerned that there is some evidence that the extensive planning, which we know took place in both the US and the UK, did not fully reflect the extent of that

41 Not printed

42 Ev 139

43 *Ibid*

range. We also believe that the Coalition should have foreseen that its presence would be resented by some Iraqis, particularly Sunni Arabs and some Shia nationalist elements, and portrayed as cultural and economic imperialism.

Composition of the Insurgency

37. The Foreign Affairs Committee concluded in July 2004:

the violence in Iraq stems from a number of sources, including members of the former regime, local Islamists, criminal gangs and al Qaeda. Iraq has become a 'battle ground' for al Qaeda, with appalling consequences for the Iraqi people.⁴⁴

38. Colonel Langton agrees with this view of the insurgency, but sees Sunni disaffection as core to the problem:

The seeds are sown amongst the disaffected which in this case, means the Sunni population dispossessed of its previous standing and led by officials from the Saddam years. The US is seen as the main enemy, and its efforts to improve security and prosperity are the target.⁴⁵

39. This concept of the insurgency—as a marriage of convenience between a number of different forces, including Al Qaeda terrorists, former Baathists, Islamic extremists and ordinary criminals—was echoed in the evidence we took from MoD. Mr Howard, the MoD's Director-General of Operational Policy, told us:

I think it is a complex insurgency, in the sense that it is not a single unified group of people. There are a number of components within it. At one end of the spectrum is a sense of perhaps alienation and disenfranchisement among the Sunni population, which in some cases spills over into relatively low-level violence. It is worth remembering that Iraq has traditionally been a very weapons-rich society—there have always been lots of weapons around—and also, to some extent, that may manifest itself in support and sympathy for those who are at the more extreme end. That moves forward through groups of people who were part of the former regime, who, again, even more so, feel disenfranchised and, moreover, perhaps have the training and residual organisation to carry out attacks. That then, again going through the extremes, moves into people like the Zarqawi's group, who are motivated by a wider Jahadi Islamist agenda, if you wish to characterise it that way, who have recently associated themselves with al-Qaeda. These are people, as we all know, who have carried out the most appalling atrocities and the most devastating attacks. The fourth identifiable component would be Shia extremists like Muqtada al-Sadr, who have been responsible for violence but who currently seem to be more interested in taking part in the political process—though we will have to watch that. Swirling all around that is the criminality and violence associated with that, and some of that overlaps.

44 HC (2003–04) 441-I, para 20

45 Ev 139

40. From his position in Baghdad at the height of the insurgency, General McColl also saw it as a movement composed of different elements. He told us:

The first element is what I would describe as the Shia militias, epitomised by al-Sadr and his people. They, in the uprising in April and then in the uprising in August, were dealt, I think, a fairly serious blow—and one can see that in some of the ways in which they have modified their behaviour—and whilst I think they will continue to be a threat, particularly in the South, I do not think they will represent a strategic threat. The second element is Jihadists, epitomised by Zarqawi and his group. I think that, as long as there is a significant Western presence in Iraq, we will continue to see significant Jihadist activity. Having said that, during the time I was there we analysed the number of attacks that were emanating from Zarqawi and his people, and it was around one per cent of the total attacks. So, whilst they are very high profile and whilst they are very effective in terms of grabbing the headlines, in terms of the numbers of attacks they are actually quite limited. Which brings us on to the third group, which is the former regime elements. I think, by common consent, over the last year they have developed in terms of coherence and sophistication. I do not think we can deny that. They are trying to represent themselves as freedom fighters, in terms of the western and multinational force and Coalition presence, and, in doing so, bind themselves with the other two groups that I have just mentioned.⁴⁶

41. In his role as General Officer Commanding of MND (SE), General Rollo had a different perspective on the insurgency's composition:

... while we all share an analysis of the three different groups within the insurgency, they do of course apply at different levels in different places.⁴⁷

42. He went on to explain that al-Sadr and the Mahdi Army were the biggest problem in MND (SE), and that they could be dealt with by a combination of force and political pressure. Speaking first about the foreign fighters, such as Musab al-Zarqawi, and then about the larger groupings of Sunni insurgents in MND (SE) General Rollo told us:

no attraction there, no apparent interest in coming down there, and not much of a welcome to be had, for fairly obvious reasons: he does not like the Shia; they do not like him. The FRE [Former Regime Elements]—again, Sunni-based—at present, certainly in terms of activity, at very low levels: one or two bomb making teams, a trickle of incidents. They do not go away, every now and again you catch some of them, and then nothing happens for a period—which I think reflects on the fact that the numbers you are dealing with are small, because a relatively low level of attrition on them appears to have quite a major effect on their activity.⁴⁸

Because the insurgency consists of several insurgency movements each with its own set of motivations and goals, the 'insurgency' has no unified leadership, agreed-upon strategy, or commonly accepted ideology. The disparate elements of the insurgency are only united by anti-Coalition sentiment, not a vision for the future of the country.

46 Q 354

47 Q 361

48 *Ibid*

43. We note that there is not one anti-Coalition insurgency in Iraq, as frequently portrayed in the media, but several, anti-Coalition, anti-Iraqi Government movements. These different movements are conducting operations with very different objectives.

Size of the Insurgency

44. There is considerable discrepancy in estimates of the size of the insurgency. The CIA was reported to believe the insurgency to number about 50,000⁴⁹ men but this has been contradicted by General John Abizaid, Commander of U.S. Central Command, who estimated the insurgency's size to be approximately 5,000 individuals.⁵⁰ Some analysts have argued that the volume of suspected insurgents—22,000 in July 2004—who have been cycled through the Coalition-run prisons give an indication of the size of the insurgency.⁵¹

45. There are a number of reasons for the discrepancy in numbers. First, as noted above, there is not one insurgency, but several sources of insurgent activity. Some, like the Mahdi Army wax and wanes in size and strength according to the political process. Second, there is a disagreement over definition. The CIA's figure probably includes non-combat supporters such as couriers, spies, etc. General John Abizaid's figure probably counts only 'trigger pullers'.⁵² In his submission to us, Colonel Langton highlighted this distinction of full-time and part-time insurgents, telling us that some insurgents are probably paid as full-time employees, whereas others work more like part-timers. He noted that 'part-time' insurgents were probably used for one operation, for example to drive, engage in reconnaissance, deception, or perhaps the planting an explosive device. Following an operation or 'job', a part-time insurgent will return to his or her previous life and "become indivisible from the normal Iraqi civilian".⁵³ 'Full-time' insurgents, according to Colonel Langton, probably handle the more complex and sensitive operations. This distinction, however, is not universally accepted. Professor Anthony Cordesman, of the Centre for Strategic and International Studies has written that the figure of 5,000 insurgents "was never more than a wag and is now clearly ridiculous".⁵⁴

46. We asked our MoD witnesses to provide an estimate of the size of the insurgency given the reported discrepancies in the publicly available figures. They were reluctant to do so. Mr Howard explained that MoD conducted intelligence assessments of the insurgency, but he did not think MoD tried "to put any precise numbers".⁵⁵ He furthermore told us:

... It is so hard: do you count someone as being part of the insurgency if, because they do not have a job and because they feel they are being excluded, they occasionally go

49 'CIA Says Resistance Forces 50,000 Strong; "We could lose", Julian Borger and Rory McCarthy, *The Guardian*, 12 November 2003

50 'No more than 5,000 Iraqis fighting U.S., commander says,' Jonathan S Landay, *Knight Ridder Newspapers*, 13 November 2003

51 'Iraq Insurgency Larger Than Thought', Jim Krane, *Associated Press*, 9 July 2004

52 According to the *Washington Monthly*, the ratio of trigger pullers to support troops in the US military is approximately 1:7. And given the large number of private contractors supporting MNF troops in Iraq, that do not count in this ratio, the 1:10 ratio cited by the CIA could be reasonable. "G I Woe", *Washington Monthly*, Nicholas Confessore, March 2003.

53 Ev 140

54 "Iraq Insurgency Larger Than Thought", Jim Krane, *Associated Press*, 9 July 2004.

55 Q 360

out and take a pot-shot at a passing convoy? Is that someone you would include in the insurgency? I think that is debatable. At the other end of the extreme, someone who is making bombs and planting bombs clearly is part of it. Experience of insurgencies elsewhere suggests that sometimes the hard core could be quite small, but I think it would be very difficult for us to come up with a number that is really very meaningful.⁵⁶

47. General Houghton also sought to explain to us the importance of going beyond a numerical analysis of the insurgency. He told us:

There is a fascination on numbers, both on how many numbers are within the various insurgent groupings and, indeed, on the other side, what is the numerical strength of the build-up of the Iraqi security forces. But, in many respects, although it is interesting, because you can put a numerical metric against it, it is not that relevant to the pursuit of a counter-insurgency.⁵⁷

We note that the scale of the anti-Coalition, anti-Iraqi Government insurgency movements was underestimated by the Coalition. At the same time, we acknowledge that a fixation simply on the number of insurgents does not necessarily, by itself, provide insight into their effectiveness and resilience.

Foreign Fighters

48. The role of foreign fighters and Al Qaeda operatives in the Iraqi insurgency has caused debate as key British and US officials have publicly promoted the notion of them playing a prominent role. On 14 March 2005 the Secretary of State told the House: “our evidence is that a great number of those [insurgent] attacks are largely the work of foreign fighters—fanatics who have come into Iraq from other countries in order to continue a campaign against the west”.⁵⁸ Previously the Secretary of State had told the House that foreign fighters were part of the insurgency and had, in all likelihood, entered Iraq through Syria:

... If those foreign fighters are not from Syria, they have certainly come through Syria. It is a matter of great concern that such people are able to make their way to Iraq and perpetrate the kind of atrocities that we have seen in recent weeks and months, deliberately trying to undermine the efforts of the majority of the Iraqi population to rebuild a constitutional basis for their country.⁵⁹

49. This has been echoed by General George Casey, the Commander of the MNF-I, who has publicly warned Syria not to provide money, supplies, and direction to the insurgents. In evidence to the Committee, General McColl told us:

I think the multinational force commander General Casey is on record as saying that the freedom with which the movement of personnel and resources across the Syrian

56 Q 360. The US Secretary of Defence has similarly declined to tell the US House of Representatives Armed Services Committee the numerical strength of the insurgency. “Estimates on Iraq Insurgency Unreliable –Rumsfeld” Will Dunham, *Reuters*, 16 February 2005.

57 Q 361

58 HC Deb, 14 March 2005, col 2

59 HC Deb, 10 January 2005, col 10

border, particularly in association with the former regime elements, is allowed to happen, is unhelpful. And I would agree with that. From the briefings that I was given over the six months out there, they are unhelpful, deeply unhelpful.⁶⁰

50. The ability of foreign fighters to enter Iraq is a product of the poor state of border security since the end of major combat operations. In the first phase, the responsibility fell to the Coalition forces. When we visited Iraq in May 2004 we were told that the small numbers of Coalition and Iraqi Security Forces had made it difficult initially to police the border adequately thus leading to widespread smuggling, and other criminal activities. As the build-up of the Iraqi Security Forces got under way, the responsibility for border security was shared between the Coalition and the Iraqi Border Enforcement Department. Mr Howard admitted that border security was still less than the Coalition had hoped: “I think it would be true to say that progress there [on border security] has been not as fast as it has been in the Ministry of Defence, so there is another area where more work will need to be done”.⁶¹

51. We are concerned at the continued influx of foreign fighters into Iraq through neighbouring countries, particularly Syria and Iran, and note that this was probably facilitated by the inadequate attention paid to border security by the Coalition immediately following the invasion. More broadly, it appears to us that the Coalition failed to appreciate the potential for an insurgency in Iraq to attract foreign fighters, both from the Middle East and further afield (e.g. Chechnya).

Insurgency Tactics

52. More important than understanding the size of the insurgency is understanding the organisation and tactics of the insurgency. As General Houghton explained to us, the resilience of an insurgency has more “to do with the motivation of the leadership and the mechanisms that command control, intelligence feed, and those sorts of things”. He went on to explain that a relatively small number of people, well motivated, well-led and with “a good cellular structure which is intelligence-fed”⁶² could present a significant challenge even though it may be relatively small in numerical terms.⁶³ It is not possible for us to comment on the structure of the insurgency beyond what we have said above. But as important as structure is the question of the insurgency movements’ tactics.

53. The insurgents have no hope of matching the military might of the MNF-I, but hope to increase the cost of reconstruction and stabilisation. The goal is to create tension between the population and the MNF-I or even between segments of the Iraqi population, for example pitting Sunnis against Shias. The insurgents rely on psychological operations fuelled by terrorism, riots, guerrilla raids, sabotage, civilian casualties, and uprisings. The various groups have employed different methods since the end of major combat operations. In the northern and central areas of Iraq, the insurgency has used suicide bombers combined with close-quarter attacks on MNF-I.

60 Q 355

61 Q 405

62 Q 361

63 *Ibid*

54. In targeting Iraqi politicians and officials, the insurgents have also used traditional hit-and-run assassinations. As MNF-I and the Iraqi Government have become increasingly cautious, for example minimizing operationally unnecessary traffic outside the Green Zone in Baghdad, the insurgents' target list has expanded to include Iraqi civilians and recruits to the Iraqi Security Forces, Iraqis working with the Coalition, and infrastructure installations such as oil and water pipelines or electrical stations. In the south, when the Mahdi Army took arms against MNF-I in summer 2004, most attacks followed a more traditional pattern characterised by attacks on Coalition and Iraqi forces coupled with the use of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs). In the future, MNF-I will probably witness episodic rioting and localized uprisings. There will be firefights similar to those that have occurred in traditional guerilla wars; but these will be of a smaller scale than in previous conflicts and more similar to the firefights that have already occurred in Iraq.⁶⁴

55. Despite the sophistication of the insurgency tactics, especially their use of psychological operations through the internet, some analysts argue that the insurgency has not yet shown that it can progress. Steven Metz of the US Army War College's Strategic Studies Institute, described the next logical step as being able "to use global information technology, interconnectedness, and émigré communities to develop networks of political support, financing, and recruitment and potentially to launch terrorist operations in the United States. It has not yet solidified linkages with the global Islamic radical movement; global organized crime; or other radical, anti-US movements".⁶⁵ The various insurgency movements have also shown no signs of developing into a genuine national war of liberation.

56. We note that the various insurgency movements have been structured, motivated and resourced to inflict significant military and civilian casualties. They have employed a range of tactics from assassinations to suicide bombings depending on their motivations and goals, but foreign fighters, such as Musab al-Zarqawi and other Islamic extremists, have been particularly skilled at using psychological operations such as kidnappings and beheadings. In the foreseeable future, MNF-I and the Iraqi Government will continue to be attacked, but the various insurgency movements have not developed into a genuine national war of liberation and are unlikely to do so in the future.

Counter-Insurgency Campaign

57. It is difficult to measure how successful the MNF-I's counter-insurgency operations have been. Certainly MNF-I faced very difficult conditions. The indigenous security apparatus had evaporated or was dismantled and MNF-I did not have a history of contacts with local institutions and inhabitants. Dr Rod Thornton, a British counter-insurgency expert, wrote to us that British forces went into Iraq 'cold' in counter-insurgency terms:

Wherever one looks in terms of the Army's counter-insurgency experience—from Cyprus to Malaya and from Palestine to the Naga Hills—there would be an extant police force and public administrations run by fellow-countrymen. There would be

64 "The Sunni Insurgency in Iraq," Ahmed Hashim, Middle East Institute Policy Brief, 15 August 2003

65 'Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in Iraq', Stephen Metz, The Washington Quarterly, Winter 2003-04

people who knew how to run the countries and how best to deal with the indigenous populations. Intelligence would be available, there would be a high degree of cultural awareness, and there would be many people who spoke the local languages. In essence, all the Army had to do was to use its military muscle in aid of a civil power who would know how to target such muscle. Hence, British counter-insurgency operations normally ended in success (with the obvious exceptions of Palestine and Aden for their own particular reasons).⁶⁶

58. The fact that the invasion of Iraq was controversial and that many countries in the international community did not support the war or the post-war stabilisation efforts, even after the passage of UNSCR 1546, also meant that the insurgents were encouraged in their belief that they could be victorious. Dr Thornton contrasts this with previously successful counter-insurgency campaigns such as in Cyprus and Malaya. He wrote to us:

... the way the Army dealt with the insurgency then was helped immeasurably by the general impression given that whatever the rebels did the British, as a great power, would prevail. The rebels, short as they were of weapons and ammunition, realised that they could not match an implacable foe who could simply bring in from abroad more and more men and materiel.

...

One of the great tools used by counter-insurgency forces in the past is the message that ‘we are more powerful than you and we will outlast you’. Such a message brings indigenous people to your side and away from that of the rebel because they can see which way the wind is blowing and where the future lies. But with Coalition governments pointing out that troops would be withdrawn as soon as possible it becomes very difficult for the population to throw in their lot and provide assistance to foreigners who may be here today, but gone tomorrow (the problem in Aden in 1967).⁶⁷

A number of analysts have argued that these unfavourable circumstances were made worse by the Coalition’s approach to its counter-insurgency operations.

59. First, counter-insurgency theory highlights the need for an “appropriate” use of military force.⁶⁸ General Houghton told us that there are:

enduring principles in relation to counter-insurgency which are familiar ones, and that is that there is not a straightforward militarily attrition-based approach to defeating it, it is the treatment of the symptoms of it, whether or not they are based on political aspiration, on the economy or a desire for a better life and those sorts of things.⁶⁹

66 Ev 141

67 Ev 142

68 *Insurgency In Iraq: A Historical Perspective*, Ian F W Beckett, January 2005, Strategic Studies Institute (SSI) Monograph

69 Q 609

Many Iraqis have been angered by the levels of force frequently used by US soldiers in response to attacks and civil disruptions. The more Iraqis there are who have a negative image of the US presence, the greater the risk that otherwise uninvolved Iraqis will either cooperate, support, or sympathise with anti-Coalition insurgents. Colonel Langton described the US Army as relying “heavily on war-fighting as being the cornerstone of its doctrine and has found it hard to lower its profile at times when it might be considered prudent to do so”.⁷⁰ He added that “a flexible approach is crucially important in counter-insurgency where (as has been said) the collective mind of the population is the territory to be captured, and where it is vital that civilians on the ‘battlefield’ are assured that we share the risks with them”.⁷¹

60. The operation to dislodge insurgents from Fallujah has been criticized by some analysts as an example of the weakness of the US approach. As the International Crisis Group wrote:

... the devastation of city infrastructure, failure to immediately resettle and compensate civilians fleeing impending hostilities, the use of tactics reminiscent of Israeli ones to most Iraqi minds, and the indiscriminate handling of all men between the ages of fifteen and 55 during the offensive risk both further alienating the town’s citizens (supposedly among the intended beneficiaries of the operation) and being used by insurgents as propaganda tools in the battle for hearts and minds (purportedly the principal target of any counter-insurgency war).⁷²

61. In his submission, Dr Thornton wrote:

One may be able to trace all the subsequent problems the Americans had in Fallujah to a particular incident where US forces displayed a singular lack of restraint. Just after the war itself had finished and when there seemed to be no opposition in Fallujah, US Marines opened fire on a crowd outside their barracks who were peacefully protesting over a fairly trivial local matter. The fact that many unarmed people were killed can be said to have turned the whole of Fallujah against US forces. Down the line and months later US forces had to move into Fallujah to root out the insurgents who had set up base there. The destruction of that city in the process is redolent of an attitude during the Vietnam War. To paraphrase an officer from that time, ‘we had to destroy the city in order to save it’.⁷³

62. More recently, increased efforts have been made to integrate the military and the civilian aspects of the counter-insurgency campaign. In his submission, Colonel Langton wrote the following:

One aspect of this work should look at how best to profit from successful military operations in a timely fashion so that the civil population sees advantage in what has just occurred, and to give the Coalition more than just a tactical success.⁷⁴

70 Ev 140

71 *Ibid*

72 ‘What Can the U.S. Do in Iraq?’, Middle East Report No. 34, 22 December 2004, International Crisis Group

73 Ev 144

74 Ev 140

63. He told us that in his view the military plan should have been accompanied by a “civil reconstruction plan able to be activated as soon as possible after military operations. “This”, he wrote, “is all part of prising the population away from any nascent insurgency”.⁷⁵

64. This seems to have been appreciated in MND (SE) where we heard from General Rollo and Mr Howard how the political process, coupled with the threat of military action, increasingly pacified Shia-based elements of the insurgency such as al-Sadr and the Mahdi Army. General Houghton told us: “... we attempt to have an approach which is multi-faceted and has lines of operation with the military only supporting those which are to do with politics, good governance, economic reform”.⁷⁶

65. General McColl similarly told us how the integration of the military and civilian aspects of the campaign had been prioritised even in MNF-I’s headquarters following the change of both civilian and military command in the summer of 2004. He told us:

... I particularly make the point that when General Casey arrived and Ambassador Negroponte arrived they were very clear that an integrated campaign which wrapped together the security line of operation, the governance line, the economic line and the information line, was absolutely critical. In fact, when General Casey arrived, part of our initial conversations was a comparison of the way operations were conducted in Vietnam and the way in which they were conducted in Malaya and the lessons that could be drawn from that and the requirement for this kind of integrated approach. He set in train a set of work, in which British officers were centrally involved, to produce a campaign which did wrap together all of those lines of operation and, indeed, which integrated with the Iraqis—because of course the Iraqis were critical to this as well.⁷⁷

66. A second strand of criticism has maintained that MNF-I has not cooperated sufficiently with the Iraqi Security Forces, especially the police. As Chief Constable Paul Kernaghan, ACPO’s Coordinator on International Policing, told us: “In any overseas country the people who will provide the policing, be it what we would call routine policing or counter-insurgency policing, have to be the local officers. That is the key”.⁷⁸ We discuss this issue further below (see paragraphs 154–170).

67. Professor Cordesman has argued that that the US military were unprepared at the senior command level for counter-insurgency operations, and especially for developing any serious partnership and interoperability with the new Iraqi forces. Even when cooperation took place, little effort was made to expand the Iraqi participation to the higher-level decisions. In particular, we were told in Iraq that little or no intelligence was passed from the Coalition to the Iraqi security forces.

68. Mr Howard admitted this had been a problem. He told us: “The issue of sharing intelligence is obviously a potentially sensitive one”.⁷⁹ General Rollo also agreed that

⁷⁵ *Ibid*

⁷⁶ Q 609

⁷⁷ Q 366

⁷⁸ Q 259

⁷⁹ Q 372

intelligence-sharing had not been optimal: “That is an area which, I was quite clear, we needed to improve”.⁸⁰

69. We heard from MoD how British forces in the south were trying to address this problem. The Iraqi National Guards’ Divisional headquarters have now been co-located with the MND (SE) divisional headquarters. General Rollo told us:

... over the last two months that I was there, there were an increasing number of operations where we were working jointly. For instance, if we were doing search operations we always wanted to have Iraqi police with us, and if an arrest were to be made then ideally we wanted an Iraqi to arrest somebody. But increasingly we produced more integrated operations, not only between us and the Iraqis, where, for instance we might provide a cordon and an element of Iraqi police would do the search, but also to get the Iraqi forces to work with each other: so you would have Iraqi police doing a search, with the National Guard doing the cordon, and we would be further out or just in over-watch. That feeling of mutual competence, both between them and us, and—frankly, much more important for the future—between the police and the National Guard, takes time to build and we had a number of joint training programmes designed to build it.⁸¹

70. He went on to explain how he had sought to share intelligence with the Iraqi Security Forces without compromising confidential sources or methods:

... we put in place mechanisms to share intelligence. Part of the joint OPS for us was a section where intelligence could be produced, stored and analysed.⁸²

71. The third criticism has been the Coalition’s perceived ‘militarisation’ of the counter-insurgency campaign. It has been argued that lessons from other counter-insurgency campaigns should have militated against giving the Iraqi Army the primary role over the Iraqi Police Service. In June 2004, General Houghton explained to us how the Interim Iraqi Government saw the different security organisations and their respective roles in the counter-insurgency campaign.

It is quite clear that they see their police force as more of a community-based force, clearly to be the front end of what one might call routine crime and protecting against that ... in terms of the core responsible for the delivery of security domestically they still see a leading and primary role for their army.⁸³

72. Mr Howard indicated that this position was shared by the Coalition, telling us that the role of the police was to provide “general security, general policing” and that MNF-I were not developing the IPS’s “ability to counter insurgency”.⁸⁴ On the other hand, Major Lincoln-Jones has argued that “one of the Northern Ireland milestones was the transition

80 Q 372

81 *Ibid*

82 *Ibid*; Joints OPS here refers to the Joint Operations Centres established, with MNF-I assistance, in the governorates to coordinate MNF-I and ISF operations

83 Q 101

84 Q 415

from Army to Police primacy in the campaign”.⁸⁵ Similar lessons were ‘learnt’ in Kosovo and Bosnia & Herzegovina where the army has worked very closely with the security services in targeting the nexus of criminals and para-military forces, but this has not happened in Iraq. The IPS have not been trained in the necessary investigative techniques. We were told that when insurgent attacks take place, no crime-scene investigations follow and little or no forensic capabilities currently exist within the IPS. Naturally, one needs to exercise caution against directly transferring counter-insurgency “lessons” across different cultures and campaigns, but there appear to have been number of valuable lessons that could have informed the Coalition’s policies in Iraq.

73. We commend British forces for their approach to counter-insurgency in their areas of operations. We are convinced that their approach has been a contributing factor in the development of the more permissive environment in southern Iraq, which has resulted in relatively little insurgent activity. We do, however, remain concerned about a number of tactics employed by MNF-I generally. We urge MoD to use its influence to affect MNF-I’s posture and approach. We also encourage MoD to ensure that the Iraqi civilian powers are given a prominent role in the counter-insurgency campaign. Finally, we emphasise and endorse the need to combine politico-economic and military strands of the counter-insurgency campaign. We have been told that this approach was adopted following the appointments of General Casey and Ambassador Negroponte,⁸⁶ but we are concerned about the state of civil-military cooperation in the counter-insurgency campaign preceding their appointments, i.e. from May 2003 until June 2004 when Ambassador Bremer was head of the Coalition Provisional Authority.

85 Not printed

86 Ambassador John Negroponte was appointed US Ambassador to Iraq following the transfer of authority in June 2004.

4 Challenges in Southern Iraq

Background to the Challenges in the South

74. In this report we use the term ‘southern Iraq’ to cover the southernmost four of the country’s eighteen provinces. Tensions between Saddam Hussein’s Sunni-based regime and the predominately Shiite population of southern Iraq were always high. Saddam Hussein subjugated the south through a range of punitive policies. The scale and severity of the regime’s attacks on Shia civilians were reported by human rights organisations. In 1991, when the Shiites revolted following the 1991 Gulf War, Saddam Hussein’s army brutally crushed the revolt and drained the extensive marshlands between the Tigris and Euphrates river to deny the Shiite rebels a sanctuary.⁸⁷

75. This history of struggle left a legacy of resentment between Baghdad, representing the centre of government, and the south. Any attempts by the Coalition to re-establish central government would therefore inevitably experience difficulties. Furthermore, because of the struggle between Saddam Hussein and the Shiites many prominent Shias developed even stronger links with Iran than religious kinship necessarily would have dictated. Iranian interests and influence was accordingly stronger in the south than elsewhere in Iraq. The prominent Shia political figure, Ayatollah al-Hakim, who was killed by insurgents on 29 August 2003, had lived in exile in Iran since the 1980s and founded the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI). SCIRI’s militia, the 5,000 to 10,000 member Badr Corps, was trained by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard.

76. While the entire country’s economic assets—from oil refineries to infrastructure—were mismanaged by Saddam Hussein’s regime, this mismanagement became an overt policy of denied investment in the south. Economic reconstruction therefore had to start from a much lower base than in many other parts of the country.

Success in the South

77. In the immediate post-conflict period the four governorates in Multinational Division South-East (MND (SE)) were plagued by rioting, looting and general lawlessness. This seemed to take British forces by surprise and they struggled to maintain order. The circumstances of the deaths of six soldiers from the Royal Military Police on 24 June 2003 in Al Majarr Al Kabir to some extent illustrated the Coalition’s lack of preparation for the developing anti-Coalition sentiment.

78. But despite initial setbacks, four factors have allowed British forces to turn the occupation of southern Iraq into a relative success story.⁸⁸ The challenges in MND (SE), which covers the four governorates, were different from those in other parts of the country. Approximately 60 percent of the residents in the governorates are Shia and therefore more predisposed than the Sunnis to the MNF-I and the ‘new’ Iraq which the war heralded. The

87 According to a UNEP study carried out in 2001, approximately 90% of the marshlands had disappeared by May 2000, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), 18 May 2001, Study Sounds Alarm about the Disappearance of the Mesopotamian Marshlands

88 ‘British Peace-Support Operations In Iraq: Low Density, High Demand’, Tim Ripley, Jane’s Defence Weekly, 4 February 2004

same was the case in the Kurdish areas in the north. US troops, however, confronted an insurgency in the largely Sunni-dominated area around Baghdad. Furthermore, apart from Basra, which is Iraq's second biggest city, large swathes of MND (SE) are sparsely populated. This environment differs significantly from the heavily populated, urbanised areas in and around Baghdad which US troops had to deal with and which have presented such a difficult operational challenge.

79. Moreover, while the UK had to confront Muqtada al Sadr and his Mahdi Army in April and August, the Mahdi Army represented a more traditional opponent than the insurgents. Muqtada al Sadr's activity was also related to the cleric's inclusion in the political process. The more he was included in the political process, the less violence he directed at the Coalition. During periods of calm, however, the Mahdi Army no doubt re-armed itself in anticipation of the next round of violence. As a result, violence against British forces was not an issue in June and July 2004, because Muqtada al Sadr was part of the political process; in August 2004, however, it was at the heart of Coalition's work in MND (SE). General Rollo told us:

If you look at the number of incidents in August, there was a huge great spike, and at the end of August, broadly speaking, it went right back down to where it was. So the politics of this are critical.⁸⁹

The MoD made the same point in the memorandum they submitted to us:

The security situation in the MND(SE) area of operations has continued to be relatively stable in comparison to the northern half of the country, in particular the areas west of Baghdad. There was a particularly quiet period in July [2004] which could be attributed to the fact that the Muqtada Militia (MM) were re-arming and retraining after a period of intense fighting during the period prior to handover of sovereignty, particularly in Al Amarah and Nasiriyah.⁹⁰

80. Closely related to this, is the fact, as we noted above, that MND (SE) has never faced the same kind of insurgency as other parts of the country, in particular the so-called Sunni Triangle. Referring explicitly to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, and the threat posed by him in MND (SE), General Rollo explained: "he does not like the Shia; they do not like him".⁹¹ Other elements of the insurgency only appeared in MND (SE) sporadically. As General Rollo's described it: "one or two bomb making teams, a trickle of incidents. They do not go away, every now and again you catch some of them, and then nothing happens for a period".⁹²

81. Perhaps most important, however, was the posture and approach of the Armed Forces. Major Lincoln-Jones submitted the following commentary to us:

The British approach since the end of the high intensity conflict to the operations within their Area of Operations (AO) has been highly successful and has deservedly

89 Q 361

90 Ev 123

91 Q 361

92 *Ibid*

drawn high praise from many commentators. It is of course based on our experience on this type of military task and the many lessons learned over time. It should be remembered that this experience does not confine itself to operations in Northern Ireland (NI); we have campaigns like Malaya and Aden, which also confer valuable lessons learned. The experience in Ulster is of course the easiest to grasp, and the evidence of its utility is obvious from the conduct of our troops on the ground.⁹³

He explained further:

Engagement with the population rather than engaging the population has been the secret of success, even if this entails some risk. Some of the most effective Tips Tactics and Procedures (TTPs) have ranged from, a willingness to abandon the dehumanising effect conferred by wearing a helmet to, simply removing ones sunglasses when communicating with people.⁹⁴

82. In his submission, Dr Thornton similarly argued that pragmatism and minimum force played a key role in the success which British forces achieved in MND (SE):

When the Army came to operations in Iraq, therefore, it displayed its characteristic caution. During the war itself, when the Army was faced with forcing its way into Basra, it held back. This was an act criticised by US officers at the time, but it allowed the Army, after negotiations, to eventually enter a city that was intact and where there had been few casualties. Thus there was less local hostility and more consent once troops moved in. Such consent is vital if, as was the case, the Army had to become the police force once it entered Basra and other towns. The level of consent allowed troops to carry through their usual measure—such as foot-patrolling. In a consensual environment they can do this without the usual protection of body armour and helmets. Such insouciance creates the impression that everything is normal, that the threat is diminished and everyone can go about their normal lives. It also reduces the sense of distance between soldier and civilian and makes soldiers seem more accessible to the local populations. It is a technique the Americans try to utilise but their sense of ‘force protection’ normally militates against it. The British philosophy has always been that physical barriers prevent soldiers from picking up the ‘on the street’ intelligence that can protect them from attack.⁹⁵

83. The nature of the challenge to MNF-I and US forces in northern and central Iraq has been significantly different from that faced by British forces in MND (SE). First, the most vicious, probably the most ideologically committed and possibly the most popularly supported elements of the insurgency have been located in the areas around Baghdad. These areas have always been the Sunni heartland of Iraq and the insurgents have been able to take advantage of a Sunni sense of political exclusion and disempowerment. Additionally, central Iraq is the home ground of many former Baathists: Sadaam Hussein’s place of birth, Tikrit, is located in central Iraq. Second, Baghdad was more damaged during the combat phase than many other parts of the country and therefore provided a favourable battle space for insurgents and their guerrilla-style tactics. Third, the counter-

93 Not printed

94 *Ibid*

95 Ev 143–144

insurgency campaign was made more difficult in the US-controlled areas simply because of the US presence.

84. We note that the relatively stable security environment in southern Iraq has been caused by a number of factors, including population density, topography and the attitude of the Shia population to Coalition forces. But we are also in no doubt that the approach and tactics of the British Armed Forces have played a major part.

Abuse

85. On 23 February 2005, three members of the 1st Battalion The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers (1RRF) were found guilty of abusing Iraqi civilians in May 2003. This case has turned out to be one of several incidents of Iraqi civilian deaths, injuries and ill-treatment allegedly at the hands of British soldiers. The allegations and the recent verdicts have rightly provoked sympathy for the indignity suffered by the Iraqis and outrage at the behaviour of the soldiers involved. In a written memorandum, the MoD told us: “We continue to follow-up incidents and allegations with determination and rigour”.⁹⁶ Similarly, in a press conference, General Sir Mike Jackson, Chief of the General Staff, has said he “condemns utterly” any abuse.⁹⁷ The Minister for the Armed Forces echoed these words before us: “We have always got to examine anything which is happening ... there is no question at all about that, because this is about ensuring we maintain the good name of the British Army and the British Armed Forces”.⁹⁸ MoD’s memorandum added that “it is nevertheless clear that these are isolated and diverse incidents involving only a very small proportion of the over 55,000 Service men and women who have so far served in Iraq”.⁹⁹

86. Perhaps unsurprisingly, much has been made in the media about the impact of the cases on the attitude of ordinary Iraqis towards British soldiers. The alleged incidents have been compared to the abuse perpetrated by US service personnel in Abu Ghraib. A number of media outlets even compared the abuses by the Coalition to those perpetrated by Saddam Hussein’s regime. General McColl told us that reports on Arabic channels such as al-Jazeera and al-Arabiya had made the abuse charges a talking point across the Middle East. Ahmed Versi, editor of Muslim News, has said:

The reaction in the Arab and Muslim world, and even here, has been of shock and also surprise because until very recently the British troops were considered to be much better in their conduct in Iraq than the Americans.¹⁰⁰

87. But General Houghton and General Rollo told us that the impact on the ground had been limited:

There was not, certainly, a discernible change of mood ... people on the streets of Basra know how they have been treated and how British soldiers behave to them and they behave accordingly and respond accordingly. People are human. I think the

96 Ev 126

97 Statement by General Sir Mike Jackson, Chief of the General Staff, 18 January 2005

98 Q 630

99 Ev 126

100 ‘Outrage at ‘Iraq abuse’ pictures’, www.itv.com/news, 19 January 2005

record speaks for itself. We would not have the low level of violence, the really—still, I think, on the whole—very amicable relations we do have there, if there had been an overwhelming belief that we were all like that. It just did not happen.¹⁰¹

88. General McColl, while admitting that the cases had affected the perceptions of the MNF-I as a whole, went on to argue that the impact did not affect the British forces more particularly: “I sensed that the majority of that criticism was focused on those who were directly responsible; I do not think there was a general condemnation of the way in which the force in general, and the British in particular, were conducting themselves”.¹⁰² This was confirmed to us when we visited Iraq in May and December 2004. Both during our discussions with the Basra Governing Council and during our walk-about in Basra we were told that many Iraqis, while eager to see all foreign troops leave, welcomed British forces much more than they would have welcomed US forces.

89. Even though British forces have escaped the recriminations and attendant backlash that has been directed at US service personnel following the Abu Ghraib scandal, the alleged incidents raise legitimate questions about the way British forces prepare service personnel for dealing with prisoners and civilians in Peace Support Operations. We asked the Minister for the Armed Forces whether the MoD had had any cause to conduct a review of the circumstances surrounding the abuse. He told us that there was an on-going process in the Army to “look to see what is happening, and if there is a need to alter some of these processes it will do so and ministers will be kept fully advised of this”.¹⁰³ He did not, however, indicate that the specific allegations had led to a root and branch review of policies, procedures or training standards. On 25 February 2005, following the verdicts in the courts martial, General Jackson announced that he would “be appointing a senior experienced officer to assess what lessons we may need to learn”.¹⁰⁴ This was confirmed by the Secretary of State to the House on 1 March 2005.¹⁰⁵ We note that the Intelligence and Security Committee in its recent report on *The Handling of Detainees by UK Intelligence Personnel in Afghanistan, Guantanamo Bay and Iraq*, concluded that the Secret Intelligence Service, Security Service and Defence Intelligence staff were not sufficiently trained in the Geneva Conventions prior to their deployment to Iraq.¹⁰⁶

90. We condemn any abuse of Iraqi civilians by British forces. We believe, however, that coverage given to these cases has been magnified because British forces are known—both in Iraq and beyond—for the professionalism and sensitivity which they bring to their tasks. As such, we trust that the actions of a few soldiers will not be allowed to overshadow the contribution made by the many soldiers who have served in Iraq.

91. We welcome a review of the circumstances that led to the incidents in March 2003. We have noted previously that the Coalition did not expect—and did not have adequate

101 Q 375 (Major General Rollo)

102 Q 378

103 Q 361

104 Statement by General Sir Mike Jackson, Chief of the General Staff, 18 January 2005

105 HC Deb, 1 Mar 2005: cols 77–78WS

106 *The Handling of Detainees by UK Intelligence Personnel in Afghanistan, Guantanamo Bay and Iraq*, Intelligence and Security Committee, Cm 6469, para 120

facilities to deal with—large-scale looting and looters. The consequent pressure on individuals may have been a contributing factor in some of the cases. But we are also concerned that the incidents may have been connected to the way in which soldiers and officers are instructed in their legal obligations during post-conflict operations. We therefore urge the senior officer leading the lessons-learned process established by the Chief of the General Staff to approach the review of the issue of abuse by British service personnel in Iraq as broadly as possible, examining not only the circumstances in Iraq, but also more generic questions related to the policies, preparations and pre-deployment training provided for Peace Support Operations.

Detentions

Legal Issues

92. Under UN Security Council Resolution 1546 and the attached exchange of letters between Prime Minister Iyad Allawi and United States Secretary of State Colin Powell the Coalition retained the power to intern individuals “where this is necessary for imperative reasons of security”.¹⁰⁷ Before the Transfer of Authority on 28 June 2004, British forces acted under the powers given to an Occupying Power under Geneva Convention IV, which allowed them to restrict individuals’ liberty for security reasons under certain conditions including proportionality of length of internment and regular reviews of the internment. Under CPA Memorandum No. 3 the British forces, as part of the MNF-I, also have the authority to arrest individuals for suspected crimes under Iraqi law.

93. The legal situation governing internees in Iraq has caused some confusion. In particular, the human rights community has raised concerns about the legal status of the power of internment. Human Rights Watch told us:

In his June 5, 2004 letter to the President of the Security Council, annexed to U.N. Security Council Resolution 1546, then - Secretary of State Colin Powell stated that the Multi-National Force will “undertake a broad range of tasks to contribute to the maintenance of security and to ensure force protection,” including “internment where this is necessary for imperative reasons of security”. This language, reminiscent of article 78 of the Fourth Geneva Convention on internment of civilians “for imperative reasons of security,” suggests but nowhere affirms compliance with the Geneva Convention provisions relating to the treatment of “protected persons” by an Occupying Power in an international armed conflict.¹⁰⁸

94. Human Rights Watch goes on to argue that, if the MNF-I is not an Occupying Power, then the Interim Iraqi Government and the MNF-I may apprehend individuals who pose serious security risks, but must charge such individuals with criminal offences under Iraqi law or violations of international law. Human Rights Watch argues that it is unlawful to detain such individuals without charge indefinitely or until the end of the armed conflict.

¹⁰⁷ Letters from the Prime Minister of the Interim Government of Iraq Dr Ayad Allawi and United State Secretary of State Colin L Powell to the President of the UN Security Council, 5 June 2004

¹⁰⁸ Ev 134–135

Practical Issues

95. The UK initially operated a facility to house internees near Umm Qasr, which was subsumed into the US Camp Bucca on 10 April 2003. The UK was represented at Camp Bucca by a UK Prisoner of War Registration Unit and Prisoner Monitoring Team. The UK also maintains a Divisional Temporary Detention Facility (DTDF) in Shaiba Logistics Base. After 15 December 2003, all the internees who were originally taken into custody by British forces were transferred to the DTDF.

96. When we visited the DTDF in May 2004 there were 127 internees; when we visited in December 2004 there were just eighteen internees. Those eighteen were a mixture of former Baathists, suspected terrorists and a few 'ordinary' criminals. Mr Howard explained MoD's policy on internment:

When we hold them, there are three things we can do. First, if they, in our judgment, represent an imperative threat to security, as defined in the Security Council resolution, then we can detain them, subject to the safeguards, Chairman, which you have already mentioned. The second class is where we have picked someone up who on the face of it is guilty of criminality, in which case we would hand those over to the Iraqi authorities. Anyone else we pick up, for whatever reason, who does not fall into either of those categories, we release. We do one of those three things.¹⁰⁹

97. Mr Howard previously told us: "Always in these circumstances our objective will be to detain people for as short a period as possible and that as soon as possible we would want to either hand them over to the Iraqi authorities or indeed release them".¹¹⁰

98. The Minister for the Armed Forces assured us that all was being done to ensure the highest standards were followed: "We will always operate within the legal framework and will always apply the highest standards of international law". Throughout the process of internment, whether on arrest or upon actual internment, MoD's policy reflects what we heard from the Minister. For example, MoD policy states that individuals must be treated humanely and in accordance with International Humanitarian Law. When individuals are apprehended, MoD policy states that they must be informed, in a language they understand, why they have been apprehended, where they are being taken and that their next of kin will be informed of their whereabouts.

99. An MoD memorandum elaborated further on the safeguards in place: "Internees receive a written Notice of Reasons for Internment within 14 days of being detained (unless, exceptionally, the GOC decides that it should not be given to an individual)". Once internees are brought to the DTDF their cases are considered by a Detention Review Committee. The Committee makes recommendations which the General Officer Commanding acts upon. Cases are reviewed at 10 and 28 days, 3 months and 6 months and each 3 months thereafter. Throughout this process, internees have the right to make written representations, and many do. MoD's memorandum went on to describe the daily routines in the DTDF: "Internees have three daily exercise periods. They have two showers

109 Q 381

110 Q 57

a day. There have also been improvements to the catering, which is now based on a seven-day cycle. Visiting times have been lengthened from 30 minutes to 60 minutes”.¹¹¹

100. Perhaps most importantly, the cases of internees are reviewed regularly and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has regular, unhindered access.¹¹² ICRC reports are confidential, but their February 2004 report was leaked to the press. The ICRC visited the DTDF before it opened and have visited the facility on four occasions since. In its leaked report from February 2004, the ICRC was critical of the Coalition, highlighting “a number of serious violations of International Humanitarian Law”. The ICRC also described an event in September 2003 in Basra where Coalition personnel allegedly abused nine individuals, and allegedly caused the death of one. MoD assured us that the ICRC had no complaints and consistently reported their satisfaction with conditions and procedures at the DTDF. In a response to a written question, the Armed Forces Minister stated: “No reports have been received by the UK of abuse either at the UK prisoner of war facility near Umm Qasr or subsequently the UK’s Divisional Temporary Detention Facility at Shaibah”.¹¹³

101. Internment without trial is a draconian measure, which no force can take upon itself lightly. It is important that the Iraqi Government develops the capabilities to detain, prosecute and imprison those it considers a serious threat to its security as soon as possible. Dr Hutton told us that the Government expects the DTDF to remain as long as the Armed Forces remain in Iraq.¹¹⁴ By maintaining the power to intern individuals, the MNF-I may be assisting Iraq in the short-term, but may simultaneously hinder the development of indigenous capabilities in the long-term. It is not inconceivable that MNF-I will be asked to remain in Iraq, perhaps in a mentoring and advisory role, long after the Iraqi police, judicial and penitentiary systems are capable of detaining those judged to be a serious threat to the country’s security. **We accept that circumstances in Iraq currently call for the limited use of internment of civilians by MNF-I. We believe, however, that this extraordinary power needs to be reviewed regularly and should only be maintained for as long as there is a compelling operational need for it. MNF-I should, as matter of priority, assist the Iraqi Government in developing the capabilities to detain, prosecute and imprison those who are judged to present a serious threat to the country.**

111 Ev 124

112 The Geneva Conventions recognize the right of ICRC delegates to visit prisoners of war and civilian internees. Preventing them from carrying out their mission would itself amount to a violation of humanitarian law.

113 Letter from Secretary of State placed in House of Commons Library pursuant to HC Deb, 18 November 2004, col 1831W

114 Q 634

military operations in Iraq to the end of 2004–05 is likely to be in excess of £3.1 billion. As we noted in *Lessons of Iraq* these sums cover only the net additional costs of operations.

107. The UK has contributed to Security Sector Reform expenditure through the Global Conflict Prevention Pool (GCPP). A break down of GCPP expenditure is given below.

GCPP Iraq Strategy—Committed SSR Expenditure 04/05

MoD Vetting Agency	£0.1m
Police Monitoring / Mentoring	£6.1m
Prisons Mentoring	£1.7m
Training at Sandhurst / ACSC ¹¹⁶	£0.15m
Police equipment projects	£0.6m
Equipment for Iraqi Civil Defence Corps	£0.1m
Equipment for Iraqi Police and Border Guards	£2.5m
Total	£11.3m

GCPP International Peacekeeping Strategy—Committed SSR Expenditure 04/05

Police training and mentoring in Iraq and Jordan £8.3m

Project Osiris, the provision for equipment and infrastructure for ISF in MND(SE), has been funded by GCPP (£2.5m) and the Treasury Contingency Fund (£40.6m)

108. The total UK commitment for humanitarian and reconstruction work in the period 2003–2006 amounts to £544 million. The DFID part of this (including a £38 million contribution to EC spending) is £422.5 million.¹¹⁷

109. The cost of UK military operations in Iraq for the three years 2002–03 to 2004–05 is expected to be in excess of £3.1 billion—equivalent to the target acquisition cost for the two future aircraft carriers for the Royal Navy. The 2004–05 Spring Supplementary Estimates provide only limited information on the costs of operations in Iraq. We consider that a more detailed breakdown of costs, for operations involving such substantial sums of money, should be provided in future to facilitate effective parliamentary scrutiny.

116 Advanced Command and Staff Course

117 Figures provided by International Development Committee

5 Security Sector Reform

110. Building the Iraqi military and security forces has now become the primary focus of British efforts in Iraq. This requires a major effort of security sector reform (SSR); a daunting task that extends well beyond the mere training of forces. SSR must encompass the “core security actors” such as the Armed Forces, police and para-military forces, the “security management and oversight bodies” such as the relevant ministries, security and intelligence organisations, parliamentary committees and other scrutiny arrangements, and the “justice and law enforcement institutions” such as the judiciary, prisons and the penal system.¹¹⁸ We examine all these aspects later in this report. To achieve rebuilding and reform among such a spectrum of Iraqi agencies clearly requires a “‘joined up’ and properly sequenced approach” by the British government that will involve inputs not just from MoD but also from the Department for International Development, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Home Office, and from their various agencies.¹¹⁹ Not least, Britain’s SSR policy in Iraq also has to be coordinated with that of other Coalition partners and with the work of the major international institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.¹²⁰

Iraqi Security Forces

111. In this section we look at the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF). Only when they are able to act independently and effectively will the MNF-I be able to leave the front lines of the counter-insurgency campaign and take an increasingly advisory role, mentoring and training the ISF to carry out the brunt of the fighting themselves. The Prime Minister told the Liaison Committee on 8 February 2005 that the ‘Iraqi-isation’ of security was front and centre of the Coalition’s agenda. The Prime Minister said:

My own very strong view of this, talking to all sorts of different people in Iraq, is that their view is that we need the multinational force for as long as the Iraqi capability is not sufficiently well trained and equipped and capable, but that capability is building the whole time.¹²¹

112. The organisation within the structure of the MNF-I devoted to the development of the Iraqi Security Forces is the Multinational Security Transition Command—Iraq (MNSTC-I), commanded by Lieutenant General David Petraeus. General Petraeus and MNSTC-I work closely with the Ministry of Interior (MoI) and the Ministry of Defence (MoD) to train, equip, mentor, and make operational the Iraqi security forces. The MNSTC-I

118 Department for International Development, *Understanding and Supporting Security Sector Reform*, Issues Paper, undated.

119 DFID, *Ibid.*

120 On judicial aspects of policy see, Department for International Development, *Making Government Work for Poor People: Building State Capability*, Strategy Paper, 2001, Sections 2.5, 2.6.

121 Liaison Committee, 8 February 2005, HC 318-I (uncorrected evidence)

organisation responsible for training and equipping Iraqi police is the Civilian Police Advisory Training Team, commanded by Major General Joseph Fil.¹²²

113. The UK's commitment to reforming the Iraqi Security Forces is delivered through a range of programmes, from providing strategic and policy advice to the Iraqi MoD in Baghdad, to mentoring Iraqi National Guardsmen on patrols in Basra, to running the police academy in Az Zubyah. Dr Hutton summarised the British involvement:

On the specifics of what the UK are doing to assist in the building of the Iraqi security forces, in the Iraqi police service you are aware we have a number of advisers, we have basic level training in Basra, Jordan, and we have deployed UK police officers to assist with that and supporting contractors. Perhaps most importantly from the MoD perspective is the assistance that we give to the Iraqi National Guard which you will also be aware is merging with the Iraqi Army. That is focused on the six ING battalions in MND(SE). Those units are paired with our units which mentor and monitor their progress. The main focus is on mentoring at division and brigade level.¹²³

114. Given the increasing importance of security sector reform, the Government has been at pains to stress the progress being made. Until recently, a steady stream of recruitment figures were released to illustrate the ever-growing size of the Iraqi Security Forces. On 10 January 2005, the Secretary of State told the House that 115,000 Iraqi service personnel were trained and operating across the country. One month later, the Minister for the Armed Forces told us:

That is including approximately 57,000 Iraqi police service, 15,000 Department of Border Enforcement, 10,000 Army, 39,000 National Guard and 6,000 Intervention Force. I am advised, also, that there are around 74,000 in the Facilities Protection Service.¹²⁴

115. Generally speaking, MoD has remained optimistic about the prospects of the Iraqi Security Forces. General McColl, who served as the Senior British Military Representative in Baghdad, cautiously told us: "there are positive signs there".¹²⁵ This was echoed by General Rollo from his perspective as a former General Officer Commanding of MND (SE). Similarly, General Houghton told us:

It will probably not be a linear progression, there will be setbacks, but I think that, given the nature of those elections, given the undoubted willingness of vast numbers of Iraqis to volunteer for service in the various components of their security architecture, I think one can take a strong degree of comfort and confidence.¹²⁶

122 Second report to the Security Council by the United States, on behalf of the Multinational Force, describing the efforts and progress of the Multinational Force in fulfilling its mandate under United Nations Security Council Resolution 1546.

123 Q 595

124 Q 567

125 Q 359

126 Q 387

116. When we visited Iraq, British officers referred to the elections to the Transitional National Assembly, which were then in prospect, as an opportune ‘starter task’ for the Iraqi Security Forces i.e a manageable assignment, which could serve to augment their capabilities and increase their confidence.

117. In the event, the elections were a significant success for the Iraqi Security Forces. Some 5,200 polling sites were secured with two rings of Iraqi security personnel, estimated to number 130,000 on polling day. There were a small number of attacks on polling stations, to which MNF-I forces responded appropriately, but these did not have a significant impact on polling. Protection of ballot papers was carried out by ISF and personnel from a Private Security Company, contracted by the US. On numerous occasions, Iraqi security forces prevented terrorists from penetrating the security of the polling sites, and several Iraqi police officers and soldiers gave their lives to prevent suicide bombers from attacking large numbers of those waiting to vote. UK forces kept a lower profile than usual on election day itself.

118. The Minister for the Armed Forces told us:

Their capacity is improving all the time. The important test of this, of course, was the elections. One of the key indicators in this was—again we are getting good feedback—that the Iraqi people now have the confidence in the security presence, the police presence or whatever, on the ground from their own people because, again, people felt free to vote.¹²⁷

119. But the elections will have an even more important role than providing the Iraqi Security Forces with the confidence that comes after having successfully completed a challenging assignment. The Transitional National Government will be seen as more legitimate in the eyes of most Iraqis than its predecessor or the earlier Governing Council because it was created through national elections and, as the ISF will come under its direction, they will share in this increased legitimacy. In the words of General McColl, this should herald “a significant increase in their local effectiveness”¹²⁸ as more ordinary Iraqis come to trust and believe that the ISF are responsive to their local communities and not an unelected government.

120. We conclude that the successful conduct of the elections to the Iraqi Transitional National Assembly on 30 January 2005 will go down as a turning point in Iraq’s post-conflict development. Their success demonstrated not only that Iraqis have an appetite for democracy and an enthusiasm to be involved in shaping their country’s future, but also that the Iraqi Security Forces have begun to develop the capabilities to provide effective security for their own people.

121. But there is still along way to go and it is difficult to judge accurately the effective strength of the ISF. As we were told on our visits to Iraq, there was discernible pressure to report ever-increasing numbers of ISF personnel back to capitals as a sign of success and mission accomplishment. Accordingly, half a year before the Minister for the Armed Forces updated us on the size of the Iraqi Security Forces, General Petraeus wrote in the

127 Q 567

128 Q 373

Washington Post that about 164,000 Iraqi police and soldiers (of which approximately 100,000 were trained and equipped) along with 74,000 facility protection forces were actively participating in security missions.¹²⁹ But even as this article was published others were reporting different figures.¹³⁰

122. Most importantly, what the figures mean by way of usable forces is still not clear. The data does not distinguish between serious training and token training. While the valour of a number of Iraqi units is unquestionable, so are the desertion rates of many others, particularly when they come under attack by the insurgents. As General Houghton euphemistically referred to it: “I think the British Army would call them—‘retention difficulties’”.¹³¹ Even when the Iraqi Security Forces stand their ground, their ability is questionable. As Olga Oliker, a Policy Analyst with RAND, writes:

We should not think that as long as enough people are deemed ‘trained’ and given a uniform that the Iraqis will be capable of providing for their own security. We must always be asking who is being trained, to do what, and how well.¹³²

123. This has been increasingly appreciated within MoD and the United States. In its report to the US Congress on developments in Iraq of 5 January 2005, the US State Department wrote that the Iraqi Security Forces will “require national, operational, and tactical level capabilities to reconstitute and regenerate forces that suffer casualties, injuries, or absentees”¹³³ and admits that logistical capabilities are also lacking. The Minister for the Armed Forces also qualified the figures he himself gave us:

These figures we give are not figures which you would say would turn out and exercise maximum capability if tomorrow they wanted to do so, that would not be the real world in which we live, but it is an improving position all the time.¹³⁴

124. Recent reviews of the Iraqi Security Forces have underlined the need to move beyond a fixation with numbers. Referring to an open-ended review of the MNF-I’s security assistance conducted by retired US General Gary Luck in early January 2005, General Houghton told us what the new focus of the security assistance would be:

I think I would perhaps summarise that as being less a concern with numbers, less a concern with the kit, training and recruiting bit; greater emphasis on leadership, greater emphasis on mentoring and battle and operational inoculation and a greater emphasis on growing those elements of security capability which are fundamental to the Iraqi security forces inheriting the responsibility for the prosecution of a complex counter-insurgency. By these things I definitely mean the operationalisation of an

129 Battling for Iraq, *Washington Post*, 26 September 2004

130 *Iraq’s Unready Security Forces: An Interim Assessment* “Barak A Salmoni, Middle East Review of International Affairs, Vol 8, No 3, September 2004; *The Critical Role of Iraqi Military, Security and Police Forces: Necessity, Problems and Process*, Anthony Cordesman, 7 October 2004, www.csis.org. In January 2005 Senator Joseph Biden described the US Administrations figures for Iraqi Security Forces as “malarkey”, General Seeking Faster Training of Iraq Soldiers, Eric Schmitt, *New York Times*, 23 January 2005

131 Q 386

132 ‘Iraqi Security Forces: Numbers and Needs’, Olga Oliker, *Knight Ridder/Tribune News Service*, 20 October 2004.

133 Section 2207 Report from the US State Department to the US Congress, 5 January 2005

134 Q 567

Iraqi C2 mechanism and greater capacity within its intelligence gathering capability”.¹³⁵

125. Dr Hutton confirmed General Houghton’s assessment:

It is all very well to have lots of people trained to a basic level to be the foot soldiers but they need the leadership and the command and control and they also need the enabling functions, the logistics and supply element, otherwise they do not perform as coherent formations.¹³⁶

126. On the future direction of the reform process, Mr Howard told us:

... quite a lot of emphasis has been placed on getting the numbers in and making sure that they are all equipped, but it is just as important that we do the more intangible things like developing the ability of the Ministry of Defence, for example, and the Joint Headquarters to direct military operations and to support them through logistics, and, looking further ahead, that the Ministry of Defence has the ability to make forward plans for budgets, equipment and so on and so forth. These are things which are happening but on which we need to make more progress, and they are much harder to measure than just numbers of people on units.¹³⁷

127. Finally, the issue of getting crucial equipment to the Iraqi Security Forces—including weapons, communications equipment, body armour and vehicles—has remained a problem. When we visited Iraq, several interlocutors, both from MNF-I and the Iraq Security Forces, lamented the slow delivery of equipment. Mr Howard also told us:

... there were problems about making sure the equipment was delivered. I think there were problems early on about getting the stream of equipment delivered into all Iraqi security forces.¹³⁸

128. According to figures published by the US Department of Defense, equipment totals for all forces will eventually reach nearly 290,000 weapons, 24,000 vehicles, 75,000 radios, and more than 190,000 pieces of body armour. The UK, US and German Governments have donated the bulk of this equipment. On 14 February 2005, MoD signed a statement of intent with the Iraqi Ministry of Defence to increase co-operation on defence equipment matters (such as requirement definition, exchange of information, supplier identification, and the availability of commercial training).¹³⁹ Mr Howard told us that he was confident the necessary equipment was now reaching the beneficiaries: “After a fairly shaky start—and there were reasons for that—I think it is actually going rather well”.¹⁴⁰

129. We believe that Security Sector Reform should have been given greater priority by Coalition and British forces before and immediately after the invasion in March 2003. Only belatedly, did the Coalition begin building the Iraqi Security Forces. Even then, a

135 Q 318

136 Q 595

137 Q 406

138 Q 415

139 HC Deb, 3 March 2005, col 93WS

140 Q 415

bottom-up, numerically-focused approach meant that the Iraqi military, security, and police did not develop in a well-coordinated manner. We are pleased to see that a more realistic approach to the build-up of the Iraqi Security Forces is now being taken with much greater emphasis on capability, effectiveness and long term sustainability.

Civilian Control of the Armed Forces in Theory

130. Military rule in Iraq predates Saddam Hussein's regime. The International Crisis Group described the development of the Iraqi military and the crucial role played by the British in the 1920s:

The British had in mind a relatively small, elitist, tribally-based army, backed by a powerful air force and irregular forces such as the 'levies'. What emerged was quite different: a large conscript army that became the repository of national identity and embodiment of state sovereignty.¹⁴¹

131. From 1958 to 1968, the Iraqi military developed a highly politicised officer corps and the army occupied key government posts. While the Saddam Hussein regime was clearly different from its predecessors, the role of the Armed Forces continued in much the same way as before: as a state within the state. Changing this cultural and historical legacy was therefore seen as a key element of the Coalition's reform programmes.

132. The Iraqi Security Forces were placed on a legal footing through the Transitional Administrative Law, Article 5 of which states: "The Iraqi Armed Forces shall be subject to the civilian control of the Iraqi Transitional Government". It goes on to state that the Iraqi Transitional Government is to have exclusive competence over the formulation and execution of national security policy, "including creating and maintaining armed forces to secure, protect, and guarantee the security of the country's borders and to defend Iraq". There has also been an increased understanding of the need for political oversight of the Iraq Security Forces. Dr Roger Hutton, Director Joint Commitments, MoD, told us:

My impression, having met senior people in the Iraqi MoD, is that they are very well seized of the need for democratic control of the Armed Forces, partly because it was not very long ago that they were on the receiving end of an MoD that was not democratically controlled. I think that culture is becoming inculcated in the Iraqi MoD.¹⁴²

National Arrangements

Ministry of Defence

133. When we visited Iraq in December 2004 we were given an overview of the Ministry of Defence. Originally the Coalition Provisional Authority had planned only for a small Iraqi Ministry of Defence and expected to have several years in which to build it up. Plans were then changed, however, in November 2003 and the Iraqi Ministry of Defence had to be established quickly before the Transfer of Authority on 28 June 2004.

¹⁴¹ 'Iraq: Building a New Security Structure', Middle East Report No. 20, International Crisis Group, 23 December 2003

134. Considerable progress has been made in only a short period of time. We were told in Iraq in December 2004 that the organisational structure of the Ministry of Defence was finally falling into place and that while recruitment of civil servants had been slow, most positions had now been filled. The projected strength is 700 and some 500 had been employed when we visited Iraq. Despite this effort, the Ministry of Defence's slow start and still limited capabilities have led some commentators to express concerns about its ability to exercise its role vis-à-vis the Iraqi Security Forces. As one of our Specialist Advisers Dr Andrew Rathmell, formerly Director of Policy Planning for the Coalition Provisional Authority, wrote in February 2005:

The institutional weaknesses of the MoD are a problem because the Iraqi Armed Forces are developing rapidly. This poses the risk that the armed forces will grow rapidly into a powerful institution, only nominally governed by a weak civilian ministry. This risk is exacerbated by the fact that, for understandable reasons, the new Iraqi Armed Forces are being used primarily as an internal security force, despite the best intentions of their founders and the stipulations of the interim constitution.¹⁴³

135. General Houghton conceded “that it is hardly surprising that the ability of organisations like the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of the Interior is still relatively rudimentary in such a short time, and, particularly, in such difficult security circumstances”.¹⁴⁴ **The need for political oversight by the Iraqi Ministry of Defence over the Iraqi Security Forces is a crucial part of Iraq's post-Saddam Security Sector Reform and we remain concerned about the slow institutional development of the Ministry.**

Ministerial Committee Of National Security

136. The Ministerial Committee of National Security (MCNS) was set up following the Transfer of Authority as an Iraqi committee to issue strategic policy direction and guidance on national security issues. It was chaired by Prime Minister Allawi. Iraqi representatives normally included the Ministers for Defence, Foreign Affairs, Interior, Finance and Justice, as well as the head of the Iraqi National Intelligence Service (INIS) and National Security Adviser.¹⁴⁵ The MCNS normally met once a week at ministerial level. MNF [Commanding Generals] and the UK and US Ambassadors (or representatives) normally attended with supporting staff, as invited members. The MCNS normally met at Deputies level once a week, with representatives of the Ministries listed above, MNF, and the UK/US Embassies. *Ad hoc* working groups were established to look at specific issues (such as drafting the National Security Strategy).¹⁴⁶ The National Security Adviser's Office provided basic administrative support to the MCNS.

137. Immediately below the MCNS, to take charge of operational matters, the Security Committee was established. In his role as Deputy Commander of MNF-I General McColl co-chaired the Security Committee alongside representatives of the Iraqi MoD, and MoI,

143 'Reforming Iraq's Security Sector', RUSI Journal, Andrew Rathmell, February 2005

144 Q 374

145 Ev 125

146 Ev 123–124

National Intelligence Service, and MNF. The aim of the Committee was to assess the operational situation, develop strategic options and guidance, raise strategic issues to higher levels and translate policy directives into action. A small secretariat comprising MoI, MoD and MNF personnel provided support to the committee.¹⁴⁷

138. Dr Rathmell told us that the MCNS was working, but there is little sign yet of the development of true coordination between ministries at working level.¹⁴⁸

139. We welcome the creation of the Ministerial Committee of National Security (MCNS) as a mechanism for the Iraqi Government to begin taking control of the Iraqi Security Forces and to coordinate military and security policy with political and economic policies. These mechanisms now need to be developed further by the Transitional Iraqi Government as well as at working-level.

Parliamentary Oversight

140. We raised the issue of parliamentary oversight of the Iraqi Security Forces with the Armed Forces Minister. In the early stages of Iraq's post-war constitutional reconstruction, no legislative body existed to assume this parliamentary responsibility. Only the Governing Council existed during the occupation and that was not a body which could exercise any independent parliamentary oversight. The Transitional Administrative Law (TAL) does not mention the role of the Transitional National Assembly in overseeing the Iraq Security Forces.

141. It did, however, set out a number of essential elements in the new constitution, which will be drawn up by the Transitional National Assembly. Article 59 of the TAL states:

The permanent constitution shall contain guarantees to ensure that the Iraqi Armed Forces are never again used to terrorize or oppress the people of Iraq.

142. It also states in Article 34 that the Transitional National Assembly will perform a range of oversight functions and may establish committees to assist in this work. While it does not explicitly mention defence matters, we believe that these articles should be interpreted in such a way as to ensure the establishment of parliamentary oversight of the country's armed forces through, *inter alia*, a committee system, in both the Transitional National Assembly and the legislature to be defined in the constitution. **Parliamentary oversight must be a central feature of the 'new' Iraq's security arrangements, and we call on Coalition partners and the UK Government to provide assistance to the Transitional National Assembly in establishing mechanisms for parliamentary oversight of the Iraqi Security Forces.**

Regional Arrangements

143. The Transitional Administrative Law also created a decentralised arrangement that mirrored the country's decentralised interim system of governance and limited the Interim Iraqi Government's writ. It granted the Kurdistan Regional Government "regional control

¹⁴⁷ Ev 124

¹⁴⁸ *Reforming Iraq's Security Sector: Our Exit Strategy from Iraq?*, Andrew Rathmell, RUSI, February 2005

over police forces and internal security”. It also granted widespread autonomy over security affairs to the eighteen governorates. The MNF-I therefore worked to establish structures for oversight and coordination in the governorates which in many ways replicated the central structures. Some governorates saw the establishment of a Security Committee chaired by the Governor where, as General Rollo describes it “he could set out policy and say, ‘Right, these are the major security issues ...’ whether it was security on route 6 or a spate of kidnapping or customs or the protection of the oil infrastructure”.¹⁴⁹ When we visited Iraq in December 2004 we were told that Security Committees existed on paper in almost all the eighteen governorates, but with different approaches taken in various provinces.

144. At the operational level, Joint Coordination Centres were established to coordinate responses to security incidents. General Rollo explained the concept further:

The idea was fairly straightforward, that there should be a single Joint Operations Centre which had the representatives of all the people present”.¹⁵⁰

145. The regional arrangements—the Security Committee, but especially the Joint Operations Centre—provided an embryonic Iraqi security structure, which MNF-I could cooperate with in the governorates. But, at the same time, the creation of this system may have caused problems as the central government institutions may have felt a lack of control over the security forces outside of Baghdad. General Rollo told us:

from Baghdad’s point of view, looking down at us, I suspect they felt they probably did not have enough control over what was happening.¹⁵¹

Ensuring appropriate oversight over, and coordination mechanisms for, the Iraqi Security Forces that mirror Iraq’s decentralised political system is important, but we believe care needs to be taken not to undermine the Iraqi Government’s control of its national security apparatus.

How Does the Command System Work in Practice?

146. Despite this elaborate system, it is clear that the Iraqi Government did not—and still does not—exercise anything resembling command and control¹⁵² of the military and security apparatus.

147. Through the evidence that we have taken and the in-theatre visits we have been on, we suspect that the military decision-making process functions in the following manner. Policies are developed and elaborated by the MNF-I based on intelligence that is collected primarily by MNF-I assets and analysed almost solely inside MNF-I. The finished product is then discussed with the Iraqi Government in the above-mentioned forums. The Iraqi

149 Q 418

150 *Ibid*

151 Q 410

152 Command and control is defined as the exercise of authority and direction by a properly designated commander over assigned and attached forces in the accomplishment of the mission. Command and control functions are performed through an arrangement of personnel, equipment, communications, facilities, and procedures employed by a commander in planning, directing, coordinating, and controlling forces and operations in the accomplishment of the mission

Government then takes a decision. Once this is done, the decision passes back into the MNF-I chain of command. It gets translated into an order and is executed by the relevant Iraqi Government units. Iraqi Security Forces may participate in the subsequent operations when and if this is deemed useful (and safe).

148. This description was confirmed to us by General Houghton who used the example of the operation in Fallujah to illustrate how the operation of the system worked:

The Ministerial Committee on National Security Transactions existed and it was at that level and Mr Allawi making the decision to prosecute the Fallujah Operation as it happened, but then what we are saying is that the absolute conduct of the operation, the orders of process, flowed down the multinational force chain of command, it did not flow down the Iraqi Armed Forces' chain of command because it was not sufficiently developed and robust.¹⁵³

He went on to tell us:

So there was political accountability at the highest level but the actual implementation of that political decision by and large flowed down a multinational force chain of command which was then wedded in at the local level with Iraqi security forces at a provincial level.¹⁵⁴

The Secretary of State made the same point to us on 2 November 2004:

The decision as to whether any operation will be conducted in and around Fallujah or elsewhere will be a decision for the interim Iraqi government.¹⁵⁵

149. Nothing about this process is surprising. It is to be expected considering the still-nascent state of the Iraqi Security Forces. But it is not the impression the Government sought to give when it described the case for the operation in Fallujah. The following exchange took place when the Secretary of State gave evidence to us on 2 November 2004:

Mr Jones: Secretary of State, you said that the decision, for example, on operations in Fallujah is down to the Iraqi government. What is their role once those operations have started? What is their involvement, for example, in calling a halt to action, or in the day-to-day running?

Mr Hoon: It is their country. They will have complete authority and, indeed, responsibility for those operations. They will be briefed in the way that I have been briefed: they will expect to receive thorough detail as to what is happening and, of course, if they decide that the operation should stop at any stage, that is a matter for them. If they decide it should stop, it will stop.

...

Mr Jones: How does it work then? For example, if they have control over, for example, the Iraqi forces there, which I assume from what you are saying is

153 594

154 *Ibid*

155 Q 152

correct, are you saying that they have a veto or they will stop, for example, or overrule what a US commander on the ground would want to do?

Mr Hoon: The final decision as to whether this operation will be conducted, how it will be conducted, and the nature of the operations involved is a matter for the Iraqis and it is a matter for the Committee, as I referred to earlier.¹⁵⁶

150. The command chain of the Iraqi Security Forces cannot yet sustain responsibility for operations carried out in its name. At this stage of the Iraqi Security Forces' development this is unsurprising. It is important, however, that we recognise the limitations which this places on the current and future capabilities of the Iraqi Security Forces.

Naval Forces

151. Eighty percent of Iraq's revenues comes from oil exported through the country's two oil terminals Khawr Al Amaya (KAAOT) and Al Basrah (ABOT) in the Gulf. Beyond the need to protect these two key installations, Iraq needs to protect its maritime border, which has since the end of the invasion seen a number of incidents.¹⁵⁷ MNF-I has therefore sought to build a limited Iraqi naval capacity while acting *in lieu* of the Iraqis through its Naval Task Force. HMS Grafton, which we visited in May 2004 and its replacement, HMS Marlborough, which we visited in December 2004 (when we also visited the ABOT itself), are at the forefront of the Naval Task Force operating close to the oil terminals themselves. Additionally, a detachment of 40 Commando train and mentor the Iraqi Coastal Defence Force, and in Umm Qasr port, the Royal Navy train the Inland Waterways Department. The Minister for the Armed Forces told us that the Iraqi Government is expected to take on operational responsibility for the oil platforms from July 2005. Currently the Iraqi Ministry of Oil is responsible for oil infrastructure security. This is mainly undertaken by private security companies. The plan for the future is to centralise oil infrastructure security under the Ministry of Interior, with the Facilities Protection Service (FPS) taking the lead for security provision. The US are the lead for the protection of the oil terminals in the northern Gulf. The Iraqi Naval Battalion is being trained by the US, with the aspiration that they will take the lead in the future. The plan is also that the Iraqi Navy will patrol the area of the oil platforms. Protection of land-based oil terminals would remain the lead of the FPS. The Naval Task Force will continue to provide the necessary maritime protection to the oil terminals for the foreseeable future.¹⁵⁸

152. In spite of these efforts, the capabilities of the Iraqi Coastal Defence Force and the Inland Waterways Department remain very limited. General Houghton confirmed this:

At the moment, the nature of the development of the Iraqi navy is relatively modest: five patrol crafts, five inflatable boats, effectively to do things in support of riverine security and that sort of thing.¹⁵⁹

156 Qq 154, 156

157 'Incident in the Shatt al-Arab Waterway: Iran's Border Sensitivities', Policy Watch No. 879, Washington Institute for Near East Policy Simon Henderson, 28 June 2004

158 Q 55

159 Q 386

153. As a result, the Inland Waterways Department only patrols the area immediately surrounding Umm Qasr port. MoD was not aware of any plans to equip the Iraqi Security Forces with larger vessels, which would allow increased capabilities. Finally, we were told that the Iraqi Ministry of Defence has no structure to command and control the country's naval assets.¹⁶⁰ **It seems clear to us that MNF-I—and, by extension the UK—will need to assist Iraq in protecting its sea-based assets and territorial waters from terrorist attack or incursion for the foreseeable future.**

Iraqi Police Service

154. Developing the capabilities of the Iraqi Police Service is now seen as a pivotal part of Security Sector Reform and establishing the Iraqi Government's writ throughout the country. Belatedly, it is also seen as part of the counter-insurgency campaign. As Mr Walt Slocombe, formerly the CPA's Director of Security Affairs, has written:

In the long run, Iraq's internal security must be within the capabilities of its police, while its armed forces, possibly in continued associations with outside allies, see to its external security (as well as those aspects of its internal security that require high-end military capacities beyond what can reasonably or prudently be expected of any police force).¹⁶¹

155. Mr Stephen Pattison, Director of International Security in the FCO, argued that the Coalition had intended to train Iraqi police officers from the end of major combat operations on 10 May 2003:

given the circumstances we found ourselves in May 2003, our plan then, to try fairly rapidly to train a large number of new Iraqi police, was a plan which seemed reasonable at the time. We put it into place, actively and with commitment, and it began to produce police.¹⁶²

156. Chief Superintendent Kevin Hurley, the Senior Police Adviser in MND (SE), however, submitted evidence to us saying that “immediately following and during the combat operations of March and April 2003 there was no plan for the maintenance of law and order amongst the civil population in Iraq”.¹⁶³ He went on to contend that policing was not “part of strategic military plan”.¹⁶⁴ Perhaps this is not surprising as UK police professionals were not part of the post-conflict planning for Operation Telic. Chief Constable Paul Kernaghan confirmed this to us:

There was no engagement with the British police service prior to the invasion—I appreciate primarily a diplomatic and military issue—but there was no liaison with the professional police expertise prior to that. I think that was wrong.¹⁶⁵

160 Q 553

161 *Iraq's Special Challenge: Security Sector Reform 'Under Fire'*, Walter B. Slocombe, *Reform and Reconstruction of the Security Sector*, BRYDEN, Alan and Heiner HÄNGGI (eds).

162 Q 256

163 Ev 148

164 Ev 149

165 Q 248

...

Pre the toppling of the Saddam Hussein regime, there was no liaison that I am aware of with British police in any shape or form. I deployed to Iraq in May 2003, I think 3 May, to see what contribution, if any, British policing could make, and, if we could make any contribution, to specify what that contribution would be.¹⁶⁶

This was confirmed by Mr Howard who told us the primary focus of planning was the future of the Iraqi army and not its police. He told us:

Obviously the focus was primarily on Iraqi combat units rather than the police service which, as John [McColl] said, was very much the lowest of the low and really did not figure in our calculations.¹⁶⁷

Mr Howard went on to tell us that establishing a civilian police force “from scratch” was not something MoD assumed it would be engaged in “prior to going into Iraq”.¹⁶⁸

157. It seems that when the Coalition was faced with the lawlessness and disorder which developed after 10 May 2003, its response was to train, equip and pay as many police officers as possible. When we visited Iraq both in May and December 2004 we were told the emphasis had been to ‘churn out the numbers’ irrespective of any strategic consideration of how the Iraqi Police Forces should develop, and what its tasks would be. The key, we were told, was to put ‘an Iraqi face’ on the security assignments. Thousands of police officers were recruited and sent on to the streets to patrol alongside Coalition forces. The reason for this approach may lie partly in the political need to be seen to be developing the Iraqi Security Forces and partly in the absence of strategic policing advice at senior levels. Even though police officers from troop-contributing countries were belatedly seconded first to the Coalition Provisional Authority and subsequently to MNF-I, it is clear that policing policy was run by the military. MoD told us that “responsibility for the training, equipping and mentoring of the Iraqi Police Service within the MNF-I resides with the Coalition Police Advisory and training team (CPATT) which is based in Baghdad and currently headed by a *US military officer*”.¹⁶⁹

158. As a result, while the police’s street-level capabilities were being developed and no doubt playing an important role in ensuring that relative lawfulness returned to many areas, we were told in Iraq that the Iraqi Police Service overall were hampered by their ignorance of more sophisticated police techniques. Chief Superintendent Hurley listed the areas he considered vital for dealing with organised crime and terrorism in Iraq: “forensic science capability, sophisticated intelligence gathering and covert operations (undercover officers, ‘bugging’, surveillance etc)”. In his submission to us, he noted that virtually no forensic work was undertaken on kidnapping, bombings or shootings during his time in Iraq. Dr Rathmell similarly writes:

166 Q 249

167 Q 311

168 Q 315

169 Ev 147, emphasis added

Unfortunately, the Iraqi Police Service was never designed to deal with serious crime or political violence. As the lowest tier of Saddam's security forces, the police have struggled with their sudden transformation into the first line of the security effort.¹⁷⁰

159. As a result, despite having been provided with some investigative training, the IPS remain incapable of conducting investigative operations or exploiting intelligence-based policing methods.¹⁷¹

160. To remedy this, MoD and the FCO have begun training Iraqi police officers in investigative techniques, including offering technical training courses in the Adnon Palace and at the Az Zubayr Police Academy. A UK Police Advisers team in the Ministry of the Interior in Baghdad has been championing criminal intelligence and forensics, encouraging the Minister of the Interior to make these two priorities for 2005. Moreover, in early 2005 the first 50 criminal intelligence operatives began training in Jordan, under the supervision of UK and Czech Republic Intelligence advisers and equipment has arrived to set up criminal intelligence offices throughout Iraq.

161. The support currently being provided by the UK to the Iraqi police stands in contrast to the lack of involvement by British police officers in the planning for the immediate post-conflict period. During our evidence session and our visits to Iraq in May and December 2004, we were told of a litany of problems confronting the deployment of police officers from the UK. First, police officers were not included in the planning for operations. Chief Constable Paul Kernaghan from ACPO told us:

From the perspective of the police service, once the Foreign and Commonwealth Office identify a diplomatic need and they secure the support of the Home Office, the Scottish Executive and Northern Ireland Office, they then come and I try to facilitate that from a police service point of view. I am involved and I appreciate the opportunity to be involved in early discussions with FCO colleagues. However, we as a service lack the preplanning capability. I do not have members of staff attached to PJHQ, for example, to see whether there is a police role, and that is a major failing. However, at this point in time, once there is a political will expressed, I seek to facilitate the response of the domestic service.¹⁷²

162. This situation probably reflects the current level of mutual understanding between the police and the military. As Chief Constable Kehanghan told us:

Yes, I think that military doctrine should include a civil police dimension but, in fairness to military colleagues, they need to know who to liaise with, and who is going to contribute to it. At this point in time there is no equivalent of the Joint Doctrines Concepts Centre in the police.¹⁷³

170 *Reforming Iraq's Security Sector*, RUSI Journal, Andrew Rathmell, February 2005

171 Intelligence-led policing is defined as the application of criminal intelligence analysis as a rigorous decision making tool to facilitate crime reduction and prevention through effective policing strategies. Three structures (criminal environment, intelligence and the decision maker) and three processes (interpret, influence and impact) are identified as necessary for an intelligence-led policing model to work.

172 Q 241

173 Q 258

163. Second, there is little institutional incentive to encourage constabularies to send police officers on missions. Policing within the UK is undertaken by over 50 forces covering three legal jurisdictions. The forty-three forces of England and Wales are regulated by the Home Office, whilst the eight forces in Scotland are regulated by the Scottish Executive, and the Police Service of Northern Ireland by the Northern Ireland Office. Additionally the Ministry of Defence Police is an executive agency of MoD. This makes ‘recruitment’ for international missions very difficult. The FCO and DFID have a roster of police officers willing to go on missions, but while many junior officers volunteer, senior officers rarely do so.

164. Ultimately, decisions to ‘free’ officers for international deployments are made by the UK’s Chief Constables, not the Home Secretary. The Chief Constables will give greater priority to fulfilling their obligations at home than to international deployments. Overseas police commitments are considered marginal activities in the context of the Home Office’s agenda. This amounts to a disincentive to the constabularies to volunteer police officers, especially senior ones, to international missions.

165. Third, there is little personal incentive—bar a sense of adventure—for police officers to put themselves forward for international missions. Their jobs, salaries and benefits are unaffected by any experience they may gain. Police officers on international deployments may also be passed over for promotion or career-enhancing assignments. Sir David Veness, the UN’s Under-Secretary General for Safety and Security and a former high-ranking UK police officer, confirmed this, telling us that overseas assignments were seen as a ‘bad career move’. No one is ‘looking out for them’ in the UK. They report to a superior in theatre who may or may not be a police professional (depending on the type of mission). So if problems occur, frequently they have no police superior to turn to. The same problems may be encountered across missions, but there are no official channels through which experience of these can be drawn together and lessons learnt for the future. Equally, police officers’ performance on missions—good or bad—is not communicated to their constabularies. Chief Constable Paul Kernaghan explained some of the problems to us:

Frankly, for senior officers in particular, there is no incentive and there are a lot of inhibitors. This is not a secret—I spoke publicly to the Association of Chief Police Officers and the Association of Police Authorities at their annual meeting and I basically said, “If you submit a well written and highly polished best value review report, that will do far more for your career prospects than having served for six months in Baghdad.” I think that is wrong and that will be the issue, the \$64 million question if I can phrase it in that way, and unless the taskforce, with political will, changes that situation, I am afraid I will still be reduced to personally canvassing individuals and whilst invariably good people—and I am not in any way decrying that—but we are sending people who are in their last months of service who have an eye to post-retirement employment. We need to be sending good people to bring them back for even more challenging domestic command appointments and, until we address that, I am afraid that we have a major issue.¹⁷⁴

166. This situation is certainly very different from the military where international deployments, and work in international organisations (i.e. NATO) remains an essential

part of an officer's career. Mr Stephen Rimmer, Director of Policing Policy in the Home Office, conceded to us that "There are clearly some things which, in terms of basic systems, can be properly applied to give a push to this".¹⁷⁵ Dr Owen Greene of Bradford University made the same point, telling us: "Awareness raising, extra inducements, changes of procedure in the margins are all essential".¹⁷⁶ He, however, went on to argue that no amount of incentives could substitute for the creation of a standing, deployable police capacity. He told us:

but without a structural change, which means that there is a standing force into which professional officers circulate in and out and so on, so it is not led predominantly in terms of local policing, and structural reform, I do not think that any degree of awareness raising will overcome some of the challenges of career progression fast enough to be able to deliver what we want.¹⁷⁷

167. As part of the Government's attempt to improve the coordination of its efforts on post-conflict and crisis management issues, the mechanisms for deploying police to post-conflict situations have received consideration in Whitehall. The FCO has established a 'Strategic Task Force', which is meant to recommend ways to move the issue forward. Its proposals will, of course, need to be considered in the context of the Government's wider police reform agenda.

168. We believe the problems in developing the Iraqi Police Service were partly caused by deficiencies in the way that the UK handles the contribution of police officers in Peace Support Operations generally. Iraq was not, by any means, the first occasion on which difficulties with the early and effective deployment of police officers to a Peace Support Operation were encountered. And even in Iraq the absence of police support was acknowledged as an issue in July 2003. Yet it has taken until the end of 2004 for the FCO (the lead department in these matters) to establish a 'Strategic Task Force'. This is in effect no more than a cross-departmental committee of officials. It is expected to report within the next six months. But Mr Pattison—who chairs the task force—could give us no assurance that its report would be followed by effective action.¹⁷⁸

169. The Coalition's early efforts at Security Sector Reform—particularly in the civil policing area—were characterised by short-termism and indecision. Weaknesses in that reform programme came close to undermining the success of the initial military operations. We are disappointed that two years after the start of those operations the Government's response to the systemic shortcomings, which contributed to those weaknesses, has amounted only to the establishment of a 'Strategic Task Force'.

170. We welcome recent initiatives by the Government and the EU to train the Iraqi Police Service in complex policing techniques. We note, however, that assistance to develop Iraq's policing arrangements was not incorporated in the post-conflict planning. As a result, there was an absence of strategic policing advice at senior levels in the Coalition while the policing policy was unduly 'militarised'. Consequently, the kind

175 Q 287

176 *Ibid*

177 *Ibid*

178 Qq 239–240

of police forces that were established in Iraq were unprepared for the complex policing tasks subsequently expected of them.

Iraqi National Intelligence Service

171. Intelligence reform is one of the less recognised aspects of Security Sector Reform in Peace Support Operations.¹⁷⁹ In Bosnia & Herzegovina, it took eight years of peace implementation before the international community began a process of intelligence reform. Part of the reason is that in virtually all authoritarian regimes, the intelligence apparatus was a key means for maintaining power and therefore a source of abuse. Intelligence reform has been further complicated because of the pervasive public distrust of intelligence institutions, as well as the common problem of politicisation of the intelligence bureaucracy, and the consequent lack of a corporate culture or tradition of public service and transparency. Despite these concerns, establishing a functioning intelligence system can be one of the most important assets provided to a country's nascent national security apparatus if properly structured and controlled. This is even more the case if the country's government is confronted by an insurgency, which can only be defeated through an intelligence-led process.

172. In Iraq, it is our impression that this task was deliberately overlooked. As Dr Rathmell has written:

The Coalition was understandably reluctant to rebuild Iraqi intelligence services, preferring that future Iraqi governments deal with the morally and political tricky subject of how to build effective but accountable services.¹⁸⁰

173. In many ways, the Coalition made the eventual task of rebuilding an Iraqi intelligence apparatus more difficult by purging many of the professionals who had previously served in the Mukhabarat (external intelligence) and the Istikhabarat Al Amn Al Askariya (the military intelligence). Major Lincoln-Jones points out that maintaining many of the existing professionals, however morally disquieting, could have made a real difference in building an intelligence apparatus. He told us:

Post WW2 experience and more recently the overthrow of the Shah proves the utility of purging the leadership but utilising the officials left behind after the collapse of a regime.¹⁸¹

He went on to tell us:

Whereas many of them were distinctly unsavoury by western democratic standards our squeamishness is reaping terrible consequences both for our own forces and for the unfortunate Iraqis.¹⁸²

179 *Democratic and Parliamentary Oversight of the Intelligence Services: Best Practices and Procedures*, Hans Born, DCAF, Working paper no. 20. May 2002

180 *Reforming Iraq's Security Sector*, RUSI Journal, Andrew Rathmell, February 2005

181 Not Printed

182 *Ibid*

174. General Houghton admitted problems in confronting the insurgency were caused by the lack of attention paid to creating an intelligence apparatus:

I would not pretend that we are a long way down the track of developing a comprehensive internal Iraqi national intelligence gathering apparatus that it has been clearly recognised as one of the key factors that they will need in order to be able to continue to prosecute a counter-insurgency campaign.¹⁸³

175. Mr Walt Slocombe, a former Director for Security Affairs at the CPA, has subsequently written:

The development of indigenous Iraqi intelligence capabilities will be an increasingly important element in this effort.¹⁸⁴

176. General Rollo, speaking about experiences in MND (SE), told us that he had sought to utilise the Joint Operations Centres established in each governorate to develop Iraqi intelligence capabilities. But he also made clear that problems remained: “I would certainly say that is an area where there is further progress to be made”.¹⁸⁵

177. Increased effort is now being put into re-building the Iraqi National Intelligence Service. General Houghton told us that increased assistance was being offered: “We are providing a number of advisers as to the sorts of techniques they need to develop”.¹⁸⁶ He further told us:

A significant amount of work and advice is being launched at this moment to attempt to give them some of those skills as much on procedures and assessments and those sorts of things.¹⁸⁷

We accept that there was good reason for the Coalition not to retain the intelligence apparatus, which Saddam Hussein used to terrorise Iraq’s citizens. At the same time, we acknowledge that developing indigenous Iraqi intelligence capabilities is necessary for the Iraqi Security Forces to engage the insurgency. We call on MoD to provide assistance to the Iraqi Transitional Government and National Assembly so that the need for intelligence is balanced with the need to maintain judicial and political oversight of all intelligence activities.

Iraqi Army

178. Reporting to the UN Security Council in 17 July 2003, the UN Secretary-General expressed his envoy’s “concern ... at the potentially serious implications of the recent dissolution of the Iraqi Army, which numbers half a million personnel”.¹⁸⁸ The concern

183 Q 597

184 *Iraq’s Special Challenge: Security Sector in Reform ‘Under Fire’*, Walter B. Slocombe, Reform and Reconstruction of the Security Sector, BRYDEN, Alan and Heiner HÄNGGI (eds).

185 Q 372

186 Q 597

187 *Ibid*

188 ‘Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 24 of Security Council resolution 1483 (2003)’, 17 July 2003, available at: <http://www.un.org/>

was that disbanding the Iraqi army would leave no indigenous force to maintain order, and would also provide the insurgency with a large pool of armed and trained fighters.

179. General Houghton similarly told us:

I think it is fair to say that in the immediate aftermath of the conflict phase judgments were reached that it was probably a mistake to have a disbandment of the whole Iraqi Armed Forces root and branch, as it were, but there was a tendency then for a local bottom-up initiative to dictate the way in which Iraqi security forces were first drawn up.¹⁸⁹

180. Dr Rathmell makes the same point: “With hindsight, it is arguable that a more gradual transition from the previous military to a new, democratic military would have been desirable”.¹⁹⁰ In September 2004, the Prime Minister conceded:

I do accept that there was probably one, as I’ve said before, one error that was made, which is that, I think in retrospect, to disband the Iraqi Army in its entirety and to ‘de-Baath-ify’, in other words to remove all elements of the Baath Party from positions of authority in Iraq was done too quickly.¹⁹¹

181. However, many of those involved the decision at the time now argue that Saddam Hussein’s army effectively disbanded itself and only the Sunni-dominated officer corps would have remained. Moreover, the decision to disband the army should not be seen in isolation from the CPA’s related decisions, for example, the decision to outlaw the Baath Party and disband the intelligence services (the Mukhabarat and the Istikhabarat Al Amn Al Askariya). Writing about the causes of the insurgency, Colonel Langton sees the disbandment of the army in a larger context: “Overall the decision to disband the army, or to allow it to disperse; the decision to prohibit previous Ba’athist officials from having any role in reconstruction when they were the only people with the knowledge and experience to do so; the lack of resources for fast post-conflict reconstruction; and the absence of a broader regime to prevent external threats entering the country all contributed to the promotion of an insurgency which had in all probability been pre-planned”.¹⁹²

182. Since the original decision in May 2003, re-building the Iraqi Army has been at the centre of the Coalition’s Security Sector Reform programme. We were told in Iraq in December 2004 that the original plan for the Iraqi Army envisaged three Army Divisions, six National Guard Divisions and Special Forces. But Prime Minister Allawi apparently forced a reconsideration of the original plans as he sought the creation of a Mechanised Brigade, which had not originally been envisaged. The new plan therefore included four Army Divisions. In September 2004, General Petraeus, Commander of the Multinational Security Transition Command in Iraq, wrote that six regular Army and Intervention Force battalions would become operational sometime within the next two months and that nine more regular Army battalions would have completed training by January 2005.¹⁹³ The Iraqi

189 Q 601

190 *Reforming Iraq’s Security Sector*, RUSI Journal, Andrew Rathmell, February 2005

191 Disbanding Iraqi army was a mistake, says Blair, *ABC News*, 26 September 2004

192 Ev 139

193 In his 26 September 2004, op-ed in the *Washington Post*

National Guard, which was previously known as the Iraq Civil Defense Corps (ICDC) will be absorbed into the regular Army.¹⁹⁴

183. The Iraqi Army is a central element of the Iraqi Security Forces both at the present time and in the future. We note that time has been lost in establishing the Iraqi Army and that changes in policy have slowed down its full establishment. It will be important to ensure that the future development of the Iraqi Army, including its prospective merger with the Iraqi National Guard, does not compromise its operational effectiveness or organisational coherence.

Judicial Reform

184. Beyond executive and parliamentary control, the Iraqi Security Forces will need to respect the rule of law. As Walt Slocombe has written: “Success requires that the security services that will serve the governmental order not only be strong enough to manage the nation’s security, but must also be fully responsive to Iraq’s new legal and constitutional order and respectful of the rights of its people”.¹⁹⁵ Dr Hutton made the same point: “... you need a functioning criminal justice system to which to hand over detainees and to create stability”.¹⁹⁶

185. The United Nation’s report “Comprehensive Review of the Whole Question of Peacekeeping Operations in All Their Aspects” (also known as the Brahimi report) concludes that peacekeeping operations require the rapid deployment not only of military forces, but also of missions that incorporate a wide range of civilian expertise needed to render viable the consolidation of peace, including a reformed judiciary.¹⁹⁷

186. Following the cessation of major combat operations, the majority of the Iraqi Ministry of Justice’s buildings had suffered extensive damage from looting and were, as a result, non-functional. Out of Baghdad’s eighteen courthouses, twelve had been emptied by looters, with approximately 75 per cent of the remaining estimated 110 courthouses in Iraq destroyed as well. At the time, neither the Ministry of Justice or the courts were operating. While many Ministry employees continued to report for work, no work could be performed. Moreover, the Coalition’s judicial reform programmes appear to have been slow to get underway. To quote Dr Rathmell: “The Coalition worked to bolster and reform the criminal and civil justice systems but the sector never received the support it deserved”.¹⁹⁸

187. Commentators have pointed to many alleged instances of extra-judicial use of force by the Iraqi Security Forces.¹⁹⁹ Human Rights Watch wrote to us:

194 Q 601

195 ‘Iraq’s Special Challenge: Security Sector Reform ‘Under Fire’’, Walter B. Slocombe, Reform and Reconstruction of the Security Sector *BRYDEN*, Alan Bryden and Heiner Hanggi (eds)

196 Q 638

197 ‘Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations’, 17 August 2000

198 ‘Reforming Iraq’s Security Sector’, *RUSI Journal*, Andrew Rathmell, February 2005

199 ‘Legal Standards Governing Treatment of Iraqi Detainees by Iraqi Security Forces During US Occupation’, Steven C. Welsh, *CDI Law Watch*, 31 January 2005.

Iraqi police and intelligence services routinely conduct arrests without warrants issued by an appropriate judicial authority. Human Rights Watch spoke to fifty-four detainees at the Central Criminal Court whom police had accused of a variety of serious crimes. The vast majority were in court for the first time, having already been in jail for several weeks, well beyond what is permitted by Iraqi law. At least twenty were blindfolded, and of those the ones that Human Rights Watch spoke with said they had been blindfolded since their arrest days earlier. The detainees spoke of dire conditions of detention, including severe overcrowding.²⁰⁰

188. Human Rights Watch also relayed to us anecdotal evidence of the Iraqi Interim Government carrying out mass raids which led to several arrests but few actual charges against those arrested. The report is worth quoting in full:

This report highlights two such raids conducted in late June and early July 2004 by Ministry of Interior personnel, with backup provided by Multinational Force personnel [...] In both of the cases we investigated, the police released the majority of the suspects within a day or two after the raids, though that received little press attention. Human Rights Watch followed the remaining cases through the court system, and found that in many of those, investigative judges ordered the suspects released because of insufficient evidence once they were brought before them. The police appear to have arrested a large number of them randomly during the operations, either because they happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time, or on the basis of unverified tip-offs from locals. By the time of the release of these detainees, the police had held them for weeks or months without bringing them to court, and in some cases certainly tortured or otherwise ill-treated them.

Only in six of the cases Human Rights Watch investigated at the Central Criminal Court had officials brought the defendants before an investigative judge within twenty-four hours of their arrest. In the majority of cases, the defendants had no access to defence counsel before being brought to court, where they were represented by court-appointed lawyers who lacked knowledge of their cases and had no prior access to the evidence against them.²⁰¹

189. Dr Hutton told us what progress had been made by January 2005:

The progress which has been made so far is the establishment of a Judicial Council which has been formed with 23 members and a budget which is independent of the Ministry of Justice, thereby creating independence from the political side of things as any good judicial system ought to have. The Judicial Council is recruiting 876 judges; court administration and the staff are now under the direct control of the Judicial Council. It is currently looking at ways of improving court infrastructure, including buildings and communication, and improving notification procedures to ensure the faster processing of people through the courts. A central criminal court has been formed to hear cases which are of national importance and to provide a model of

200 Ev 136

201 *Ibid*

judicial integrity for the rest of the judicial system. The court is staffed by vetted judges and prosecutors and operates within the regular Iraqi judicial framework.²⁰²

190. Reforming the Iraqi judicial system is key to the country's post-Saddam transition. We welcome MoD's assurance that progress is being made. It is moreover essential that Iraqi Security Forces act within the parameters of the judicial process and it is incumbent upon MNF-I to do what they can to ensure that they do.

Militias

191. A number of regional, sectarian, and political groups control large and well-armed militias which operate apart from the Iraqi Security Forces and outside the Iraqi Government's control. Estimates of their size vary, but some analysts have placed the figure as high as around 100,000.²⁰³ This figure is unlikely to represent a standing capability, but rather a 'surge' capacity i.e. the number of fighters that could be mobilised when necessary. Speaking about his experiences in Basra, General Rollo made the following comment:

If you have a vision of Ireland in 1914, with people drilling on street corners, it is not normally like that. It is a very shifting bunch of people, both in terms of the leadership and the membership, of a very varied size depending on how strongly people feel about a particular issue at a particular moment.²⁰⁴

The most well-known militia is probably the Kurdish *Peshmerga*. But there are also Shia formations, notably the Badr Corps and Muqtadr al-Sadr's 'Mahdi's Army', which we discussed above. The militias are a natural outgrowth of Iraq's recent history: the Kurds relied on their militia formations to protect them during Saddam Hussein's rule. Mr Howard explained it thus: "The first thing I would say is that militias have traditionally been a part of the Iraqi politics of this. Most political parties have had a militia associated with them".²⁰⁵ This, of course, was only the case in Kurdish-controlled north east of the country where the two main Kurdish political parties raised militias during Saddam Hussein's rule; Shia militias were largely formed or returned from exile following the invasion in 2003.

192. Following the end of major combat operations on 10 May 2003, the militias have taken up various positions towards MNF-I and the Iraqi Government, which largely reflect where their political masters are placed in the political process. Some militias, like Muqtadr al-Sadr's 'Mahdi's Army', have taken hostile action against MNF-I; others, like the Kurdish *Peshmerga*, have supported the MNF-I's stabilisation efforts. As General Houghton told us: "There has been some pragmatic use of militias". Despite this, the militias stand outside the legally constituted security structure. For this reason, in a February 2004 report, the UN warned that the continued existence of the militias would represent a long-term problem. In our report *Lessons of Iraq*, we gave a similar warning. "We are concerned that local militias which have been allowed to operate in the south-east of Iraq may represent vested

202 Q 639

203 'Iraq's Special Challenge: Security Sector Reform 'Under Fire'', Walter B. Slocombe, Reform and Reconstruction of the Security Sector *BRYDEN*, Alan Bryden and Heiner Hanggi (eds)

204 Q 427

205 Q 424

interests. There is a danger that these may seek to use their position to pursue agendas which might not be to the advantage of the people of Iraq more generally”.²⁰⁶

193. Before the Transfer of Authority on 28 June 2004, the CPA had developed a transition strategy for disbanding or controlling these militias. The CPA issued an order in June 2004—Order 91—outlawing non-governmental militias. Since the Transfer of Authority, however, little has happened and the militias remain. MNF-I still seems aware of the need to deal with the militias, but is confronted with the greater threat of the insurgency. They appear to be postponing consideration of the issue. Mr Howard summed up the MoD’s position:

From a British point of view, and, I am sure, from an American point of view, we would like to see the militias either disbanded or integrated as appropriate into the Iraqi security forces as they go on, but this now has to be an Iraqi decision on how they operate. In practical terms, I suspect it is not something you can just do overnight. I think it is a question of persuasion and developing mature political institutions and mature security institutions which make the need for militias redundant. But I do not think that is something that can happen quickly; nor can it happen at our behest or American behest alone. It has to be an Iraqi decision.²⁰⁷

194. Mr Howard did, however, assure us that MNF-I would be willing to assist any disbandment process, but he gave no indication that this was an integral element of the Security Sector Reform process. This may be in part because MoD does not necessarily see the militias or other personally loyal military formations as a threat to the Iraqi Security Forces. The Armed Forces Minister told us:

There is no indication that private armies are developing under the control of one powerful minister to be used in the way in which Saddam Hussein would have used his security forces.²⁰⁸

195. Paramilitary militias continue to exercise considerable power in Iraq. We understand the need to prioritise MNF-I’s limited forces in the counter-insurgency campaign and we realise that some militias made a contribution to the stabilisation of the country. But militias exist to protect particular sectional interests and we believe that until all Iraq’s militias are disbanded, questions will continue to hang over the Iraqi Security Forces’ authority. We welcome MoD’s assurance that MNF-I will be willing to assist the Iraqi Government in dismantling the militias if circumstances should so require.

Disarmament and Small Arms

196. Iraq is believed to harbour enough guns to arm every one of its 24 million citizens.²⁰⁹ Iraqi civilians also have access to other light weapons, such as rocket-propelled grenades,

206 HC (2003–04) 57-I, para 417

207 Q 424

208 Q 600

209 ‘Proliferation of small arms: A menace that must be controlled’, Rachel Stohl, *International Herald Tribune*, 30 June 2003

and mortars. Iraq's pervasive 'gun culture' is nothing new and was always going to present a problem.²¹⁰ As we were told in Iraq, after 10 May 2003 when the Iraqi authorities disintegrated, previously protected arms depots were left unguarded and many people helped themselves to their contents. This created an additional source of weaponry for the insurgents.

197. When we visited Iraq in December 2004 we were told that there were simply too many weapons in circulation for a buy-back scheme to make sense. The fear was that people would trade in their old weapons and use the funds provided in the buy-back scheme to buy new weapons on the open market. As the security situation deteriorated, the ability of MNF-I to dissuade Iraqis from keeping their weaponry naturally declined. Pilot projects seem to have confirmed this. One, in summer 2003, succeeded in encouraging Iraqis to turn in light weapons as well as hand-fired missiles and rocket-propelled grenades, but the Coalition was forced to allow many Iraqis to keep automatic rifles.

198. Alternative solutions have been proposed. Rachel Stohl, of the Centre for Defence Information, suggested "community-based weapons-collection programmes. Rather than turning in weapons for cash, a neighbourhood could receive increased security patrols; provision of electricity; or assistance with rebuilding schools, roads, and shops, for a target number of weapons turned in".²¹¹

199. Dr Rathmell has been critical of the MNF-I's lack of attention to disarmament from the outset when making an effort could have mattered more. "Long experience with disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) in post-conflict situations was largely ignored by the Coalition Provisional Authority since it was felt that the armed forces had self-demobilised. A more structured and better resourced approach towards former Iraqi military personnel would have been beneficial".²¹²

200. Understandably, small arms were low on the list of Coalition priorities, which, in the initial stages, were focused on finding weapons of mass destruction and securing heavier conventional weapons. But the well-armed insurgency, which subsequently emerged, suggests that focusing on small arms could have been beneficial in the longer-term and that in the medium-term ways must be found to reduce the very large amounts of small arms in circulation. It also appears that more planning and resources should have been devoted by the Coalition to securing Iraq's many arms depots immediately following the invasion. These arms depots have now become a key source of the insurgency's material for Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and heavy weapons.

Private Security Companies

201. From the beginning of operations in March 2003, the security environment in Iraq has presented grave risks for humanitarian workers, contractors and their local associates. As of 31 December 2004, 232 civilians working on US contracts in Iraq had been killed, according to the United States Department of Labor. The exacting security environment

210 'Small Arms are Continuing Threat in Iraq', Rachel Stohl, *CDI Policy Paper*, 5 May 2003

211 'Iraq Small Arms are a Big Threat', Rachel Stohl, *Christian Science Monitor*, 5 November 2003

212 'Reforming Iraq's Security Sector', *RUSI Journal*, Andrew Rathmell, February 2005

has also prevented contractors performing their daily work and completing projects on time. The Project and Contracting Office reported that in central Iraq, 16.5 per cent of their construction projects were delayed for more than two weeks; in northern Iraq, 14.8 per cent of reconstruction projects were delayed. Attacks on sites, employees, and convoys related to reconstruction projects are and remain frequent. Mr Jim Drummond told us about the difficult circumstances in which DFID staff have to work in Iraq:

Over the last six months we have had quite tight restrictions on numbers because of the security situation and the difficulty of people moving around.²¹³

... this is a very difficult operating environment. Even in the south we had periods in April and May [2004] where our staff could not travel and were locked down in the consulate. We had the same again in August and parts of September [2004], a lock-down in the consulate and DFID staff could not get out.²¹⁴

202. Far more than in previous conflicts, FCO and DFID and even MoD have therefore relied on private security companies for the security of their personnel, and materiel. The work of private security contractors, many of whom are ex-soldiers, has been material to the conduct of the Government's activities in Iraq. Even though the outsourcing of protective services to private security companies is not new, the scale of their involvement in Iraq is unprecedented.²¹⁵ It is estimated that more than 60 security companies with over 20,000 personnel are engaged in Iraq.²¹⁶ As many commentators have noted, the numbers of private security companies dwarfs the current military contribution of any contributing nation to MNF-I except the United States. In a number of reported cases, these companies have become involved in combat, prompting concerns about the lack of distinction between professional troops and private commandos.²¹⁷

203. With this reliance has come a significant bill. As at December 2004 DFID had disbursed £249 million on humanitarian and reconstruction work in Iraq: £186 million through multilateral agencies, NGOs and the Red Cross; and £63 million bilaterally. Of this bilateral disbursement, £17 million had been spent on security (armed protection, armoured vehicles, hostile environment and first aid training, and the posting of security managers) and on security for DFID's own staff and offices in Baghdad and Basra. The UK has also funded security for a number of local politicians.²¹⁸

204. The extensive presence of private security companies has raised a number of issues. It is not clear how private security companies are controlled or held accountable for violations of law. The more unscrupulous private security companies may take advantage of this vacuum and engage in illegal or other inappropriate activities and there have been a

213 Q 432

214 Q 463

215 'Controlling Private Military Companies: The United Kingdom and Germany', Elke Krahnemann, paper Delivered at International Studies Association Annual Convention, 25 February–1 March 2003

216 'The Private Military Industry and Iraq: What Have We Learned and Where to Next', Peter W Singer, *DCAF Policy Paper*, November 2004.

217 'Security Companies: Shadow Soldiers in Iraq', David Barstow, James Glanz, Richard A. Opiel Jr. and Kate Zernike, *New York Times*, 19 April 2004. It has even been suggested that a "contractor brigade" be raised to supplement regular military forces. 'Washington Urged To Save Money By Raising Private Military 'Contractor Brigade'', Nathan Hodge, *Wall Street Journal*, 10 February 2005

218 Figures provided by International Development Committee

number of reports of private security company personnel violating human rights. As the Foreign Affairs Committee wrote in July 2004: “The US has made use of a number of private security firms and private contractors are now known to have supervised interrogations at the Abu Ghraib prison in Baghdad”.²¹⁹ In Christopher Langton’s words: private security companies “have the disadvantage of lacking in accountability”.²²⁰ Above all, because of the lack of regulation, in Iraq the many respectable and professional companies have not always been clearly differentiated from the inexperienced, uncontrolled companies. Chief Constable Paul Kernaghan put it aptly when he told us that the industry “ranges from what we call blue chip to frankly cowboys”.²²¹ And the activities of some companies have garnered negative publicity for the entire sector.²²² The important distinction between companies which offer legitimate security services and those which are prepared to engage in paramilitary, mercenary activities is not always well-understood by commentators. Too often the headline grabbing antics of the latter are used to attack the often essential work of the former.

205. On 12th February 2002 in response to a recommendation from the Foreign Affairs Committee the Government issued a Green Paper *Private Military Companies: Options for Regulation*, which considered various options for regulation, their advantages and disadvantages, but ultimately did not propose any policy. The Green Paper examines the following policy options: (1) a national and international ban on mercenary activity, (2) national licensing of private military companies and exports and (3) the self-regulation of the industry.²²³

206. Mr Pattison brought us up to speed with subsequent developments:

There is certainly thinking going on. As you said, a few years ago, the Government produced a Green Paper and we followed that up with consultations with interested parties including representatives of a number of companies in this sector and, as a result of that, what we are now trying to do is to look quite carefully at what proposals for regulation might be brought forward.²²⁴

207. He explained that the question of defining private military companies was difficult: “We all know the difference between a private military company and private security company when we see it but actually trying to define it for the purposes of legislation is rather difficult”.²²⁵ The FCO, he told us, was currently examining two broad options. One option would be to license companies. The second option would be to focus on the

219 HC (2003–04) 441-I, para 27

220 Ev 141

221 Q 305

222 ‘In Iraq, it’s security Rambo-style’, Michael Georgy, *Jordan Times*, 10 November 2003

223 ‘The Regulation Of Private Military Companies: A Reaction To The Foreign Office Green Paper’, ‘Memorandum from Bruce George and Simon H Cooper, submitted to the Foreign Affairs Committee, July 2002; ‘Controlling Private Military Companies: The United Kingdom and Germany’, Elke Krahnmann, Paper Delivered at International Studies Association Annual Convention, 25 February–1 March 2003

224 Q 302

225 *Ibid*

licensing of contracts, which, Mr Pattison told us, were “similar to the procedures we have for the licensing of defence exports”.²²⁶

208. In their memorandum to us, the FCO explained that “a senior FCO official, in close consultation with his colleagues from other Government Departments, has been conducting a review of policy options for the regulation of Private Military Companies”. The review, is expected to be finalised in by spring 2005.²²⁷

209. As a result of the lack of regulation, the UK has to resort to tightly drafted and negotiated contracts to ensure that the private security companies that MoD, DFID or the FCO employs follow appropriate standards. Mr Pattison explained: “What we have done with Armour Group is actually draw up an extremely detailed contract with them which covers a very wide area of issues including the sort of people they recruit, their answerability”.²²⁸

210. But while such contracts are better than nothing, they do give rise to a number of problems as the National Audit Office (NAO) has identified.²²⁹ Complex contracts require close monitoring and may involve frequent payments in the course of a year. As such, they may be labour-intensive, risk-prone and possibly cost inefficient. They are not an effective or appropriate substitute for proper regulation.

211. It is now three years since the Government published its Green Paper on Private Military Companies. We recommend the Government urgently brings forward proposals for the regulation of the overseas activities of private security and military companies. We do not believe that the current reliance on contracts is sufficient. We are well aware of the complexities involved in a licensing regime for individual contracts not least from our experience of the export control regime. We suggest that the FCO should enter into discussions with the Security Industry Authority to find ways in which its offices could be used. Once a mechanism has been established to regulate these companies, Parliament should consider how best it could undertake the necessary oversight.

226 Q 302

227 Ev 131

228 Q 302

229 ‘Kosovo: The Financial Management of Military Operations’, Report by the Comptroller and Auditor-General, 5 June 2000

6 Civil-Military Issues

212. The relationship between military and civilian authorities in Peace Support Operations is central to success.

213. As Nadia Schadlow of the Smith Richardson Foundation points out in her article *War and the Art of Governance*, dividing responsibilities between civilian and military agencies during the initial conduct of an occupation is a serious mistake. Physical security underlies all efforts to conduct the three vital tasks of occupation—averting humanitarian crises, fielding domestic security forces, and establishing a legitimate government, which can deliver basic services.²³⁰ Moreover, the military can, in certain circumstances, build up respect among the local population toward the occupation regime.

214. In Iraq, post-conflict reconstruction responsibilities were originally divided between the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (ORHA), tasked with administering the country, providing humanitarian aid, and rebuilding damaged infrastructure, and the Coalition forces (under the US Central Command (CENTCOM)). That relationship was broadly replicated when ORHA was replaced by the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA). While the creation of the CPA reflected an attempt to improve unity of command in-theatre, the CPA remained dependent on Coalition forces for many of the resources needed to accomplish its mission. More damaging, a clear coordination of responsibilities only seemed to have been worked out after considerable time and the consequent disconnects between Coalition forces and the CPA arguably hindered their efforts to address their respective tasks efficiently. When the civilian framework—i.e the CPA—came to an impromptu end on 28 June 2004, the military had to take responsibility for a range of policy areas which it had not been sufficiently involved in previously.

215. Despite the need for the military to work closely with civilian agencies, the military should probably not be the principal participant in this process. As Carl Bildt, the former Swedish Prime Minister and EU and UN envoy, has written:

State building ... requires skills across a far wider range than a purely security-focused organisation can provide. It remains an essentially political and economic task, not a military one. Thus, leadership must rest with institutions that can command a wide range of resources.²³¹

Although the military may play a crucial role, a number of civilian actors have a comparative advantage in addressing many of post-conflict reconstruction's wide range of needs. **Non-governmental organisations, the private sector, international organisations, all have a crucial role to play in addressing matters of governance, justice and reconciliation, and economic and social needs in Peace Support Operations.**

230 Nadia Schadlow, "War and the Art of Governance," *Parameters*, Autumn 2003

231 'Build States, not Nations', Carl Bildt, *Financial Times*, 16 January 2004

Reconstruction and the Military

216. MoD outlined the British forces roles in reconstruction activities as follows:

Identification of reconstruction projects in essential services (water, power, oil), the economy and social services, governance, and security sector reform, which can then be financially resourced through UK and/or US funds;

Project management and execution of projects by the Royal Engineers;

Provision of planning input and coordination (where appropriate) for reconstruction projects executed by external agencies including the Project Coordination Office (PCO), DFID, USAID, Gulf Region South (GRS) US Army Corps of Engineers, the UN and NGOs.²³²

217. MoD has used a number of different funding mechanisms to meet these objectives the principal of which have been: Quick Impact Projects, for which the military was allocated approximately £30 million; CERPS funds, a US funding mechanism; and funds from the Project Contracting Office. We praised the significant contribution of Quick Impact Funds in *Lessons of Iraq* and found on our trips in May and December 2004 that the quick-impact funding provided to the military was still seen as a priority.

218. The Minister for the Armed Forces praised the Quick Impact Projects, but underlined the need for Iraqi involvement in allocation decisions:

The wish must be to get Iraqi buy-in to all of this and then sourcing it through their mechanisms for them to start delivering with a lot of key and essential support from other agencies, NGOs or DFID sponsored agencies or UN sponsored agencies, and to make sure that the money that is being spent is being spent to good effect.²³³

219. Out of these funding mechanisms, reconstruction funds allocated by the US Congress to the Coalition are the most substantial, totalling \$18.4 billion. When the Coalition Provisional Authority was disbanded, its responsibilities were divided among two organisations, the Project and Contracting Office (PCO), and the Iraq Reconstruction Management Office (IRMO). The IRMO was created by a US National Security Presidential Directive signed 11 May 2004. IRMO is a temporary organisation established under the US Department of State with offices in the US Mission reporting to the US Ambassador. It has assumed the policy oversight and advisory functions for which the CPA was responsible. It also houses US advisors to Iraqi government ministries. Three key US Government agencies manage implementation of US aid programmes. The Project and Contracting Office (PCO), reporting to the Secretary of the Army, manages most of the construction and some of the non-construction projects for the reconstruction of Iraqi infrastructure. USAID administers some of the programmes, including major infrastructure projects run by Bechtel, and numerous democracy promotion and civil society programmes. The Multinational Transition Command (MNSTC-I), part of MNF-I, headed by General Petraeus has the mission of manning, training and equipping the Iraqi army and police.

²³² MoD memorandum

²³³ Q 620

220. In MND (SE), British forces have carried out their reconstruction-related tasks admirably. But we remain concerned about the support offered by other departments.

In *Lessons of Iraq* we wrote that we believed DFID to have been constrained in the pre-war planning process. We were concerned that any political reluctance within DFID to assist in the planning phase played to preconceived notions inside DFID of ‘how to do humanitarian assistance’ and the proper role of the department. These issues go back to the establishment of DFID as an independent institution and the passing of the International Development Act in 2002, which, in a sense, isolated the development agenda from the wider foreign policy agenda by making poverty-reduction the over-arching aim of development assistance.

221. Since then, the need for an integrated approach to development, and the move to include post-conflict reconstruction in any conflict planning, has led to calls for the re-integration of development, and reconstruction into the foreign and security policy agenda. DFID—and the wider development community—have been concerned that this re-integration might compromise humanitarian principles of impartiality and neutrality.

222. For this inquiry, we took evidence from DFID and MoD on the former’s role in post-conflict reconstruction. It is for the International Development Committee to oversee the work of DFID. We were mainly concerned with the relationship between DFID and the MoD.

223. We asked Mr Drummond, former Iraq Director at DFID, to provide an outline of DFID’s activities in Iraq and the cost of these. He told us that DFID produced a Country Assistance Plan, which identified the priorities for the DFID programme over the next year. “It identified three main objectives for us: one was to help the international community to re-engage, to help get the World Bank and the UN back involved. Second was to have an impact on the functioning of national government. Thirdly, was to promote reconstruction in the south”²³⁴.

224. On cooperation with DFID, the Minister for the Armed Forces told us:

The answer is yes, both in theatre and in the UK. That is one of the increasing areas of cross-governmental effort, and there are good examples of that in terms of how the global conflict prevention pool operates and the Africa conflict prevention pool operates, and the three ministries—FCO, Ministry of Defence and DFID—will sit and consider all that at official level and ministerial level, and Treasury will be part of that process as well. Specifically in Iraq, the answer is yes. We have DFID personnel in Iraq, we want to see more of them, we want to create the conditions so more of them and more of those they would sponsor can come in to take forward those projects. So there is very good, close working in all of this ...²³⁵

234 Q 436

235 Q 624

225. Dr Hutton's comments were similar:

As an official, working at official level with DFID colleagues is unprecedentedly close these days. In all three theatres I have had something to do with—Iraq, Afghanistan, the Balkans—we have had very close working relationships on a day-to-day basis with DFID colleagues. Certainly when the humanitarian response to the Boxing Day tsunami occurred, from day one it was an intimate relationship, involving liaison officers embedded in each other's teams. So I think the relationship these days is better than it has ever been before".²³⁶

226. The tsunami was, of course, not a post-conflict situation but a humanitarian crisis. As such, it may not be the best example by which to judge cooperation between DFID and MoD.

227. We are pleased to hear of the improved cooperation between DFID and MoD since the publication of our *Lessons of Iraq* Report in March 2004. In this light, we welcome DFID's participation in planning and command exercises. Once the Government has made a commitment to post-conflict stabilisation, as it has in Iraq, that commitment will only be effectively delivered through the planned and coordinated effort of all the relevant government departments.

Non-Governmental Organisations

228. Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), and aid workers are frequently the most visible, non-military element in a theatre of operations. As a result of the experience of recent years, the relationship between the Armed Forces and NGOs has moved from antagonism to mutual acceptance. Indeed, in order to promote mutual understanding between the two sides, the UN has published 'Guidelines on the Use of Military and Civil Defence Assets to Support United Nations Humanitarian Activities in Complex Emergencies'. For its part, the Armed Forces Peace Support Operations Doctrine published in June 2004 contains a significant section on NGOs and the "acceptable degree of complementary activity", which exists between NGOs and the Armed Forces. The need for the military to work more closely with NGOs in Peace Support Operations is implicitly acknowledged in the military concept, which most modern armies now use to understand Peace Support Operations, namely the "three-block war". "Three-block war" was a term first coined by General Charles Krulak, the 31st Commandant of the United States Marine Corps. The concept described an urban battle space as having three-blocks. On the first block, the military engage in high-intensity fighting. On the second, the military is conducting stabilisation operations. And on the third, the military is expected to deliver humanitarian aid or assist others in doing that. The military must be ready to conduct these operations simultaneously and very close to one another and this necessarily involves cooperation with a range of non-military actors.

229. This has been an issue in Operation Telic almost from the outset, as the lack of security made the military's involvement in humanitarian work inevitable. The area that causes NGOs the most concern is the perceived move by the Armed Forces towards direct involvement in the provision of humanitarian relief. Where humanitarian resources are

clearly overwhelmed, it is accepted that the use of the military may be appropriate. NGOs accept that in these ‘exceptional circumstances’ the military should act in support of humanitarian efforts. But many humanitarian actors see the involvement of military forces in humanitarian activity as inappropriate. They focus on the need to create a ‘humanitarian space’, i.e. a distinction between politically motivated actions and apolitical humanitarian assistance. Giving evidence to the International Development Committee, Mr Ken Caldwell, Director, Save the Children, said:

... we are seeing continuing situations of military activities, including by the British military, straying into humanitarian space, and from our perspective that is not only an issue of inappropriate intervention under international law it also places our staff very directly at risk.²³⁷

Similarly, some NGOs recognise the rationale behind military ‘hearts and minds’ programmes, but object vehemently to these being described as ‘humanitarian’.²³⁸

230. The Armed Forces Minister seemed to acknowledge the concerns expressed by the NGO community. He told us:

I used the phrase earlier about humanitarian space, about the need for those who deliver into those environments to want humanitarian space because that is a measure of success and those who are delivering the humanitarian aid and building that normal society do not like to do it at the point of a bayonet, they cannot do that. You are not able to win people if it is “We are here to give you a bowl of rice and you had better eat it otherwise we will have trouble”. You do not deliver humanitarian aid in that way, it has got to be done in a much more subtle way and it has got to be distant and remote from any military presence. If there is any need for military action to resolve the issue, that should be sitting round the corner to be able to deal with that.²³⁹

231. New ways of describing military activity in the transition from war-fighting to Peace Support Operations, i.e. the “three-block war”, illustrate how the Armed Forces are presented with a more complex range of tasks than previously; they require the military to work more closely with NGOs and other non-military actors to fulfil their objectives. This, in turn, requires a level of mutual understanding, which has not always been present. We hope Operation Telic has provided a degree of mutual insight as well as an opportunity to improve cooperation between British forces and key NGOs. We were pleased to hear that the Joint Services Doctrine staff at the Defence Academy at Shrivenham have begun to examine the problems of MoD/NGO interface with NGO representatives.

237 HC (2004–05) 224-i, Q 91

238 *Ibid*, Q 95

239 Q 611

7 Broadening the Coalition

232. The elections in January 2005 should have marked a new international phase in the effort to stabilise and rebuild Iraq. Yet little by way of a genuine multinational effort has been assembled. As we have discussed, fewer countries are likely to contribute to MNF-I in the future. When asked about this, the Prime Minister admitted to the Liaison Committee: “We would have liked a bigger Coalition”.²⁴⁰ We have been assured by MoD that the military tasks can be managed by the MNF-I as currently constituted. Reconstruction, institution-building and managing the political process, however, would undoubtedly benefit from increased support, in particular from the United Nations, the European Union and NATO.

The United Nations

233. The United Nations supported the Independent Iraqi Election Commission and provided significant support to the electoral process. The organisation and its specialised agencies are not, however, present in significant numbers in Iraq. The role of the UN—and especially that of the Secretary General’s Representative—in Iraq remains largely undefined. The UN agencies dealing with reconstruction operate primarily from Kuwait and Jordan: it is only through this out-of-country presence that the UN participates in coordination meetings with the MNF-I. We heard during our visits how inefficient this arrangement was.

234. After turning to UN envoy Lakhdar Brahimi to negotiate a workable plan for the 28 June 2004 Transfer of Authority, the United States has signalled an interest in drawing the UN further into Iraq’s stabilisation process. Similarly, the Armed Force Minister indicated the British Government’s eagerness to see the UN become increasingly involved: “Are you asking am I satisfied that there is a sufficiency of UN buy-in on this? Probably the answer to that is no. A lot of our effort, and it is the FCO who lead on this, it is not an MoD lead, is to encourage all of that”.²⁴¹ But little has happened. Much of the resistance may come from the UN itself. The UN Secretary-General has faced considerable criticism from UN staff for failing to secure the UN compound in Baghdad, which was attacked on 19 August 2003. Lingering resistance from those Permanent Members of the UN Security Council who did not support the war may also be a contributing factor.

235. There can be no doubt that the absence of the United Nations has been a significant impediment to the country’s post-conflict stabilisation. The legitimacy and expertise that the UN is able to bring to bear is significant. Moreover, the UN’s presence would also send a helpful signal to NGOs and foreign investors who are unwilling to establish offices in Iraq unless the UN does so. When we visited Iraq in December 2004, several interlocutors emphasised that there was no reason why the UN should not expand its presence in Iraq now. We were told that every demand the UN has put forward by way of security arrangements for their officials has been met by MNF-I. In MND (SE) space has been made available for the UN’s offices, and security arrangements have been instituted to

²⁴⁰ Liaison Committee, 8 February 2005, HC 318-i, Q 3 (uncorrected evidence)

²⁴¹ Q 602

protect UN staff. In a recent interview with Al-Arabia TV, Iraq's interim President Ghazi al-Yawar said pointedly: "The lack of security is not a sufficient justification for the United Nations to stay away from Iraq".²⁴² Perhaps in response to this pressure, in the run-up to the 30 January elections, the UN boosted its numbers beyond the 59 international employees that had been posted to Iraq. The Secretary-General's spokesman said recently that the UN sent 'small liaison detachments' of four persons (military, security and support) to two locations outside Baghdad to assess and prepare appropriate and secure living and working conditions. Thereafter, "and depending on the circumstances," perhaps four or five personnel will be deployed to assist and work with local authorities and local non-governmental organisations (NGOs). We discussed the lack of UN involvement on the ground in Iraq with senior officials at the United Nations during our visit to New York in March 2005. We were told that the situation was under review. **We strongly urge the United Nations to expand its presence in Iraq especially in the southern governorates, and engage actively in the reconstruction effort.**

North Atlantic Treaty Organisation

236. At NATO's Summit in Istanbul on 28 June 2004, NATO Heads of State and Government agreed to assist Iraq with the training of its security forces. A Training Implementation Mission was established on 30 July 2004. On 9 December 2004, the North Atlantic Council, NATO's decision-making body, decided to transform the embryonic NATO Training Implementation Mission into a full-fledged NATO Training Mission-Iraq (NTM-I) to support the build-up of the Iraqi Security Forces in Iraq.

237. The NATO mission will proceed in a phased implementation building on NATO's current effort in Iraq.²⁴³ Phase 1 deals with the assessment and planning required for the mission (now complete). Phase 2 (which commenced on 20 February 2005) is broken down into three distinct stages. *Stage 1* will reinforce and expand NATO's current effort in training and mentoring the Iraqi MoD, Ministry of Interior, Joint Headquarters, National Joint Operations Centre, National Command Centre Joint Operations Centre and Iraqi Training Command. It will also undertake preparatory activities, including 'train the trainer' courses in the International Zone in Baghdad, to establish the Training, Education and Doctrine Centre (TEDC). *Stage 2* (commencing in September 2005) will establish the TEDC at Al Rustamiyah in Baghdad to provide leadership and middle/senior management training for the ISF. *Stage 3* will see the expansion of NTM-I training activities and has yet to be defined. Phase 3 involves the transfer of responsibility for training to the ISF.²⁴⁴

238. The welcome arrival of NATO broadens the Coalition's efforts and promises to bring countries, such as Germany and France, together in a project which is in the entire Euro-Atlantic community's interest. We are nevertheless concerned that militarily NATO's contribution will not be as effective as it could be. Its numbers are still limited. Approximately 90 NATO personnel are currently deployed.

242 *More staff bound for Iraq*, Thalif Deen, IPS, 15 December 2004

243 Q 589

244 Ev 127

239. There are also wider questions about NATO's effectiveness. NATO's record as an agent for defence reform is well-known not least through its contribution to the transformation of Central and Eastern Europe's military establishments following the end of the Cold War. It is clear that the ultimate prospect of NATO membership for the Central and East European Countries contributed to NATO's success in this area. In other words, it was arguably not the technical defence reform process alone, which expedited the transformation of these countries' military establishments. It was also the 'pull' of Euro-Atlantic integration. In Iraq, there is no such similar prospect. There is only the internal 'push' for reform.

240. There may also be a risk that countries currently contributing to the Coalition might 'switch' their contribution to the NATO Training Mission-Iraq (NTM-I). Mr Howard was not concerned. He told us: "I do not think it is a major worry. If we are talking about switching training being done under a Coalition hat to being done under a NATO hat, I think we will be content with that".²⁴⁵ General Houghton went even further saying that such a switch should possibly be encouraged:

Over time, one might positively encourage it. The whole nature of the shift will be that away from counter-insurgency and towards a security assistance mission, and therefore the nature of people's contributions, nations' contributions, should increasingly, over time, be more focused on the training and security assistance rather than training in counter-insurgency type tasks. So I think it would be, properly controlled, the right thing to be happening over time.²⁴⁶

241. We welcome the Government's support for NATO's technical assistance programmes in Iraq. We remain concerned by the slow manning of NATO's mission and the fact that the majority of assistance provided by NATO takes place outside Iraq. We urge the Government to lobby for an expansion of NATO's programmes in-theatre. We are also concerned that the countries contributing to MNF-I may be tempted to 'switch' their support to the NATO mission and thereby deprive the MNF-I of front-line capabilities before the Iraqi Security Forces are ready for their increased responsibilities. We also urge the Government to examine the scope for offering the prospect of Partnership-for-Peace-like arrangements to Iraq.

242. We also urge the Government and our NATO allies to give early consideration as to how NATO might be able to assist a democratic Iraq to play some role in a regional security arrangement.

The European Union

243. The EU has focused on providing humanitarian relief and financial support to the reconstruction process. In early 2003, the EU set aside €100 million for the European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO) to provide humanitarian aid to Iraq.

244. To date, the EU has provided assistance amounting to over €300 million from the Community budget to Iraq. This total includes the €100 million committed for

245 Q 423

246 *Ibid*

humanitarian activities in 2003 and a further €3 million indicatively earmarked by ECHO for humanitarian efforts in 2004, as well as the €200 million pledged in Madrid for reconstruction in 2003–04 and an additional €2 million provided in 2003 from the Community mine action budget. The EU has also developed a three-phased approach to its assistance in 2005. It primarily concentrates on generating a ‘political dialogue with the Provisional Government including an EU/Iraq Joint Declaration’ and continued support to democratisation, and human rights. It also contributes to reconstruction efforts. Finally, Iraq is a beneficiary of the EU’s Generalised System of Preferences, a system which waives barriers to trade.

245. General Houghton told us that the EU was also tentatively exploring how to increase its non-financial contribution in Iraq²⁴⁷ and on 21 February 2005, EU Foreign Ministers decided to deploy a so-called “Integrated Rule of Law Mission”. This will provide training in the fields of management and criminal investigation to Iraqis, mainly from the judicial, police and prison sectors.

246. We welcome the increased involvement by the EU in the non-financial aspects of Iraq’s reconstruction, including the deployment of a mission to train Iraqi judicial, police and prison personnel. We note, however, that this training is to take place primarily outside Iraq and we urge the Government to lobby for an expansion of the EU’s programmes in-theatre as soon as possible.

8 Future Commitment to Iraq

247. Estimating the force levels which MNF-I will have to maintain for the remainder of 2005 and further into the future is difficult. The Prime Minister and the Secretary of State have made it clear that the UK contribution to MNF-I will remain as long as the Iraqi Government welcomes it. Currently, around 9,000 British troops are deployed in Iraq.²⁴⁸ General Houghton described the circumstances surrounding the deployment:

At the moment we have 8,700 deployed to ground, that includes 400 from the EHRR that went out in order to provide the additional cover for the election period. We would hope that by the end of February they would be recovered bringing that figure down by another 400.²⁴⁹

The Prime Minister told the Liaison Committee: “What we always say is that we will remain in Iraq for as long as is needed”.²⁵⁰ Coalition forces are, of course, present in Iraq at the invitation of the Iraqi Government. Legally, UNSCR 1546 stipulates that the mandate of the MNF-I “shall be reviewed at the request of the Government of Iraq or twelve months from the date of this resolution”. The resolution was passed on 8 June 2004 and thus expires on 8 June 2005 unless renewed. It is likely to be renewed.

248. Testifying before the US Senate Armed Services Committee, Deputy Secretary of Defence Paul D Wolfowitz said the United States had decided to reduce the level of US forces in Iraq in the course of March 2005 by 15,000 troops, down to about 135,000. But these reductions should be seen in light of previous increases in the run-up to the elections. The US Army expects to keep its troop strength in Iraq at about 135,000 for at least two more years, according to Lieutenant General James J. Lovelace Jr, the US Army’s Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations. General Lovelace told reporters on 26 January 2005 that the assumption of little change through 2006 represented “the most probable case”.²⁵¹ This was confirmed to us during our visit to Washington in March 2005; when we were also told that significant progress in Iraq by the summer of 2006 would be critical if President Bush’s second term of office was to be seen as a success.

249. A number of countries, however, are planning to withdraw their troops in the course of 2005. Ukraine’s contingent is set to withdraw. Portugal confirmed on 17 January 2005 that it would withdraw its contingent of 120 military police after seeing through its pledge to help provide polling-day security. More importantly, Poland, the Netherlands and Hungary are withdrawing their forces. The Italian Prime Minister, Silvio Berlusconi, has also announced that Italy, which is the fourth largest contributor to MNF-I, intends to begin withdrawing its troops from Iraq in September 2005. These withdrawals will affect the force levels in MND (SE) and MND (SC). Unless other countries come forward to

248 As of 18 February 2005, in addition to the UK and US, the contributions were Italy (3116), Netherlands (1368), Denmark (485), Lithuania (131), Czech Republic (102), Romania (747), Japan (536), Bulgaria (495), Mongolia (130), Poland (2500), Slovakia (105), Ukraine (1589), Albania (74), Kazakhstan (29), Macedonia (34), Azerbaijan (154), Estonia (47), Latvia (117), El Salvador (380), South Korea (3700), Australia (282), Armenia (46). Norway retains 9 staff officers in Multinational Division South East. Ev 127

249 Q 327

250 Liaison Committee, 8 February 2005, HC 318-i, Q 9

251 ‘Army Plans To Keep Iraq Troop Level Through ‘06: Year-Long Active-Duty Stints Likely to Continue’, Bradley Graham, *Washington Post*, 25 January 2005

replace them, they will have to be covered either by the United States, or the United Kingdom. In MND (SE), the UK has already made provisions to cover for the Dutch. The Secretary of State announced that additional troops were to be deployed in Al Mutana Province.

250. As well as covering for the withdrawing Dutch forces, and perhaps the forces of other countries too, there will, from time to time, be a need to increase levels either because security conditions deteriorate or because special events, such as the elections, require a greater force presence. In the run-up to the 30 January 2005 elections, the 1st Battalion Royal Highland Fusilliers deployed to Iraq.

251. Pressure on the US and the UK to increase the total number of personnel in Iraq could therefore mount. Australia has recently increased its Iraq deployment by an additional 450 troops to assist in replacing Dutch troops and protect Japanese troops engaged in humanitarian work. A number of smaller countries, such as Georgia and Romania, also intend to increase their troop contributions, although there is no sign that France, Russia and Germany will participate in MNF-I. MoD seems confident at present that these pressures will not necessitate further UK troop deployments. Mr Howard told us that at the moment the MoD did not have any plans for major changes either downwards or upwards in force numbers: “I think in overall terms we certainly would not anticipate any significant increase in force levels”.²⁵²

252. General Rollo told us that he had been satisfied with the number of forces at his disposal:

It was not a major issue for me; I felt I had enough people. What did occur during the time I was there was that the task evolved. We started focusing on security assistance; we had to take people off that in August to deal with al-Sadr’s people and then gradually over September, October, November we were able to take people out and put them back into the training task which was really our main effort in improving the Iraqi forces. I am sure that direction will continue into the New Year.²⁵³

253. The Minister for the Armed Forces told us similarly that there were no plans to increase force levels considerably: “No, we have no plans to do so. What we have done, as we have announced, in terms of the Dutch and the Dutch withdrawal, we have taken on a contingent responsibility there”.²⁵⁴

254. The state of the Iraqi infrastructure is poor. We saw for ourselves the water, power and oil shortages and the defunct nature of the port infrastructure at Umm Qasr. Substantial private investment is needed to improve the situation. However, with an unstable security situation there is little to attract private investment at present. No company is going to risk its shareholders money until the situation is settled and, very importantly, is going to stay settled for the length of time needed to realise the returns to make an investment worthwhile. **Until such time as the private sector is confident that**

252 Q 324

253 *Ibid*

254 Q 543

this security can be provided by the Iraqi Security Forces, British troops are likely to be invited by the Iraqi Government to stay in Iraq. This may be a substantial period of time.

255. In light of the state of the insurgency and the condition of the Iraqi Security Forces, and subject to the continuing agreement of the Iraqi Government, it seems likely that British forces will be present in Iraq in broadly similar numbers to the current deployment into 2006. We support this commitment and believe that calls for a withdrawal of British forces are premature. Experience has taught us that, if nation-building exercises, such as that in Iraq, are to succeed, they must have a serious commitment of time, energy, financial resources and political resolve.

256. We do not reach this conclusion lightly. Operations in Iraq will continue to be dangerous. There is a very real risk that British forces will suffer further casualties. We need always to remember when this happens that these are individual men and women, who have families and friends in the UK. As a country we owe them a great debt for the commitment, loyalty and courage which they display on behalf of us all.

257. In February 2005 we pressed the Minister for the Armed Forces to improve the financial compensation provided to the families of those killed.²⁵⁵ We welcome the Government's announcement that the lump sum benefits under the existing Armed Forces pension scheme are to be at least doubled.²⁵⁶ We also welcome the announcement in the Budget that compensation payments for injured serving personnel will not be taxed in future. We regret, however, that these changes are effective only from 6 April 2005. We urge MoD to consider making them retrospective to the start of combat operations in Iraq. Many thousands of our Armed Forces have served in Iraq since 2003, and 85 have given their lives in the course of that service. We do not believe that their families should be treated differently simply because of the date on which they were killed

255 Q 538

256 Ev 150

9 Whitehall Issues

258. The considerable success that has been achieved in Iraq can, in large part, be traced to the Coalition's ability to adapt to changing circumstances. Suppleness is a praiseworthy attribute. But it is clear to us that it is no substitute for a comprehensive approach to post-conflict planning, which brings the Government's post-conflict stakeholders and institutions together and produces an inclusive analysis that lays out all the likely scenarios and possible responses to these. Ensuring that the UK has such an approach will require a more systematic and multifaceted planning process as well as improved cross-government management mechanisms. It will also require an on-going lessons learned process. General Houghton told us that MoD had in fact drawn a range of conclusions from operations in Iraq after Spring 2003: "In general terms there is a constant dynamic lessons learned process going on about all sorts of things militarily, both at a tactical and operational level".²⁵⁷ The Minister for the Armed Forces told us he thought MoD should publish as much as possible.²⁵⁸

259. In improving the UK's response to post-conflict reconstruction, consideration could also be given to the way in which post-conflict issues are treated not only in government departments, but also at universities and think tanks. Carl Bildt, a former Prime Minister of Sweden and an EU and UN representative on the Balkans, has contrasted the vibrancy of debate on nation-building issues in the US—in think tanks, universities, government departments etc—with the paucity of debate in Europe.²⁵⁹ In the UK, only a handful of universities engage in post-conflict, nation-building issues and, compared to the United States, little exchange—of staff or ideas—takes place between government departments and universities. Mr Bildt suggested the establishment of a European Institute of Peace "to bring together Europe's expertise and experience on these issues".²⁶⁰ A similar proposal could be made for the UK alone.

260. The first step to achieve a systematic and multifaceted post-conflict planning process will be for MoD to conduct and publish a comprehensive study on all the lessons of the post-conflict period in Operation Telic. Such a report should cover the post-conflict challenges faced not only by British forces, but also by British civilian organisations that have operated in Iraq alongside the military. In particular it should examine relationships with other Coalition partners, including the United States, and what lessons can be learned for future Coalition operations. Without a clear baseline of the problems encountered, it is near-impossible to correct failures. Improving the UK's response to post-conflict reconstruction, should also identify ways in which to improve cooperation between the think tanks, universities, government departments, including exchange of staff through secondments.

257 Q 618

258 Q 644

259 'Build States, not Nations', Carl Bildt, *Financial Times*, 16 January 2004

260 *Ibid*

Post-conflict Reconstruction Unit

261. As part of the Government's attempts at improving its post-conflict capabilities, the Secretary of State for International Development announced to the House on 16 September 2004 the Government's intention to improve the United Kingdom's capacity to deal with immediate post-conflict stabilisation, including integrating civilian and military policy, planning and operations, through the establishment of a Post-conflict Reconstruction Unit (PCRU).²⁶¹ General Houghton explained the motivation for establishing the PCRU: "...this has been an initiative slightly borne of the Iraqi experience, what might be generally termed "phase 4 planning", i.e. the post-conflict phase of an operation needs seeing to *ab initio*, before the operation launches".²⁶² He went on to tell us that the PCRU was "one of the significant lessons learned in phase four planning".²⁶³

262. The unit is intended to be a cross-government initiative involving the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Ministry of Defence and the Department for International Development. The intention is to staff the unit with 40 core staff and a deployable capacity of approximately 400. Half of the deployable staff will be civilian experts, and half are expected to be civilian police officers. While the unit is not yet operational, staff have participated in exercises with the military in December 2004 and deployed with the Operational Liaison and Reconnaissance Team from the Permanent Joint Headquarters to South East Asia in January 2005 as part of Operation Garron, the UK military assistance to relief operations following the tsunami in the Indian Ocean.

263. The PCRU is currently housed in DFID and reports through the DFID chain of command on administrative matters. On policy, it reports to the Cabinet Office and its three parent departments. More broadly, political oversight is to be maintained by a Cabinet sub-committee on post-conflict reconstruction chaired by the Foreign Secretary.

264. Overall, the PCRU's lists its tasks as:

- Developing strategy for post-conflict stabilisation, including linking military and civilian planning, and working with the wider international community.
- Planning, implementing and managing the UK contribution to post-conflict stabilisation, including practical civilian capabilities needed to stabilise the environment in immediate post-conflict situations.²⁶⁴

265. The Secretary of State for International Development told the House that "in spring 2005 we anticipate being able to inform Parliament about its initial capabilities".²⁶⁵

266. There are great hopes for the Post-conflict Reconstruction Unit's ability to improve the UK's post-conflict planning capabilities. Mr Jim Drummond set out DFID's commitment to the initiative, telling us: "...we are establishing a post-conflict reconstruction unit which we would expect to take the lead in the immediate, post-conflict

261 HC Deb, 16 September 2004, cols 173–174WS

262 Q 643

263 *Ibid*

264 <http://www.postconflict.gov.uk>

265 HC Deb, 16 September 2004, cols 173–174WS

stabilisation phase”.²⁶⁶ Mr Howard took a similar position in his evidence: “we are very keen that this Unit is a Unit which actually delivers effect on the ground when it is needed”.²⁶⁷ This was echoed in even stronger words by General Houghton, who said that the advent of the PCRU would go a long way to rectify the identified shortfall in post-conflict capabilities.²⁶⁸ MoD is already planning to involve the PCRU in future deployments to Afghanistan.²⁶⁹

267. In order to meet these expectations, a number of preconditions need to have been met. Firstly, the tasks of the PCRU must be agreed across government. In our evidence session we saw indications that this has still not happened. Asked which department was best placed to manage, for example, the deployment of civilian police officers in post-conflict operations. Mr Pattison replied:

It is not yet immediately clear whether responsibility for managing the UK’s contribution to overseas policing will eventually transfer to them [the PCRU] or will remain within the Foreign Office. We will need to see how this develops. It may be that it is better that it stays within the Foreign Office ... It may be that falls, or will continue to fall more naturally to the Foreign Office than it will to the PCRU.²⁷⁰

268. Secondly, the PCRU will need to cover all departments involved in post-conflict activities. The Development Committee, which comprises senior officials within DFID, met on 20 January 2004 to discuss the establishment of PCRU and DFID’s role. They concluded that “from a lead position DFID could also promote longer-term development and raise this issue higher on the cross-Whitehall agenda”.²⁷¹ It will be important, however, that the PCRU operates in a genuinely cross-departmental manner and is not the advocate of a particular department’s priorities.

269. Thirdly, the PCRU will need to be provided with the necessary funding not only to establish itself but to fund its deployment. The two Conflict Prevention Pools (CPPs) provide a useful example of cross-government cooperation. These funds originally came from existing budgets held by MoD, DFID and FCO plus an additional contribution from the Treasury. This, however, has now changed and the funds currently bid directly for money from the Treasury. Perhaps this could be an example for PCRU.

270. MoD’s own analysis of the international security environment ‘*Delivering Security in a Changing World*’ envisages that the UK will be regularly engaged in stabilisation and post-conflict efforts for the foreseeable future. Successfully meeting this challenge will require effective planning and preparations well in advance of the outbreak of hostilities. The establishment of the PCRU should contribute significantly to the creation of capabilities to do this. But the PCRU faces a number of challenges in establishing itself. We are concerned that it may not achieve its initial operating capability by the target date of Spring 2005.

266 Q 510

267 Q 310

268 Q 314

269 Q 643

270 Q 240

271 DFID Development Committee, 20 January 2004, www.dfid.gov.uk

271. If the Government manages to establish a cross-departmental capacity to coordinate the UK's post-conflict activities, then the House of Commons will need to consider how best to provide oversight of this work. This is likely to include the Defence, Foreign Affairs and International Development Committees.

Annex: List of Abbreviations

ABOT	Al Basrah Oil Terminal
ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers
CDS	Chief of Defence Staff
CENTCOM	Central Command (US)
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CPA	Coalition Provisional Authority
CPATT	Coalition Police Advisory and Training Team
DDR	Defence, Demobilization, Reintegration
DfID	Department for International Development
DIS	Defence Intelligence Staff
DoD	Department of Defense (US)
DTDF	Divisional Temporary Detention Facility
EOD	Explosive Ordnance Disposal
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
GCPP	Global Conflict Prevention Pool
GOC	General Officer Commanding
HRW	Human Rights Watch
ICDC	Iraq Civil Defence Corps
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IEDs	Improvised Explosive Devices
ING	Iraqi National Guard
INIS	Iraqi National Intelligence Service
IPS	Iraqi Police Service
IRMO	Iraq Reconstruction Management Office
ISF	Iraqi Security Forces
KAAOT	Khawr Al Amaya Oil Terminal
MCNS	Ministerial Committee National Security

MoD	Ministry of Defence
MND (SC)	Ministry of Defence South Central
MND (SE)	Multinational Division South East
MNF-I	Multinational Force Iraq
MNSTC-I	Multinational Security Transition Command—Iraq
MOI	Ministry Of Interior
NAO	National Audit Office
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NTM-I	NATO Training Mission-Iraq
ORHA	Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance
PCO	Project and Contracting Office
PCRU	Post Conflict Reconstruction Unit
PJHQ	Permanent Joint Headquarters
QIP	Quick Impact Project
RAF	Royal Air Force
RN	Royal Navy
RUSI	Royal United Services Institute
SCIRI	Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq
SIA	Security Industry Authority
SSR	Security Sector reform
TAL	Transitional Administrative Law
TEDC	Training, Education and Doctrine Centre
UK	United Kingdom
UOR	Urgent Operational Requirement
UN	United Nations
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
US	United States

USAF	United States Air Force
USAID	US Agency for International Development
USMC	United States Marine Corps

Formal minutes

Wednesday 16 March 2005

Morning Sitting

Members present:

Mr Bruce George, in the Chair

Mr David Crausby	Richard Ottaway
Mike Gapes	Rachel Squire
Mr Dai Havard	Mr Peter Viggers

The Committee deliberated.

Draft Report (*Iraq: An Initial Assessment of Post-conflict Operations*), proposed by the Chairman, brought up and read.

The Committee deliberated.

[Adjourned till this day at 2.00 pm]

Wednesday 16 March 2005

Afternoon Sitting

Members present:

Mr Bruce George, in the Chair

Mike Gapes	Rachel Squire
Mr Dai Havard	Mr Peter Viggers
Mr Frank Roy	

The Committee deliberated.

Ordered, That the Chairman's draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 271 read and agreed to.

Annex [List of Abbreviations] agreed to.

Resolved, That the Report be the Sixth Report of the Committee to the House.

Ordered, That the provisions of Standing Order No. 134 (select committees (reports)) be applied to the Report.

Ordered, That the Appendices to the Minutes of Evidence taken before the Committee be reported to the House.

Ordered, That several memoranda be reported to the House.

[Adjourned till a date and time to be fixed by the Chairman]

Witnesses

Wednesday 23 June 2004

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Mr Martin Howard, Director General, Operational Policy, and **Major General Nick Houghton**, Assistant Chief of Defence Staff (Operations), Ministry of Defence

Ev 1

Tuesday 2 November 2004

Rt Hon Geoff Hoon, a Member of the House, Secretary of State for Defence, Ministry of Defence

Ev 19

Wednesday 26 January 2005

Chief Constable Paul Kernaghan, Chief Constable Hampshire Constabulary and ACPO Coordinator for International Policing, **Mr Stephen Pattison**, Director of International Security, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, **Mr Stephen Rimmer**, Director, Policing Policy, Home Office, and **Dr Owen Greene**, Director for the Centre for International Security and Co-operation, University of Bradford

Ev 31

Wednesday 26 January 2005

Mr Martin Howard, Director General, Operational Policy, **Lt General John McColl CBE DSO**, Former British Military Representative in Iraq, **Major General Nick Houghton CBE**, Assistant Chief of the Defence Staff (Operations) and **Major General Bill Rollo CBE**, former General Officer Commanding MND (SE), Ministry of Defence

Ev 56

Wednesday 2 February 2005

Mr Martin Howard, Director General, Operational Policy, **Lt General John McColl CBE DSO**, Former British Military Representative in Iraq, **Major General Nick Houghton CBE**, Assistant Chief of the Defence Staff (Operations) and **Major General Bill Rollo CBE**, former General Officer Commanding MND (SE), Ministry of Defence

Ev 63

Wednesday 9 February 2005

Mr Jim Drummond, Former Director, Iraq Directorate, **Ms Pauline Hays**, Senior Programme Manager, Iraq, and **Mr Rodney Matthews**, Former Head of Office, Basra, Department for International Development

Ev 86

Wednesday 9 February 2005

Rt Hon Adam Ingram, a Member of the House, Minister for the Armed Forces, **Major General Nick Houghton CBE**, Assistant Chief of Defence Staff (Operations) and **Dr Roger Hutton**, Director, Joint Commitments, Ministry of Defence

Ev 102

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Follow-up to the evidence session on 9 February 2005	Ev 129
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	
Follow-up to the evidence session on 26 January 2005	Ev 130
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Human Rights Watch	Ev 134
Shlomo Avineri, Herbert Samuel Professor of Political Science, Hebrew University, Jerusalem	Ev 137
Colonel (retd) C R Langton, International Institute for Strategic Studies	Ev 139
Dr Rod Thornton, Joint Service Command College	Ev 141
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Kevin Hurley, Chief Superintendent, City of London Police	Ev 148
Letter from the Secretary of State for Defence	Ev 150

Reports from the Defence Committee since 2001

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Third Report	Duty of Care	HC 63-I & II
Fourth Report	Future Capabilities	HC 45-I & II
Fifth Report	Strategic Export Controls: HMG's Annual Report 2003, Licensing Policy and Parliamentary Scrutiny	HC 145

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First Report	Armed Forces Pensions and Compensation	HC 96-I & II (<i>Cm 6109</i>)
Second Report	Annual Report for 2003	HC 293
Third Report	Lessons of Iraq	HC 57-I, II & III (<i>HC 635</i>)
Fourth Report	Strategic Export Controls: Annual Report for 2002, Licensing Policy and Parliamentary Scrutiny	HC 390 (<i>Cm 6357</i>)
Fifth Report	The Defence White Paper 2003	HC 465-I & II (<i>HC 1048</i>)
Sixth Report	Defence Procurement	HC 572-I & II (<i>Cm 6338</i>)

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First Report	Missile Defence	HC 290 (<i>HC 411</i>)
Second Report	Annual Report for 2002	HC 378
Third Report	Arms Control and Disarmament (Inspections) Bill	HC 321 (<i>HC 754</i>)
Fourth Report	The Government's Proposals for Secondary Legislation under the Export Control Act	HC 620 (<i>Cm 5988</i>)
Fifth Report	Strategic Export Controls: Annual Report for 2001, Licensing Policy and Parliamentary Scrutiny	HC 474 (<i>Cm 5943</i>)
Sixth Report	A New Chapter to the Strategic Defence Review	HC 93-I & II (<i>HC 975</i>)
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Fifth Report	The Government's Annual Report on Strategic Export Controls for 2000, Licensing Policy and Prior Parliamentary Scrutiny (Joint with Foreign Affairs Committee, International Development Committee and Trade and Industry Committee)	HC 718 (<i>Cm 5629</i>)
Sixth Report	Defence and Security in the UK	HC 518 (<i>HC 1230</i>)
Seventh Report	The Future of NATO	HC 914 (<i>HC 1231</i>)

Government Responses to Defence Committee reports are published as Special Reports from the Committee (or as Command papers). They are listed here in brackets by the HC (or Cm) No. after the report they relate to.