

Director of Communications and Strategy was to help take this strategy forward. I chaired a weekly strategy group on Iraq comprised of senior officials from No. 10, FCO, MOD, DIFD, JIC, SIS, DIS, CIC. This would discuss and review forward strategy. As you know, we continue to meet, though not every week. I also chaired the regular morning meeting of key departments to help take the strategy forward on a day to day basis.

Much of the debate on the issues under investigation by the Committee concerns the two so-called dossiers.

It is important to separate out the two dossiers. They are not comparable in terms of their scale, breadth or intended impact.

The first was a serious, thorough piece of work which involved detailed planning and preparation over months, not least because it was to be presented to Parliament by the Prime Minister. Indeed the foreword was in his name. But the JIC was in the lead on this and its Chairman took the lead responsibility for drawing up the contents which were regularly reviewed by the group that I chaired as the document evolved. The Prime Minister's officials, including me, and senior FCO officials were involved with the Chairman of the JIC in discussions upon the context, the planning of the document, and its presentation. That has never been an issue. I had many discussions with the Chairman of the JIC on presentational issues arising from the dossier and, in common with other officials, made drafting suggestions as the document evolved through various drafts. I was conscious of the fact that this was a major break with precedence for the intelligence community to allow so much of their information to be put into the public domain in this way and for them to cooperate so closely with us