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(SUB COMMITTEE C)

THE EUROPEAN SECURITY STRATEGY

THURSDAY 5 JUNE 2008

MAJOR GENERAL MESSERVY-WHITING CBE and MR NICK WITNEY

Evidence heard in Public

Questions 36 - 87

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Present

Anderson of Swansea, L
Chidgey, L
Hamilton of Epsom, L
Hannay of Chiswick, L
Jones, L
Roper, L (Chairman)
Selkirk of Douglas, L
Swinfen, L
Symons of Vernham Dean, B

Witnesses: **Major General Messervy-Whiting CBE**, Centre for Studies in Security and Diplomacy, European Research Institute, University of Birmingham, and **Mr Nick Witney**, European Council on Foreign Relations, examined.

Q36 Chairman: Major General Messervy-Whiting and Mr Witney, we are very pleased to see you this morning as part of the inquiry which we are carrying out on the future development of the European Security Strategy of the European Union. Both of you of course have had significant practical experience with this area of the Union's work but you are now free, working in other places, to be able perhaps to speak to us more frankly about these matters than might have been the case on earlier occasions. Can I begin and ask you what do you see as the nature and the purpose of the European Security Strategy and to what extent has it served as a useful tool for addressing the security challenges which have been faced by the European Union since it was prepared and agreed? To what extent do you feel it really informs policy-making in the institutions and indeed in the Member States? Perhaps I will ask Major General Messervy-Whiting to start and then, Mr Witney, we will switch around.

Major General Messervy-Whiting: Thank you, My Lord Chairman. If the Committee's attention has not already been drawn to it might I mention the publication which has been published by the Swiss (Zurich) Technical Institute, ETH, as the result of a Chatham House conference in March 2006, which is available on the internet. This was called *Securing Europe? Implementing the European Security Strategy* and contained really the results of the workshop that was co-sponsored by Chatham House and by GCSP in Geneva, amongst others. Professor Anne Deighton was the leading light and the editor for that and what really came out of that workshop, of which I was a member, was that it was very much accepted that it was a rough guide for future action, it was not perhaps a strategy document in the true military sense. Solana himself, when speaking yesterday, opening the plenary session of the European Parliament, spoke at length on the European Security Strategy and his view of his remit from the European Council. He referred to it very much as it has proved useful, it has served us well, it is a short readable document that reflects our values and reflects our principles rather than a more fully fleshed-out strategy. Certainly looking back at the period up until 2006 and this particular Chatham House workshop, when the participants were asked if decision-makers around the table in the Council or indeed in the political security meeting in the European Union had the strategy in their left hand whilst they voted with their right, the answer was very much that they did not think that happened, that it was more a document that informed the decision-making process. That would be my view on nature and purpose; to what extent does it inform policy-making, it informs it quite well in European institutions. A number of them are now seized of the issue to try and do something to bring it up to date. Whether it is as widely used in the EU Member States I would have my doubts.

Mr Witney: My Lord Chairman, my views are really very similar to Mr Whiting's. I guess the purpose of the document is essentially to get the Member States on the same page in relation to the attitude towards security issues, which was particularly necessary at the end of

2003 when the document was born. Yes, you could argue about whether it is really a strategy or a conceptual framework or what it actually is but it seems to me a necessary crystallisation of the understanding that moving into the 21st century the security threats that Europe should be concerned about were not invasion but all these more amorphous threats from the dark side of globalisation, if one can express it that way, and that the way to deal with them was to get out there and deal with them, that you could not and should not afford just to sort of sit at home and have these things happen to you. How far it has been used – I know that during my time in Brussels we seemed to have identical copies of this little blue book. Mine is substantially dog-eared, I found it very useful to use on occasion, but as Graham said my sense is that it was absorbed more within the Brussels ring road – where after all it was proposed – than out in the capitals of Europe.

Q37 Lord Hannay of Chiswick: I have a copy of the little blue book too but could I ask the two witnesses this morning, who have got extensive experience of course of living and working in our national framework and also some knowledge of how the United States organises security strategies and so on, do you think that this document differs markedly from documents you came across in your professional life in London and which you came across in your contacts with Washington? If so, how does it differ or is it broadly similar. Secondly, does either of those two actors, the United Kingdom or the United States, hold their strategic document in their left hand as they take decisions with their right, or is the situation more or less the same as the one you have described in Brussels?

Mr Witney: I suppose my immediate sense of how it differs is that it is blessedly short, very lucid and readable, which cannot be said for most security strategies. Because the EU is not a nation state we find less in here about its policies and it is closer to being a statement of principles whereas the US national security strategy will tend to be more specific. Interestingly, I thought the recently produced British national security strategy, although

considerably longer in its ambit, was surprisingly congruent with this five year old document, certainly in its analysis of the threats.

Major General Messervy-Whiting: I wonder if the US national security strategy is perhaps more widely used within Washington because it reads across to a certain extent to budgetary issues, which I do not think this does – perhaps it should. I note that it followed hard on the heels of the US strategy and that our own Foreign Office’s first strategy followed hard on the heels of the EU.

Q38 Lord Hamilton of Epsom: Is there any point in it at all unless it actually changes things on the ground? The reaction of most European nations to Afghanistan, which I think threatens the whole of Western Europe if it reverts to being a terrorist state, is appalling, but really the performance of German and French troops has been pretty weak and defence budgets have been cut across Western Europe. What is the point of all of this if things are changing for the worse on the ground?

Major General Messervy-Whiting: I agree that to the extent that there is anything wrong with this, it is not the words so much as whether people are doing it or not and across Europe I am not sure that I would exempt any national capital. Across Europe people are not actually following the prescriptions of more active, more capable and more coherent.

Mr Witney: I would perhaps just emphasise that like many things in the European Union this perhaps is starting a long term process of construction rather than achieving any results in the short term.

Q39 Lord Hannay of Chiswick: Could we turn now to that phrase that you used, Mr Witney, about providing a coherent and well-balanced assessment of the threats and risks facing the EU. Does the strategy achieve that? Are there any threats or challenges or risks that are not covered by the present strategy and which could now fall within the ambit of the

review that is ongoing at the moment and which has triggered our own consideration of this matter. Already, of course, Solana and the Commission put a paper to the March European Council on climate change which suggested that that was an area that came within the ambit of a broad security policy, but there are other things like electronic attacks, non-military espionage, maritime piracy, natural disasters and then a whole range of what I call poverty eradication, pandemic disease, food security and so on. Could you perhaps comment, both of you, on the extent to which these now need to be brought within a broader view?

Mr Witney: There is no doubt that in recent years there has become an increasingly widespread understanding that defence issues need to be seen as part of a much broader spectrum of security concerns, which cover many of the sorts of issues that you have just listed, and that military power per se is not often, perhaps never, the answer to a particular situation and most crises and areas of instability need to be addressed with a variety of tools. It is interesting that this document does in fact mention quite a few of the subjects you have mentioned – there is even, I noticed, a reference to piracy which has become topical in the last week or so – though it does not have very much to say about them. Whilst it is important and right that people are increasingly concerned about the multi-headed nature of most of the situations of instability and crisis management that the EU might need to involve itself in, there can be a danger of this tending to shift the debate too far away from matters of hard power and military matters. It is too easy to move from saying that the military is seldom a solution to anything by itself to an attitude of mind which is that you do not actually need the military at all. I myself, for example, am slightly sceptical about today's rather vogue concentration on energy security which I think falls pretty loosely under the ambit of what I understand by defence and security affairs, it seems to me in fact more a matter of the organisation of the internal gas market in Europe than something that needs to be considered in conventional security terms. I see that danger if one is too sophisticated and moves too far

into spreading the term security, but on the other hand it is absolutely right that things like climate change do play a key role in contributing as drivers of conflict and instability.

Major General Messervy-Whiting: I tend to agree with Nick. There are tags to most of the things in there and of the ones the Committee listed in its question I do not think there is anything about non-military espionage, that is about the only one I could not find a coat-hook to. It is interesting that yesterday, whilst saying that most of the threats were still the right ones as they were in 2003, Solana picked out in particular climate change and its effect on international security, ditto illegal immigration and information security. Actually, the strategy does mention global warming under global challenges and talks about turbulence and migratory movements, and it does mention illegal immigration under the key threats in relation to organised crime, but clearly these are issues that Solana will probably feel he needs to tackle in any update of the strategy. The other thing I noted recently is that the French are just about to update their defence white book after about 15 years and President Sarkozy is going to announce the main findings on 17 June, just before the European Council on 18 and 19 June and just before France takes over the Presidency of the European Union. What *La Figaro* trailed as likely headlines from that were obviously terrorism, but the dangers generally coming out of Asia and specific mention about cyber-terrorism and climatic change.

Q40 Lord Hannay of Chiswick: Just to follow up on that, because I very much agree with what you said about the risk that if you say too much about what I call the Millennium Development Goal end of the spectrum, you do risk giving the impression that it could all be done with soft power. Do you not feel that the European Union and its Member States should be looking at the soft power/hard power issue as a long continuum basically in which you cannot predict in advance always how far along that continuum you will have to go in dealing with a particular risk or threat. It is not a question of alternatives, of either soft power or hard power, it is a question of having a realistic and credible continuum up which to move.

Mr Witney: Yes, I do agree with that and I think that for an organisation whose self-image is its particular value added in combining the different tools of hard and soft power, the European Union is remarkably ill-equipped to do that.

Major General Messervy-Whiting: If I could just add, not so much as part of the strategy but in relation to each particular challenge that needs to deploy the European Security and Defence Policy instrument, the EU does as a matter of discipline, as part of its crisis management procedures, enter a comprehensive global concept phase where they look at the overall objectives using all instruments in relation to that problem, of which the ESDP element – whether it is more civil in nature or more military in nature – will be just a part.

Q41 Lord Anderson of Swansea: Just as there are differences in the weight given to soft and hard power in individual countries – at the one end I guess one would have Canada and Norway emphasising soft power and ourselves probably on the other side of it – is there a danger that there would be a *differentiation* from the European Union side because the military end of it has been so as yet undeveloped within the European Union, and is there a temptation to look mainly at the soft power end? Perhaps part of our role is to put a little more weight on the military and hard power side in the formulation of the new policy.

Major General Messervy-Whiting: Solana quotes 17 ESDP operations so far and the vast majority have been civil rather than military in nature, but actually in terms of the planning effort, the machinery and the institutional side the military were very much first off the ground under the ESDP and the civilian side, without being derogatory, were very much playing catch-up. The first mission mounted was a police mission but the planning for that was very much done quietly and informally with a great deal of assistance from the military staff because they were up and running and the police planning staff were not. The non-military crisis management structures had very much been looking at the military way of doing things to try and develop how to do things.

Q42 Lord Anderson of Swansea: At about the time this security strategy came out was it not also the time when we had the Macedonia operation where it was trumpeted by the European Union that their role was pretty minimal; at the beginning it was a NATO-led operation. My point is, is there a temptation, because of the weight within the European Union, to overstress the civilian as opposed to the military?

Major General Messervy-Whiting: I would say from what I saw when I was there, which was up until 2005, that that was not the case. To what extent that might have changed I defer to Nick, but certainly by the time the strategy was agreed there had been two military operations, one was using Berlin Plus and NATO assets and capabilities – the Macedonia one – the second one was Artemis in the Bunia region of the Democratic Republic of Congo which was very much a so-called autonomous military operation without recourse to NATO assets and capabilities, so they had done one of each.

Q43 Lord Anderson of Swansea: But that was essentially French, was it not?

Major General Messervy-Whiting: France provided the framework nation, absolutely, but a large number of Member States and non-Member States took part in that operation. It was small in nature.

Q44 Lord Anderson of Swansea: We had a general in Macedonia for what people were saying was essentially a brigadier operation – that is the EU was trumpeting this as a great operation, but it was pretty small.

Major General Messervy-Whiting: It was modest in size but the operation commander was a four star general, was DSACEUR, the German Admiral at that stage, Feist, based in Mons and the force commander on the ground was a two star. It was a modest operation.

Q45 Lord Jones: Following on from Lord Hannay and Lord Anderson's immediate question should the strategy place greater emphasis on human security to balance the current focus on state security and does the strategy sufficiently address the complexities of the European security environment and inter-linkages between different types of security threats and risks?

Mr Witney: It is a bit unfair to the strategy to say that it is focused on state security; it seems to me actually that it recognises that most situations of instability and conflict are to do with regional conflicts and the failure of states. There is quite a clear pair of statements about the importance of governance, ensuring that the rule of law works, that there is not excessive corruption, that there is accountability. The understanding of the importance of human rights comes through to me pretty clearly from this so my sense is that allowing for the fact that this is very much a summary, headline document, very much compressed in its terms, it is entirely sensitive to the fact that what you mean by developments and concern for human rights is something that has to go absolutely hand in hand with efforts to improve harder security, as we learn every day in Afghanistan or anywhere that Europeans are engaged, no matter what flag they are engaged under. To be fair, questions can be headlines sometimes.

Q46 Lord Jones: Could you explain how you perceive human security; could you pad that out a little bit?

Mr Witney: I have had one or two conversations with collaborators of Professor Kaldor and my understanding is that it is very much focused on an understanding that you are not going to get things right in the societies that you are possibly intervening in, unless you look at the grass roots and do address the problems of the individual human beings on the ground. As I said, it seems to me that this is exactly the sort of lesson that we are relearning again in Afghanistan, that you can do what you like with the central government but unless you win the hearts and minds of people on the ground and show them substantive development and

show them real security, you are not actually going to have a successful outcome to what you are going to do.

Major General Messervy-Whiting: I agree with Nick. I am not comfortable with the term “human security” because I do not really understand it.

Q47 Lord Jones: I was hoping you could explain it to me.

Major General Messervy-Whiting: I run fellowship courses on democracy, the rule of law and security at Birmingham University and I think I know what she is getting at. The EU, certainly in some of its smaller, more recent, good governance-type operations – security sector reform and other operations, mainly military in nature – is actually addressing those sorts of issues directly on the ground.

Lord Hannay of Chiswick: I agree with the difficulty of defining what you mean by this catchphrase “human security” but the most obvious case where it has been defined and has become an international norm but has not yet been properly implemented is the responsibility to protect, which is of course specifically directed towards human security and overriding state security in certain circumstances where genocide or war crimes or gross abuses of humanitarian law took place. The responsibility to protect was of course agreed in 2005, after the European Security Strategy was promulgated, and presumably one of the ways in which the strategy may need to be updated is to indicate how the European Union intends to move ahead with implementing its responsibilities of its 27 Member States in the United Nations under the rubric of responsibility to protect; that is about human security.

Chairman: We did have evidence from Dan Smith last week and we are going to hear Mary Kaldor next week, so we will have from them a good deal about human security. Can I ask Lord Anderson if he would like to come in.

Q48 Lord Anderson of Swansea: Gentlemen, when you mentioned the thin blue book my mind raced to Maoist themes and I had a picture of the Brussels bureaucrats waving a little blue book, but I guess the danger is that because it is thin it is a statement of principles, broadly consensual; is there a danger of just having a sort of Cook's tour of problems, challenges, threats, without going beneath those to the implementation – I took down your phrase, if I can repeat it, “get out there and deal with them” on terrorism, looking at the causes and what one can do there. Is that next stage, the implementation and the understanding of the causes, in your judgment beyond the remit of what such a strategy should contain?

Mr Witney: There is a great deal of material that should be developed underneath the chapeau of this strategy. For example, it is probably time that a more coherent doctrine of stabilisation was developed with Europe. We all talk again in headline terms about the need for the comprehensive approach and we do not necessarily know exactly what we mean by that.

Q49 Lord Anderson of Swansea: But that is under the chapeau, not contained within the document itself.

Mr Witney: Yes, I think that is right. Of course, the neighbourhood policy moves on and in due course the EU should develop more explicit and coherent regional strategies. I find it striking that five of the 20 EU operations so far have been in Congo – and why not, if there was a country that needed external help, but it is pretty opaque to me what the EU thinks its strategy towards the Congo is apart from popping into the Eastern Provinces from time or backing the EU over the short period of an election or putting a few drops in the ocean of policing and security sector reform. This does not actually look to me like a strategy towards Congo. There is plenty that can be done and should be done underneath the chapeau of this strategy to fill out the sub-strategies or policies, but the document itself I am rather attached to.

Major General Messervy-Whiting: There might be real practical difficulties in trying to get something more complicated through the EU system successfully in a short space of time. The way the European Security Strategy was worked through the EU Council system was in my view, standing back from it and not having been involved directly, quite masterful in as much as EU Member States were not allowed to get at it at too early a stage and therefore it retained some of its elegance and simplicities and singleness before it hit the drafting wall. As a former military adviser to the United Nations Secretary General said recently at Lusi, “The important thing to do is know who not to call at UN headquarters in New York if you want to do something in practical terms as a commander in the field” and that applies a little bit to that as well. There is a whole raft of things underneath that; terrorism was mentioned and there is a whole JHA construct which does terrorism, gives effect to what happens, without necessarily needing to go back into here to give more detail.

Q50 Lord Swinfen: From where is the intelligence obtained that shows you that there is a security threat developing and what the causes of that threat are? As far as I understand the EU itself does not have an intelligence service of any kind.

Major General Messervy-Whiting: It does not, and I do not think there is any serious ambition by anybody that it should. What it does have is quite an efficient intelligence-handling machinery, both on the military side inside the military staff in Brussels and on the non-military side inside the situation centre in Brussels and they work very closely together. What Member States are signed up to do is provide intelligence product to the European Union and the military side of it is handled in one way and the non-military side of it is handled in another way, but then they come together. The EU is receiving sensitive classified intelligence which is releasable to the Member States from each and every Member State. What happens then is that there is a synthesis – in my time there it started off being called a hotspots thing, but it then became a global overview which was presented to the Political and

Security Committee, looked at and updated, in my time on a monthly basis. That was the document that gave rise if you like to what we would call threat analysis and eventually to risk assessment if the EU decided to do something in the field.

Q51 Lord Swinfen: Is updating on a monthly basis satisfactory or should it be more often?

Major General Messervy-Whiting: What we are talking about being updated on a monthly basis, and I may be out of date here, was the end product of all these considerations. The actual intelligence was flowing in 24 hours a day on an as and when needed basis.

Q52 Chairman: And OSINT would generate material for the Member States on a more regular basis than monthly.

Major General Messervy-Whiting: Yes, there would be intelligence summaries which would be periodic and there would be specific intelligence reports if there was a specific intelligence event that needed reporting.

Q53 Lord Swinfen: Although the Member States are passing intelligence to this organisation, is the organisation passing intelligence back to the individual Member States?

Major General Messervy-Whiting: Absolutely. That is one of the fundamental conditions of all the memoranda of understanding between the EU bodies and the intelligence services of the Member States; that everybody gets all product back from what the EU produces.

Q54 Lord Swinfen: Have there been any instances of a Member State withholding intelligence because it thought it was to its political or other advantage?

Major General Messervy-Whiting: I cannot answer that but certainly Member States would not release everything that they had to the European Union, they would be making decisions as to what was releasable to the 27 Member States and certainly countries like the United

Kingdom and France would not be releasing everything they had, some of it would not be releasable to the 27.

Q55 Lord Chidgey: On this point, My Lord Chairman, of paying greater attention to the causes and sources of security threats, which we have been chuntering on about quite happily, can I just use an example here which is rather puzzling me in a way? One of the key threats set out in the overview of the ESS is the proliferation of WMDs. There is a fact sheet from the European Union, a pro forma of what the EU should set out to do in terms of facing up to the threat of WMDs – this was in 2004. I first of all feel it is probably a bit ambitious for the structures within the EU that we are talking about to actually tackle the issue of rogue states or whatever using WMDs as an international threat, but that is my view and I would like to hear from the witnesses as to what has been achieved in the last four years with regard specifically to the ESS being able to address and progress the ambitions that are set out here in dealing with this as a key threat to the EU.

Mr Witney: Proliferation is a difficult subject to deal with on an essentially inter-governmental basis, whereas, as Graham has just described, the intelligence is contributed by Member States according to what they feel comfortable contributing. In the area of proliferation of course intelligence is critically important and I imagine that it is rather difficult for Member States to provide their best assessments and consequently rather difficult for the EU collectively to form particularly up to date or incisive views on the proliferation threat. The obvious area where the EU has been engaged is with Iran and the not definitively successful, if I can express it that way, dialogue that Mr Solana has been having with the Iranians.

Q56 Lord Chidgey: Was that not the initiative of Germany, France and the UK?

Mr Witney: They are the particular partners in that enterprise but it now has the weight of the EU behind it as an engagement from the Iranians. Of course it seems that Iran carries on enriching uranium, which is scarcely a measure of success, but on the other hand they have not been bombed, which I suppose is another measure of the success of the policy, a more positive measure of success of the policy. It is an intractable problem, proliferation, but I do not think the EU is particularly well-placed to deal with it except at second hand by trying, as per the strategy, to see what it can do to enforce the broader sense of the rules-governed world and the rule of law and deal with instabilities and regional conflict where they arise.

Lord Chidgey: Particularly on WMD there is a set of actions that have been set forth as a framework for the EU WMD strategy 2004. I was just interested to know whether there is some assessment of the progress that has been made with the actions that were set out there in 2004 at the US/EU summit in Dublin in 2004.

Chairman: Lord Chidgey, this is probably something we could pursue more usefully when we are in Brussels with EU officials. General Whiting would have left the organisation by the time that went through and Mr Witney's responsibilities in EDA were not directly related to it; it might be easier to take this up there.

Lord Chidgey: Just one final small point, I would just like to make a distinction between the work that was done by our foreign secretary in Teheran with our colleagues in Germany and France as an initiative to try and make some progress with the Iranians. I do not think we really should see the ESS absorbing that as part of its achievement, because it was not; I happened to be in Teheran at the time when Jack Straw arrived and one has to be careful about what one assumes has been achieved when it has not been achieved and then recognise what has to be done.

Q57 Lord Hamilton of Epsom: Returning to the question of sharing intelligence, is it not true that the nations contributing the intelligence have to basically work to the lowest

common denominator in that you have to think of the roughest and most unreliable member of the EU, as to what they will do with that intelligence, before you contribute it. You say that this intelligence is sensitive; I just wonder how sensitive it is at all. I suspect that sensitive information is switched between the intelligence communities in each country, probably on a bi-partisan basis, so the real intelligence is not actually going through the EU at all.

Major General Messervy-Whiting: Certainly during my time as a practitioner it was much easier working with 15 than I suspect it is for my successors working with 27.

Q58 Lord Hamilton of Epsom: I would imagine that is so.

Major General Messervy-Whiting: Having said that, there was and is a multi-layering to it, so there were things for example that Member States would agree to release to key decision-makers within the EU machinery that might not necessarily go out in a report to the 27 to inform their negotiations or the actions they were taking, demarches they were making, in overseas countries. There was and is, therefore, a sort of layering system which the UK as well as other countries, as well as France, were actively involved in setting up.

Mr Witney: Perhaps I could just add a footnote. It is also worth recording that intelligence and particularly secret intelligence of the kind you are referring to is only a means to an end and the end is to have a decently robust assessment which can be shared, particularly the business of sending it out again, using it to inform 27 Member States. Many of the new Member States have not traditionally been particularly closely interested or involved with distant parts of the world, so I do not know how well informed the Poles were on Chad before they took part in the Chad operation. To provide assessments with the necessary degree of robustness to inform that sort of debate – open source intelligence is increasingly widely used actually.

Chairman: We did have a meeting when we were in Brussels on the last occasion with Mr Shapcott and we had a very interesting discussion with him, really coming to the conclusion that you really do need to have among Member States common analysis if you are going to get common reactions, and you will not have common action unless you have common reaction, so this is all the preparation of the process for decision-making. I have the feeling that OSINT has been a rather useful development over recent years.

Lord Anderson of Swansea: I would share that.

Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean: Does that not beg the question of common politics and a common policy over different issues of foreign policy? It was not entirely straightforward sharing intelligence even at 15.

Lord Hamilton of Epsom: It certainly was not.

Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean: This sounds, if I may say, terrific in theory, but for those of us who have had to practise it and control to a degree the intelligence passing, even between close allies, I cannot help agreeing with a lot of the analysis that Lord Hamilton made, that actually this becomes so bland in what one is prepared to share in the end that the effort involved sometimes does not seem worth the candle. That is a very bleak view, but it is one borne of experience.

Lord Hannay of Chiswick: In contrast to that I just want to pick up what Mr Witney said, which I believe to be correct, that a higher and higher proportion of the input to making analyses and risk assessments is open source now and that is, of course, entirely available and depends only on the resources that Brussels has to absorb it, to analyse it and work it, so I do think that is a pretty important point. The other one which you also commented on is if you wish to get common action out of 27 countries on a matter on which an understanding of the underlying threat is absolutely critical, then of course withholding intelligence is one way to not get it.

Chairman: We ought to revert to questioning mode.

Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean: My Lord Chairman, there is the opportunity for an internal discussion amongst members of the Committee about this. I always see Lord Hannay's brilliant breadth of knowledge; military intelligence however is a very different matter from human intelligence.

Chairman: With respect to the Committee, our witnesses are only with us for another 45 minutes and we can have these discussions on another occasion, so if we can revert to the questioning mode it would be useful.

Q59 Lord Jones: Looking at General Whiting's distinguished CV, in the context of the strategy and following on Lord Hamilton's references to intelligence, how do you establish a rating in terms of human intelligence as opposed to signal, which is the most valuable have you found?

Major General Messervy-Whiting: In general they each have their particular merits depending on the situation that you are trying to address; in some cases human intelligence might be more valuable and more available, in other cases where it is difficult to penetrate a particular area or target technical intelligence might be more useful than human intelligence. I would agree with the thrust of the comments made that open source intelligence is becoming more and more interesting.

Q60 Lord Chidgey: This is bringing us back to the growth if you like, the development, of the ESS. For the record, thinking now in terms of the ESS being adopted in 2003, at a time when the European Security Defence Policy was only just getting off the ground, could the witnesses tell us do they think the strategy should be revised to take into account specifically the experience gained since then and the types of crisis management operations that the EU has conducted in the Balkans, in Afghanistan, in Africa, in the Middle East and in Asia?

I realise we have already talked about the fact that there were operations in those various theatres but I am specifically interested in the lessons that can be learned, the developments that can be made in the strategy updating, modernising and recognising the fact that it is 27 nations not 15 and so on.

Major General Messervy-Whiting: The update will have to take account of lessons learnt from operations on the ground. The EU does have a lessons learnt process in the same way as NATO has a lessons learnt process from operations and, I believe, so does the UN. To what extent there is going to be anything particularly useful that will go back into the strategy from that I am not sure, because from what I have seen of the lessons learnt so far they tend to be things that are pretty obvious and I do not think there have been any big surprises to practitioners there. Most of the messages about the need for better co-ordination, the need for a better capacity for advanced planning, the need for Member States to act where there is an agreement to act more quickly are already tagged in the strategy.

Q61 Lord Chidgey: Is there anything specific? You have mentioned that there is a process, General, obviously as one would expect, of reviewing what has happened, but again we are talking about a five-year timescale and quite a lot of investment in materials, human resources and so forth in these various actions by the EU. We are looking for something robust that has come from this to almost underline the importance and effectiveness of the strategy and I am rather hoping to have that confirmed so we can say, yes, this is really working so well. It is all a bit down-key at the moment.

Major General Messervy-Whiting: Quietly optimistic perhaps rather than down-key. I do not think there have been any huge surprises, is what I was trying to say. There are lots of specific things that have come out in terms of the operations with recourse to maintain our assets and capabilities; there is a general feeling now both within the European Union and within NATO that Berlin Plus perhaps is a bit old, a bit archaic for what needs to be done

between the two organisations and can actually be a bit of a hindrance in its bureaucracy nowadays and there is a need to move on beyond Berlin Plus. In each and every completed operation – and I do not know how many there are to date – there are things like that that come out of it, but I am not sure how much of that needs to be folded back into a document that might remain that size.

Mr Witney: In terms of encapsulating the lessons of five years of operational experience for the EU, plus many other crisis management operations under other flags, there is a case for the more self-conscious formulation of a doctrine of stabilisation and how you deal with crises, failing states and so on, but I am not sure that that would belong in this document. If I might just pick up the point about lessons learnt, in my view the EU is very bad at learning lessons – though they may have a process – and as with most other things that on the face of it can sound like criticism of them in Brussels, it is actually criticism of the Member States. Operations take place, they are finished, no one wants to trawl over what went wrong and everybody wants to declare a success and move on to the next one. It seems to me absolutely scandalous that it is only in recent months that anybody has taken any notice at all of the shortage of support helicopters, which has been the Achilles heel of every crisis management operation in the last decade – one could replicate that: lack of communications, lack of decent surveillance capabilities. If there were a decent lessons learnt process all of these would have been highlighted in some fashion years ago, but somehow that sort of retrospective judgment never arrives at the point of visibility, of people doing things about it.

Q62 Lord Anderson of Swansea: Building on Lord Chidgey's question is that of continuous revision over the five years since the strategy was evolved. Yes, there has been expedience but also certain problems which were no larger than a man's hand at the time – climate change for example has suddenly become centre stage. In your judgment how flexible is the process, how open to amendment as a result of new developments?

Mr Witney: To what extent is climate change contributing to Sudan and Chad? I do not know whether conflicts and aberrations are driven by climate change or driven by traditional patterns of tribal or ethnic antipathy. Yes, the EU needs to have a policy on climate change, we need to act together on that, but I am not sure how relevant these possible underlying causes and contributory factors of the crisis we see in Darfur matter to how the EU should think about addressing the way the problems present.

Q63 Lord Anderson of Swansea: In terms of migration, in terms of food security, it is relevant.

Mr Witney: Yes. I do not think we are necessarily disagreeing on that, it is a matter of whether one regards these as underlying factors or part of the presentation of the symptoms of hungry people who are being shoved across borders and ending up in refugee camps.

Q64 Lord Anderson of Swansea: Flexibility is the point.

Mr Witney: Yes.

Major General Messervy-Whiting: Just briefly, the tools to act if the EU is minded so to do are there, currently in Article 17 of the Treaty on the European Union, and the terminology used there, the old so-called Petersburg tasks from the western European Union, give the EU scope to do virtually anything it wants to do provided the Member States are minded to act and provided there is indeed a capacity within the Member States to act. One of the problems that the EU has, along with NATO and everybody else at the moment, is that there is not a very great capacity to take on big new challenges from a military point of view because the forces are by and large not there, they are doing other things in other places.

Q65 Lord Hamilton of Epsom: I am not at all sure that you have not really answered my question because this is all about whether we are learning lessons from Afghanistan and so

forth, and if you were to say yes, we ought to learn, we are talking about an even bigger pamphlet that will be produced and I am quite keen on keeping it small and simple. Surely the essence of what has come out of this is rather like the experience of the British Army in Northern Ireland when there was a massive evolution in tactics and how to deal with that problem and so forth that went on for many years. Surely the most useful thing we could be doing when the EU is involved in somewhere like Chad is to learn the lessons from that and move them on to some other theatre. We can all sit here speculating about what happens if we get mass migration, global warming, starvation, but that actually gets almost nobody anywhere. All that is actually useful is to say we had a challenge in Chad, this is how we handled it and this is where we got it incredibly wrong and we should learn some lessons from it. Is there really anything useful beyond that that we can do?

Mr Witney: I do feel that the tendency towards corporate amnesia is one of several ways actually in which the ESDP needs to become more systematic and more professional in its approach to the operations it runs.

Major General Messervy-Whiting: Just briefly, as Nick hinted there tends to be a two-level lessons learnt process, as indeed with NATO. That is, there is the top-level process which is signed up to by all the Member States politically, which tends to be fairly bland, because no one wants to admit that everything has not gone correctly, and there is the practitioners lessons-learnt list which is more akin to what you were saying about the British Army and learning over time. For each and every step in a deployment process there is an underpinning, what the EU calls a military concept document; those do get amended and lessons are fed back from the practitioner point of view with those.

Q66 Lord Swinfen: The European Security Strategy calls on the EU to be “more active, more capable and more coherent”. What in fact does this mean in practice and how could the

improvements be made? Will the Lisbon Treaty lead to greater coherence between the nations or not?

Mr Witney: Yes, that is indeed the heart of it, these three words active, capable and coherent and at the moment there is no doubt that the ESDP endeavour is falling short on all three heads. Part of activity, as I read this document, was to be prepared to get in there early and so far the record has been that we are not; we arrive really very late in the day, it is all emergency room stuff rather than preventative medicine on the whole, and the time it takes simply to set up operations, to get people to put their hands up and say “Yes, we will contribute” is often embarrassingly protracted. Twenty operations is quite a lot but it would be a mistake for anybody to say that this is a sign that we have really taken the lessons of activity to heart; capability – you do not have several hours so I will lay off military capabilities and just point out that there is an illusion that the EU is replete with civil capabilities; people say there should be a reverse Berlin Plus arrangement so that the EU can lend its civil capabilities to it. The famous catalogues talk of 5000 policemen and there are about 1500 earmarked for Kosovo and a couple of hundred finding their way slowly into Afghanistan, maybe a couple of hundred more, so that in practice drains the reservoir. Interestingly support might be hypothetically available, but on the day it is far too often not. In terms of coherence, when we conduct military operations run from one of six possible alternative locations across Europe and civil operations run from an entirely different place within Brussels you find at the very heart of direction of interventions complete separation between civil and military, so we are not very clear in that way. Of course there is then the fundamental problem that you mentioned at the end there that the Lisbon Treaty does seem to address which is to try to ensure that it is not just the combined efforts of Member States in terms of the military and the diplomatic side but also that the aid and trade policies march

more coherently in step, which is something that, God willing, the Lisbon Treaty will improve.

Major General Messervy-Whiting: Briefly, the Chatham House workshop in March 2006 did try to look at the 15 ESDP deployments to date at that time and fit them into the boxes of more active, more capable and more coherent, and it was able to produce one to illustrate each of those boxes. Whether that actually means that a strategic culture that fosters early, rapid and when necessary robust intervention is a great deal nearer than it was in 2003 I am not so sure, but that is all part of the long term construction anyway and is unlikely to show short term gains. The most difficult bit is the “more coherent” bit, that is the toughest nut; even with the Lisbon Treaty actually getting the various bits of the Brussels machinery to in their heart of hearts work together efficiently, singing off the same hymn sheet, is the toughest nut of all, even though the Lisbon Treaty will give them the framework with which to do that.

Q67 Lord Swinfen: Do you have a timescale for long term?

Major General Messervy-Whiting: If one is talking about changing mindset and strategic culture it is going to be something that will have to draw on training and education of young people, whether they are bureaucrats or ---

Q68 Lord Swinfen: Are you talking about a generation?

Major General Messervy-Whiting: I am talking about a generation.

Q69 Lord Swinfen: At least.

Major General Messervy-Whiting: I would hope to see some results at the end of a generation.

Q70 Lord Hannay of Chiswick: Could I just take up this point about the civilian capability which you have referred to as also being a fairly shallow pond. Presumably the problem is

that in order to be able to deploy civilian capability in Afghanistan or in Chad or wherever it may be countries have to have a surplus over what they need to conduct their national responsibilities in policing, judges, civil servants or whatever it is, but that is not something that they naturally have, unlike the military who by definition have a deployable surplus, even if it is not a very big one. Unless Member States are prepared to recognise that the pond will remain shallow presumably and per contrary they do recognise it, the pond could be quite considerable but then they would have to carry excess capability on their books.

Mr Witney: There is a third way, which is the idea of a civilian reserve corps, as indeed the Prime Minister advocated in his recent speech in America in the context of the UN, but it could be more easily and effectively done closer to home in an EU context.

Q71 Lord Anderson of Swansea: There could be a fourth way in terms of the recently retired, because police officers who have recently retired have a range of expertise which can be used overseas.

Major General Messervy-Whiting: Absolutely.

Chairman: We will be looking at the papers later on about a letter from the minister talking about a proposal to double the size of the EU police mission in Afghanistan, and at the moment it only is half the strength it should be, let alone what it is going to be when it is doubled, so it does demonstrate very clearly the real difficulty of deploying in that sort of area. Lord Swinfen.

Lord Swinfen: Just as a matter of interest what countries in the EU currently have a surplus of deployable military personnel?

Lord Hannay of Chiswick: Presumably all the people who have battle groups.

Lord Swinfen: But they are normally doing other jobs.

Lord Hamilton of Epsom: Our battle groups are.

Q72 Chairman: Can we ask our witnesses to answer, please?

Mr Witney: If I may, I think there are some countries which probably do have a surplus of deployable military capability – the Spanish, for example, have Armed Forces well into six figures and have an explicit cap of 3,000 on the numbers that they are prepared to deploy at any time.

Q73 Lord Swinfen: Are they well-trained?

Mr Witney: That is absolutely the issue, is it not? We have nearly two million men and women in uniform in Europe and yet by the Member States' own calculations only some 20 per cent of land forces are trained or equipped to act outside national territory, 80 per cent of land forces are not fit for deployment outside national territory which does raise the question of what on earth they are for. Across Europe we just have not restructured away from the Cold War to meet the sort of activities that we are all saying we should be preparing to meet.

Q74 Lord Swinfen: Is it not really just pie in the sky then?

Mr Witney: One just has to plug away at pointing out the difference between what people say they are going to do and what they actually then do when the next annual set of decisions comes up as to how they are going to spend their defence budgets.

Major General Messervy-Whiting: On the non-military side some countries do have deployable police and legal assets – I am thinking particularly of those with a gendarmerie type of force and overseas territories or dominions still as opposed to the British police model. As I understand it, even in the British police forces there are designated forces which do have pools of officers who are available and in some cases on standby to go overseas, not least of which are in relation to our own remaining dependant territories.

Q75 Lord Selkirk of Douglas: I wish to ask a question about capabilities. You have in large measure answered the first aspect of it which I wish to raise, which is whether there is the right mix of civilian and military capabilities at disposal and the necessary flexibility to apply them. The second aspect related to capabilities is whether the strategy should contain stronger or more precise references to such capabilities, or whether you feel a level of generality is preferable, and the third aspect is whether the EU has adequate capabilities to deal with large scale natural disasters and emergencies outside the EU as in the case of the Indian Ocean tsunami in 2004 and whether such capabilities should be strengthened.

Major General Messervy-Whiting: If I may take the last one first - and it leads on from our previous discussion - I am not sure that the EU certainly in the short term would wish to do more than contribute to the international effort to deal with such large scale natural disasters. The EU in that sort of situation would always want to do something in support of the United Nations or, if a regional organisation was taking the lead, ASEAN or whoever in support of ASEAN, as indeed it did in the Aceh monitoring mission on disarmament and demobilisation. In those sorts of situations it is going to have to be an international effort to which the EU contributes in the best way that it can, and the best way might be diplomatic or financial or reconstruction and not necessarily an ESDP operation.

Q76 Chairman: On the earlier questions do you think it would be useful for there to be rather more explicit reference to capabilities in the revision of the strategy?

Major General Messervy-Whiting: In terms of the mix of civilian and military capabilities the strategy touches on that quite adequately at the moment, but it certainly would do no harm. I referred to it as being the toughest nut to crack to get the military and the civilian, the Commission and the Council, and all the various bits working together efficiently. It would do no harm to really pound the fist on that particular point.

Mr Witney: In the area of capabilities in the five years since this document was produced there has been quite a lot of work one level down at, if you like, declining what capabilities are needed, and the story is in fact identical with the story that you hear in the other side of Brussels and NATO about what it is that constitutes deployable, available and effective expeditionary forces. Roughly speaking I would say there is no shortage of analysis, in fact there is a surfeit of analysis, an almost interminable analysis about what should be done and the deficiencies – I quoted the example of helicopters before. The arrival at a point of critical mass of impatience for people to say let us actually seriously tackle this and see if we can do something about it. I have a sneaky feeling, without being an expert on the subject at all, that we ought to be doing more on the humanitarian side. I do not know whether it would be useful or helpful for the EU to common fund and pre-stock materials. I was quite interested at one stage in the concept of fast ships – it always seems to me a bit ridiculous that our naval inventories contain things that can only move at 25 to 30 knots when technology allows you to move things transoceanic distances at twice that speed if you pay for it – it is rather a specific point but it is something that I feel would be worth some attention in the EU.

Q77 Lord Anderson of Swansea: Gentlemen, at the level of the analysis of threats there would probably be a reasonable consensus among the planners in the Kremlin and in Washington if one were writing just a general document on global threats; the problem I guess is implementation in part but also when the EU strategy cannot be done within the confines of the EU it surely will need to be or should be co-ordinated with what the planners in Washington are saying and equally with what the planners in NATO are saying and, to a lesser extent, what the planners in the Kremlin are saying. We know for example on the helicopter case you cited that we are now in discussion with the Russians about surplus helicopters in Ukraine and so on. My question is to what extent in the formulation of this new strategy there should be, in your judgment, increased co-ordination between people in other

areas? If one looks at circles the closest circle would be Washington and NATO and even more widely afield in terms of the similar planners in the Kremlin and elsewhere, those countries which have strategic partnerships with the EU.

Mr Witney: That is exactly right and as I read this document it is one of the aspects of coherence – the coherent word is not just a plea for an end of institutional turf warfare in Brussels, it is a plea for the Member States to work more closely together, it acknowledges the need to work more effectively with partners in other multinational institutions and other centres of power as you describe. Dialogue with NATO has its well-known problems at the moment but probably one of the successes of the ESDP in the last five years has been increasingly close and productive involvement with the UN. An area where the EU needs to beef up its dialogue very substantially is its direct dialogue with Washington – that will come – and the Kremlin.

Q78 Lord Hannay of Chiswick: What you have both said about this document which is now being reviewed puts a lot of emphasis on the fact that it is short and clear and readable and that indeed it is more a kind of public policy statement than it is a guide to individual policy-making in individual crises. Does it not therefore seem a little odd – but perhaps you could comment on this – that it has so low a public profile, that nobody seems to know about its existence and that the institutions of the European Union do not seem to have taken much trouble to popularise it or to socialise it – to use that ghastly NGO phrase – and yet that is surely what it ought to be ideal for. Would you have any suggestions, if you agree that that is a weakness, about how a reviewed strategy could be better promulgated?

Major General Messervy-Whiting: A lot of this comes down to the extent to which Member States are willing to push an EU product and that will vary between Member States. I really do not have a feel, for example, as to what extent this is known to the average citizen in France but I would not suspect it is a topic of discussion in the local bistro in Marseilles, but

I am not sure that it should be however. This is an area where the Lisbon Treaty hopefully – if and when ratified – should be helpful because at the moment there is a Commission representative in London with outposts in Edinburgh, Cardiff and Belfast, and the poor chap's job is to try and sell this but it is not actually at the top of his priority list, I think fishing at the moment is at the top of his today's priority list, but when that becomes the European Union External Action Service representative in London, maybe issues from Pillar 2 will be nearer the top of the list than the Pillar 1 issues that are there.

Q79 Lord Hannay of Chiswick: You do not think that the Member State governments have any responsibility there at all?

Major General Messervy-Whiting: I do actually but it would be nice if the EU representative in each capital, if this were to happen, would be able to occasionally remind officials in foreign offices that this was there and needed a bit more visibility perhaps.

Mr Witney: The advantage of the bureaucratic coup that was effected in order to produce this document in the first place is that you get something which is such a good document; the disadvantage is that nobody takes ownership of it and ESDP is nothing if it is not the possession of the Member States, it is an inter-governmental exercise. My beef about this is that you have got a great document which people do not actually follow, because vast swathes of European opinion do not believe it, they do not think we should be being more active, they do not think that the frontline against terrorism is on the Hindu Kush, they think terrorism is best combated from underneath the duvet. There is a whole process that never happened with this in terms of taking this out to national parliaments, to opinion-formers, to try to make the case for more active, coherent and capable European policies. In some ways, therefore, I regret that it looks as though the revision is going to be inside the Brussels ring road stitch-up again, but at least there will be a document which is new and I very much hope that in 2009 governments will find their voices to advocate it and present it. It should be debated in

all national parliaments it seems to me; the last one was debated by the Fins and that was about it.

Q80 Chairman: Is this not the dilemma: you either have the classic definition of a camel as a horse developed by a committee – which is what I suspect you would have if it were developed in a more normal council process – or you have something elegant designed by a very limited number of people, but which other people do not share ownership of. How do we solve that problem?

Mr Witney: I am not even sure, My Lord Chairman, that having it worked on for four months through the Brussels committee process would help. It is not what happens within the Brussels ring road that matters at all in this case, it is whether in 27 national capitals the people who take the key decisions about how defence budgets are spent and foreign policies set believe this sufficiently to have it influence the way they implement their national policies.

Q81 Lord Anderson of Swansea: The normal culture of Brussels is transparency which obviously proves problems for the intelligence as you have mentioned, and you have talked of the bureaucratic coup in the formulation of the last document. To what extent in your judgment should the European Parliament be involved, what are the processes available for an input from the parliamentarians in Brussels?

Mr Witney: Yes please.

Q82 Chairman: Particularly in view of Mr Solana's meeting with the Parliament yesterday.

Major General Messervy-Whiting: He opened the plenary session at three o'clock yesterday afternoon and this – or at least common foreign and security policy, including the European Security and Defence policy – was top of the agenda. Two European Parliament rapporteurs had produced reports which were considered by the plenary session essentially relating to the

European Security Strategy. Solana, as I understand it, is not only going to talk about this and take the temperature with heads of state and government next week, on 18/19 June, but is also under remit to discuss where he has got with it in the informal foreign ministers' meeting this autumn, I think in September. I believe there will be this time a much greater transparency process with not only Member States but also with Parliament and that process has started.

Q83 Lord Anderson of Swansea: That might partially solve the ownership and policy problem which Lord Hannay mentioned.

Major General Messervy-Whiting: It might do but I think Member States feel that they own something if it has been tabled as a document in one of the formations of the European Council and is looked at by ambassadors and is looked at by ministers and is signed up to as a Council document. That gives Member States a real feeling of ownership and I am not sure that this document will necessarily go down that route. One reason why there was this sleight of hand with this document – a precedent within the EU – was the production of their crisis management procedures, which started off as an in-house secretariat document as to how the internal machinery in the EU Council should deal with a crisis. It was not meant to be a comprehensive bible, it was meant to be a guideline, a thing you referred to – have we ticked all the boxes in addressing this crisis. But Member States insisted on taking ownership of that and to an extent it was a good thing that they did, but it led to an interminable drafting process and something that ended up being a great number of pages long as opposed to a practitioner's guide.

Chairman: At least you have seen that in one of the parliaments or Member States a certain amount of attention is being paid to it. Lord Hamilton has a final question.

Q84 Lord Hamilton of Epsom: Can I move slightly away from this document and the realities on the ground and go back to hard power. What it really comes down to, it seems to

me, is that these are national decisions taken by individual governments within the EU and that really depends on the political will to actually risk the lives of your troops. What I want to know is whether anything is really going to change. There is this great pacifist tradition or anti-military tradition in Germany, for instance, where there seem to be quite large numbers of troops who could be deployed although things have changed there a bit. I remember in the late Eighties or early-Nineties an admiral called Velasco (?) who was the chief of defence staff came over, and I remember him saying quite specifically that there could be no question of Germans being deployed to the Balkans because the history of Germany in the Balkans was so absolutely horrific that it would be completely unacceptable. The Germans now are in the Balkans, so things are changing in some areas a bit. It seems to be going rather backwards with the French, they used to be very gung-ho about charging off into places and doing things but they seem to be more reluctant now to risk the lives of their troops. I can never quite understand what the French Foreign Legion is doing – they are always painted as being extraordinarily gung-ho, dying to get into action all the time, so where are all of them? What is going to happen with other European countries? What I wanted your personal opinion on is where is all this going, are we seeing a Europe that is going to get increasingly pacifist, more and more reluctant to risk the lives of their troops, or do you see any signs that it might go in another direction?

Major General Messervy-Whiting: The real hard power decisions will always be taken by Member States and national parliaments – I hope they are, as an old soldier. Having said that, I would be slightly more upbeat; I do not think the EU is going backwards on the European Security and Defence Policy although the French perhaps have a particular problem at the moment in terms of restructuring resources and over-commitment in the same sort of way as we British have. I do see the EU doing more and more of these operations along these lines, provided the troops are there to do them. At the end of the day if we are in Afghanistan and

others are in Iraq and those sorts of commitments stay, there is not going to be an awful lot that we the Brits are going to be able to contribute.

Q85 Chairman: Can I ask Mr Witney if he would like to comment before calling Lord Selkirk.

Mr Witney: It is a little hard to predict really. The latest enlargement of the Union has probably been helpful; the Poles are thoroughly determined to establish this and the Estonians are surprisingly stepping forward in a positive role. As for the French, they have their money problems but the 2006 intervention in Congo would not have happened without the French making it happen and Chad would not have happened without the French making it happen. Even the Germans have actually come a long way and they have over 10,000 troops deployed at the moment. That is only a relatively small proportion of their very large Armed Forces and there are lots of caveats but how it goes – I just come back to this thing of whether publics can be convinced that this is the sort of thing that they want to be behind, whether they feel a sense of pride at their guys going out there and doing these jobs or whether, as for example I am afraid is the case with Afghanistan, far too many European publics think that this is some ghastly American global war on terror mistake that Europeans are now being leant on to bail the Americans out of. I do not share that view, but that is how a lot of people in Europe see Afghanistan. At the end of the day it is all to do with how these things are perceived politically, whether the political will is there.

Q86 Lord Hamilton of Epsom: Do you think that would change if there was a terrorist outrage in a German city, killing very large numbers of civilians walking along the street?

Mr Witney: I do not know Germany well enough.

Q87 Lord Selkirk of Douglas: Can I ask the General a question: why do you perceive the French to be totally over-committed as far as providing military resources is concerned?

Major General Messervy-Whiting: It is not so much over-committed in the same way as we the Brits are but, as Nick mentioned, they have got resource problems at the moment, budgetary problems perhaps even worse than ours.

Chairman: Gentlemen, can I thank you both very much indeed for coming and talking to us. It has been a further important part of our education on this subject and we are taking more evidence next week and the week after – we are seeing Francois Heisbourg the week after next, just after the French White Paper has been published, so it will perhaps be an appropriate moment to raise some of these points with him, and then we will be going to Brussels where we will obviously be seeing some of your successors. Could I thank you very much indeed, we have very much appreciated your coming and the evidence that you have given to us.