



## BRIEFING PAPER

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# The Chilcot Inquiry: a reading list

By Ben Smith

### Contents:

1. The Iraqi Inquiry Report
2. Commons briefing papers
3. Other sources
4. Declassified documents from the Inquiry archive



## Contents

<b>1.</b>	<b>The Iraqi Inquiry Report</b>	<b>4</b>
1.1	Summary	4
1.2	Statement from Sir John Chilcot	4
1.3	The report	4
<b>2.</b>	<b>Commons briefing papers</b>	<b>7</b>
2.1	The inquiry	7
	<i>The Chilcot Inquiry</i> , 1 July 2016	7
	<i>Public Inquiries: non-statutory commissions of inquiry</i> , 1 July 2016	7
	<i>Impeachment</i> , 6 June 2016	7
	<i>Iraq: calls for an inquiry and historical precedents</i> , 4 June 2015	7
	<i>The Hutton Inquiry: publication and Commons consideration; and comparisons with other inquiries</i> , 18 August 2004	7
	<i>The Scott Inquiry: Approaching Publication</i> , 25 January 1996	8
2.2	Iraq	8
	<i>ISIS/Daesh: the military response in Iraq and Syria</i> , 24 May 2016	8
	<i>Iraq Historic Allegations Team</i> , 22 January 2016	8
	<i>Parliamentary approval for military action</i> , 13 May 2015	8
	<i>ISIS and the sectarian conflict in the Middle East</i> , 19 March 2015	8
	<i>The Arab Uprisings</i> , 15 November 2011	9
	<i>PL: Timeline of House of Commons Responses to the Iraq War</i> , 25 June 2009	9
	<i>British defence policy since 1997</i> , 27 June 2008	9
	<i>In Brief: British military involvement in Iraq since 1914</i> , 08 September 2006	9
	<i>Iraq: Military Use of White Phosphorus and Napalm-type Weapons</i> , 17 November 2005	9
	<i>Iraq: weapons of mass destruction and the '45 minutes' intelligence</i> , 13 July 2004	10
	<i>Iraq: legal issues at the handover</i> , 22 July 2004	10
	<i>Iraq at the Transition: key agreements and documents</i> , 28 June 2004	10
	<i>Iraq: bibliography on the use of force</i> , 05 March 2004	10
	<i>Iraq and Weapons of Mass Destruction</i> , 9 February 2004	10
	<i>Iraq: Security Council Resolution 1511</i> , 21 October 2003	10
	<i>Post-conflict Iraq</i> , 22 August 2003	11
	<i>The Conflict in Iraq</i> , 23 May 2003	11
	<i>Commons Divisions on Iraq: 26 February and 18 March 2003</i> , 24 March 2003	11
	<i>Draft Security Council resolution on Iraq</i> , 19 March 2003	11
	<i>No Fly Zones over Iraq</i> , 13 March 2003	11
	<i>Iraq: Developments since UN Security Council Resolution 1441</i> , 13 March 2003	11
	<i>Iraq and UN Security Council Resolution 1441</i> , 21 November 2002	11
<b>3.</b>	<b>Other sources</b>	<b>12</b>
	<i>Iraq Inquiry Chilcot Timeline of Principal Developments</i> , House of Lords Library briefing, 28 June, 2016	12
	'Chilcot report: Over and out?', <i>Financial Times</i> , 3 July 2016	12
	Jonathan Powell, 'Chilcot mustn't make us afraid to use force', <i>Times</i> , 2 July 2016	12
	'The Chilcot Inquiry is unlikely to change anyone's mind about the Iraq war', <i>Independent</i> , 2 July 2016	12
	'The Chilcot report won't help solve Iraq's sectarian violence today', <i>Daily Telegraph</i> , 3 July 2016	12
	'The beginning of the end', <i>Economist</i> , 23 April 2016	12

### 3 Commons Library Briefing, 6 July 2016

Owen D. Thomas, *The Iraq Inquiries: Publicity, Secrecy and Liberal War*, Exeter University, 2015 12  
Fraser Nelson, 'The Iraq inquiry we should be having', *Spectator*, 29 November 2009 12

#### **4. Declassified documents from the Inquiry archive 13**

# 1. The Iraqi Inquiry Report

## 1.1 Summary

The Report of the Iraq Inquiry, [Executive Summary](#), Report of a Committee of Privy Counsellors, HC 264

## 1.2 Statement from Sir John Chilcot

[Statement by Sir John Chilcot](#): 6 July 2016

## 1.3 The report

### The Report of the Iraq Inquiry

#### Volume 1

- [Introduction](#)
- [1.1 UK strategy 1990 to 2000](#)
- [1.2 Development of UK strategy and options, September 2000 to September 2001](#)
- [2. Decision making within government](#)
- [3.1 Development of UK strategy and options, 9/11 to early January 2002](#)
- [3.2 Development of UK strategy and options, January to April 2002 - "axis of evil" to Crawford](#)

#### Volume 2

- [3.3 Development of UK strategy and options, April to July 2002](#)
- [3.4 Development of UK strategy and options, late July to 14 September 2002](#)
- [3.5 Development of UK strategy and options, September to November 2002 - the negotiation of Resolution 1441](#)

#### Volume 3

- [3.6 Development of UK strategy and options, November 2002 to January 2003](#)
- [3.7 Development of UK strategy and options, 1 February to 7 March 2003](#)
- [3.8 Development of UK strategy and options, 8 to 20 March 2003](#)

#### Volume 4

- [4. Iraq's weapons of mass destruction](#)
- [4.1 Iraq's WMD assessments, pre-July 2002](#)
- [4.2 Iraq's WMD assessments, July to September 2002](#)
- [4.3 Iraq's WMD assessments, October 2002 to March 2003](#)
- [4.4 The Search for WMD](#)

#### Volume 5

- [5. Advice on the legal basis for military action, November 2002 to March 2003](#)
- [6.1 Development of the military options for an invasion of Iraq](#)

- [6.2 Military planning for the invasion, January to March 2003](#)

#### **Volume 6**

- [6.3 Military equipment \(pre-conflict\)](#)
- [6.4 Planning and preparation for a post-Saddam Hussein Iraq, mid-2001 to January 2003](#)
- [6.5 Planning and preparation for a post-Saddam Hussein Iraq, January to March 2003](#)
- [7. Conclusions: pre-conflict strategy and planning](#)

#### **Volume 7**

- [8. The Invasion](#)
- [9.1 March to May 2003](#)
- [9.2 May 2003 to June 2004](#)
- [9.3 July 2004 to May 2005](#)
- [9.4 June 2005 to May 2006](#)

#### **Volume 8**

- [9.5 June 2006 to 27 June 2007](#)
- [9.6 28 June 2007 to April 2008](#)
- [9.7 May 2008 to October 2009](#)
- [9.8 Conclusions: the post-conflict period](#)

#### **Volume 9**

- [10.1 Reconstruction: March 2003 to July 2004](#)
- [10.2 Reconsruction: July 2004 to July 2009](#)
- [10.3 Reconstruction: oil, commerical issues, debt relief, asylum and stabilisation policy](#)
- [10.4 Conclusions: Reconstruction](#)

#### **Volume 10**

- [11.1 de-Ba'athification](#)
- [11.2 Conclusions: de-Ba'athification](#)
- [12.1 Security Sector Reform](#)
- [12.2 Conclusions: Security Sector Reform](#)
- [13.1 Resources](#)
- [13.2 Conclusions: Resources](#)

#### **Volume 11**

- [14.1 Military equipment \(post-conflict\)](#)
- [14.2 Conclusions: Military equipment \(post-conflict\)](#)
- [15.1 Civilian Personnel](#)

## 6 The Chilcot Inquiry: a reading list

- [15.2 Conclusions: Civilian Personnel](#)

### **Volume 12**

- [16.1 The welfare of Service Personnel](#)
- [16.2 Support for injured Service Personnel and veterans](#)
- [16.3 Military fatalities and the bereaved](#)
- [16.4 Conclusions: Service Personnel](#)
- [17. Civilian casualties](#)
- [Annex 1: Iraq 1583 to 1960](#)
- [Annex 2: Glossary](#)
- [Annex 3: Names and posts](#)
- [Annex 4: Maps](#)
- [Annex 5: How to read and navigate the Report](#)

## 2. Commons briefing papers

### 2.1 The inquiry

#### [\*The Chilcot Inquiry\*](#), 1 July 2016

The Iraq Inquiry, chaired by Sir John Chilcot, was set up in 2009 to look at decision-making in relation to the invasion of Iraq and was originally expected to publish its report quite quickly. There have been repeated delays, caused by the broad scope of the inquiry, arguments about the disclosure of documents, and the so-called Maxwellisation process, whereby individuals criticised in the report get an opportunity to respond before publication. Some hoped that it would be published before the 2015 general election but that did not happen. In October 2015 the inquiry chairman said that it would be published in June or July 2016. In May the date of 6 July 2016 was finally set for the report's publication.

#### [\*Public Inquiries: non-statutory commissions of inquiry\*](#), 1 July 2016

This Briefing Paper examines non-statutory inquiries, including: non statutory *ad hoc* inquiries, committees of Privy Counsellors and Royal Commissions. A number of recent high profile inquiries, including both the Butler and Chilcot inquiries on the Iraq war, have been held as non-statutory inquiries

#### [\*Impeachment\*](#), 6 June 2016

Impeachment was a means by which Parliament could prosecute and try individuals, normally holders of public office, for high treason or other crimes and misdemeanours. The first recorded impeachment in Parliament was in 1376 and the last in 1806.

Impeachment is considered obsolete, as it has been superseded by other forms of accountability, and the rules underpinning the procedure have not been adapted to modern standards of democracy or procedural fairness. It has, however, been mentioned in connection with the Chilcot report.

#### [\*Iraq: calls for an inquiry and historical precedents\*](#), 4 June 2015

There were repeated calls for a broad-ranging official inquiry into the run-up to the Iraq war. Opposition Day debates in the House of Commons were used by both the Conservative party and others to press the government for an investigation.

The government resisted the calls, at first partly because it considered that there had been several inquiries already, later because the government argued that it would not be right for an inquiry to take place while troops were still serving in Iraq.

#### [\*The Hutton Inquiry: publication and Commons consideration; and comparisons with other inquiries\*](#), 18 August 2004

This note reviews the publication arrangements of the report of the Hutton Inquiry, and how the report was considered in the House of Commons. By way of comparison, it reviews the responses to a selection of inquiries in the House of Commons. It provides some detail on the Scott report, including calls for a debate on a substantive motion, rather than on a motion for the adjournment. For the other inquiries, it details how the inquiry report was presented to the House of Commons.

### [\*The Scott Inquiry: Approaching Publication\*](#), 25 January 1996

It is expected that Sir Richard Scott's report on the sale of arms to Iraq will be published in the near future. This paper is a reminder of the background to the establishment of the Scott Inquiry and provides an overview of the issues the inquiry has been investigating.

## 2.2 Iraq

### [\*ISIS/Daesh: the military response in Iraq and Syria\*](#), 24 May 2016

US-led air strikes against ISIS continue in Iraq and Syria, alongside a training programme to build the capacity of Iraqi security forces and local fighters. The UK has been conducting airstrikes against ISIS in Iraq since September 2014 and has been providing training assistance to Iraqi security forces and the Kurdish Peshmerga. Following a vote in Parliament in December 2015 the UK expanded its air campaign into Syria. How is the campaign progressing?

### [\*Iraq Historic Allegations Team\*](#), 22 January 2016

This Commons Library briefing paper describes the Iraq Historic Allegations Team (IHAT): when and why it was set up; its mandate, staff and methods; and its achievements. It puts these in the context of other related investigations and recent publicity.

### [\*Parliamentary approval for military action\*](#), 13 May 2015

The deployment of the Armed Forces is currently a prerogative power. Parliament has no legally established role and the Government is under no legal obligation with respect to its conduct. In 2011 the Government acknowledged that a convention had emerged whereby the House of Commons would have the opportunity to debate the deployment of military forces, prior to doing so, except in the event of an emergency. The defeat of the Government in a vote on military action in Syria in August 2013 was widely viewed as an assertion of Parliamentary sovereignty on such matters. Yet many have argued that the convention lacks clarity and remains open to interpretation and exploitation. In 2011 the Government committed to legislate on this issue but by the end of the 2010-2015 Parliament no proposals were forthcoming. Going forward proponents of a formalised role for Parliament have suggested adopting a parliamentary resolution as either an interim step or as a viable alternative to legislation. Establishing either is fraught with difficulties and arguably, therefore, makes the continuation and strengthening of the current convention more likely in the immediate future.

### [\*ISIS and the sectarian conflict in the Middle East\*](#), 19 March 2015

ISIS has its roots in the Sunni rebellion against the US-led occupation after the 2003 invasion and has recently broken away from al-Qaeda, setting itself up as a rival jihadi 'franchise'. Some say, however, that ISIS is a useful cover for former high-ranking elements of Saddam Hussein's dismantled Sunni-dominated security forces, determined to regain their former position. There is limited support for official Iraqi forces among Iraqi Sunnis after what they see as relentless persecution by the Shia-dominated government in Baghdad.

ISIS took advantage of the even greater chaos in Syria to take large areas of Syrian Sunni-majority territory and set up a claimed capital there.

The forces ranged against ISIS make further progress more difficult, but differing policies pursued by its opponents in the region make a coordinated response difficult. Inherent contradictions exist, particularly because of the differing strategic alignments of the respective governments of Iraq and Syria.



The focus of European governments has been on Iraq, where the legal basis for intervention is clearer, but Syria remains the bigger conflict, at least for now. The US is getting into a complicated multi-sided fight in Syria. Many analysts question the likely effectiveness of Western intervention in such a complex conflict with strong sectarian overtones.

### **[The Arab Uprisings, 15 November 2011](#)**

Since December 2010, the most profound process of change has affected the countries of the Arab world. The change spread quickly between the countries of the region, underlining the many common factors that provoked unrest. How the region's revolutions progress, however, depends on the individual characteristics of each country, which are very different. This paper looks at these similarities and differences and considers the possible outcomes in each case. The legitimacy of ruling regimes, the effect of societies' divisions along confessional lines and the role of the region's militaries are considered.

Separately, the prospects for tendencies such as political Islam and violent jihadis are considered. The possible ramifications of the Arab unrest on relations with other countries in the region, such as Turkey, Israel and Iran are also discussed as are the military balance, and defence expenditure and relationships in the region. The immediate and short-term outlook for the region's economies, which will have such an impact on the outcome of the revolutions, is discussed.

Lastly, the paper looks at US, EU and UK policies towards the region and presents some views on how they should evolve.

### **[PIL: Timeline of House of Commons Responses to the Iraq War, 25 June 2009](#)**

House of Commons debates, statements and papers on the Iraq war.

### **[British defence policy since 1997, 27 June 2008](#)**

British defence policy has altered significantly since the Labour Government came to power in 1997. Those changes have been prompted largely by the shifting nature of the strategic environment over that period, and in particular the events of 11 September 2001.

However, the strategic foreign policy objectives of former Prime Minister Tony Blair have also helped to shape the direction of British defence policy and have had a fundamental impact on the role, structure and welfare of the Armed Forces.

This paper is not intended to be a comprehensive assessment of all aspects of defence policy since 1997, but an introduction to some of the main issues that have shaped the defence agenda in that time. It also examines the prospects for defence since Gordon Brown became Prime Minister in June 2007.

### **[In Brief: British military involvement in Iraq since 1914, 08 September 2006](#)**

British forces have been involved in a number of military interventions in Iraq since the outbreak of the First World War in 1914. This note is not intended to be a comprehensive survey of British involvement, but seeks to provide an introduction to the subject.

### **[Iraq: Military Use of White Phosphorus and Napalm-type Weapons, 17 November 2005](#)**

White phosphorus, a spontaneously flammable chemical used for battlefield illumination and providing smoke screens, has been deployed by Coalition forces in Iraq. Contact with

the substance causes severe burning of the skin and flesh, and its use by British and US forces has attracted considerable media and parliamentary attention in recent weeks.

**[Iraq: weapons of mass destruction and the '45 minutes' intelligence](#), 13 July 2004**

The 'September Dossier', Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction: The Assessment of the British Government of 24 September 2002, included a reference to intelligence that Iraq had military plans for the use of chemical and biological weapons, and that some of these weapons were deployable within 45 minutes of an order to use them.

The inclusion of this intelligence came under scrutiny in the report of the Intelligence and Security Committee, Iraqi Weapons of Mass Destruction – Intelligence and Assessments of September 2003, and in the report of Lord Hutton into the circumstances surrounding the death of the government weapons scientist, Dr David Kelly, which was published on 28 January 2004. It is expected to feature in the report of the Butler Review of intelligence on weapons of mass destruction, which is to be published on 14 July 2004.

**[Iraq: legal issues at the handover](#), 22 July 2004**

This Paper discusses the international legal framework for Iraq at the end of the occupation. It gives a brief overview of the occupation period and then describes the legal basis for the new arrangements. These include transitional political structures and a multinational military force. The Paper also looks at ways in which legal responsibility might arise for the UK in respect of abuse of detainees in Iraq.

**[Iraq at the Transition: key agreements and documents](#), 28 June 2004**

On 28 June 2004 the Coalition occupation of Iraq came to an end, and the Coalition Provisional Authority, which had administered Iraq since the fall of the Saddam Hussein regime, was dissolved. Authority for governing the country passed to an Iraqi Interim Government with full exercise of sovereignty.

This note provides details of selected key agreements and documents relating to the transition. It includes a brief summary and the full text of the Agreement on Political process of 15 November 2003, the Transitional Administrative Law of 8 March 2004 and its related Annex of 1 June 2004, and UN Security Council Resolution 1546 of 8 June

**[Iraq: bibliography on the use of force](#), 05 March 2004**

This Note gives a guide to readings on the legality of the use of force against Iraq in 2003. It updates the reading list in Iraq: calls for an inquiry, SN/IA/2713, though other material in that Note remains relevant.

**[Iraq and Weapons of Mass Destruction](#), 9 February 2004**

This note examines the weapons of mass destruction programmes developed by the regime of the deposed Iraqi leader, Saddam Hussein. Several months of investigations by Coalition inspectors have uncovered evidence of weapons programmes and Iraqi concealment activities but no stockpiles of chemical or biological weapons. The note looks at the process of accounting for Iraq's WMD programmes after 1991 and summarises the findings of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the UN Special Commission on Iraq (UNSCOM) and its successor, the UN Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC), and the Coalition's Iraq Survey Group (ISG).

**[Iraq: Security Council Resolution 1511](#), 21 October 2003**

This note discusses Security Council Resolution 1511, which adds to the legal basis for the

administration of Iraq by the USA and its coalition partners.

### **[Post-conflict Iraq, 22 August 2003](#)**

This note provides an overview of developments in Iraq since the downfall of the Saddam Hussein regime in April 2003. It summarises the post-conflict arrangements put in place by the Coalition, the provisions introduced under UN Security Council Resolutions 1483 of 22 May 2003 and 1500 of 14 August, and the moves towards Iraqi self-government. It also examines the multinational stabilisation forces that have been deployed.

### **[The Conflict in Iraq, 23 May 2003](#)**

Military operations to remove the Iraqi regime from power (Operation Iraqi Freedom) began officially at 0234 GMT on 20 March 2003. Coalition forces advanced rapidly into Iraq, encountering sporadic resistance from Iraqi military and paramilitary forces. By mid-April major combat operations had come to an end, with coalition forces in effective control of the whole country, including the capital Baghdad. This paper provides a summary of events in the buildup to the conflict, a general outline of the main developments during the military campaign between 20 March and mid April 2003 and an initial post-conflict assessment of the conduct of operations.

### **[Commons Divisions on Iraq: 26 February and 18 March 2003, 24 March 2003](#)**

This standard note analyses the divisions on 26 February and 18 March 2003 regarding Iraq. An alphabetical list of all 659 members and how they voted is appended.

### **[Draft Security Council resolution on Iraq, 19 March 2003](#)**

This note gives an overview of the draft resolutions on Iraq introduced in the United Nations Security Council by the UK, the USA and Spain on 24 February 2003 and 7 March 2003. It includes the texts of the draft resolutions and also the text of the French, Russian and German memorandum on Iraq. Further information can be found in Research Paper 03/22, *Iraq: developments since UN Security Council Resolution 1441*, 13 March 2003.

### **[No Fly Zones over Iraq, 13 March 2003](#)**

...provides historical information on the 'no-fly zones' over northern and southern Iraq, which were imposed by the USA and UK in the aftermath of the Gulf War of 1991. The Note looks at the legal basis cited by Washington and London for the zones and summarises the main incidents that occurred between September 2001 and March 2003.

### **[Iraq: Developments since UN Security Council Resolution 1441, 13 March 2003](#)**

This Paper outlines the current policy of the UK and the USA concerning Iraq, looks at the United Nations involvement, the progress of inspections and the state of military deployments. It includes information on humanitarian planning, on the means of financing military action and on Iraq's economic and social indicators, including oil production.

### **[Iraq and UN Security Council Resolution 1441, 21 November 2002](#)**

This Paper gives an account of the latest developments concerning efforts to disarm Iraq of weapons of mass destruction. It discusses Security Council Resolution 1441 and looks at the new mandate for weapons inspectors.

### 3. Other sources

[\*Iraq Inquiry Chilcot Timeline of Principal Developments\*](#), House of Lords Library briefing, 28 June, 2016

[\*'Chilcot report: Over and out?'\*](#), *Financial Times*, 3 July 2016

Whatever conclusions the inquiry draws this week, the Iraq invasion has changed Britain's place in the world.

Jonathan Powell, [\*'Chilcot mustn't make us afraid to use force'\*](#), *Times*, 2 July 2016

I'll take my share of the blame for what went wrong in Iraq but doing nothing can have even worse consequences.

[\*'The Chilcot Inquiry is unlikely to change anyone's mind about the Iraq war'\*](#), *Independent*, 2 July 2016

The question on everybody's lips is whether it will be worth the wait, and the weight.

[\*'The Chilcot report won't help solve Iraq's sectarian violence today'\*](#), *Daily Telegraph*, 3 July 2016

Whatever conclusions Sir John Chilcot comes to this week in his long-awaited report into the Iraq War, one thing is clear: more than 13 years after the invasion in which this nation took a leading part, Iraq is still in turmoil.

[\*'The beginning of the end'\*](#), *Economist*, 23 April 2016

Sir John hopes that when people see the comprehensiveness of the inquiry they will understand the time it has taken. The reality is that it can only disappoint many of those who have been demanding its publication most stridently. They will be satisfied only when Britain's role in the war has been officially declared illegal and Mr Blair is convicted as a war criminal. Neither is imminent.

Owen D. Thomas, [\*The Iraq Inquiries: Publicity, Secrecy and Liberal War\*](#), Exeter University, 2015

Since 2003 the British state has conducted several public inquiries into the Iraq War. These inquiries have been impeded by official secrecy, justified on the grounds of national security. This leads to an apparent dilemma in which the liberal democratic practice of publicity is balanced against security. I reject this balance. Instead I show how publicity and official secrecy are *both* apparatuses of security. Indeed the suspicion of official secrecy and the act of publicity is constitutive of liberal war. Thus those who demand 'open government' may re-inscribe a technique of governing that supports the British government's case for war against Iraq.

Fraser Nelson, [\*'The Iraq inquiry we should be having'\*](#), *Spectator*, 29 November 2009

Do we still have the will to win in Afghanistan? If so, the question the Iraq inquiry should be asking is not "how did we get into this war" – we have had a number of separate inquiries into that already – but "why were the military defeated on the ground in Basra?".

## 4. Declassified documents from the Inquiry archive

See also the Iraq Inquiry's [background page](#), which has a selection of useful documents, including declassified documents, as follows:

### **Biographies of the Iraq Inquiry members**

- [Sir John Chilcot \(Chairman\)](#)
- [Sir Lawrence Freedman](#)
- [Sir Martin Gilbert](#)
- [Sir Roderic Lyne](#)
- [Baroness Usha Prashar](#)

### **Relevant documents**

- [Letters and memos to and from the Inquiry](#)

### **Statements**

- [Statements from and to the Inquiry](#)

### **Declassified Documents**

- [Declassified Documents listed by Department](#)

### **Protocols**

The following are protocols used in the inquiry:

- between [The Iraq Inquiry and Her Majesty's Government regarding documents and other written and electronic information](#)[External website];
- for [witnesses giving evidence to the Iraq Inquiry](#);
- for [hearing evidence by the Iraq Inquiry in public](#);
- for [sensitive information](#).

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