Ministers were warned in July 2002 that Britain was committed to taking part in an American-led invasion of Iraq and they had no choice but to find a way of making it legal.

The warning, in a leaked Cabinet Office briefing paper, said Tony Blair had already agreed to back military action to get rid of Saddam Hussein at a summit at the Texas ranch of President George W Bush three months earlier.

The briefing paper, for participants at a meeting of Blair’s inner circle on July 23, 2002, said that since regime change was illegal it was “necessary to create the conditions” which would make it legal.

This was required because, even if ministers decided Britain should not take part in an invasion, the American military would be using British bases. This would automatically make Britain complicit in any illegal US action.

“US plans assume, as a minimum, the use of British bases in Cyprus and Diego Garcia,” the briefing paper warned. This meant that issues of legality “would arise virtually whatever option ministers choose with regard to UK participation”.

The paper was circulated to those present at the meeting, among whom were Blair, Geoff Hoon, then defence secretary, Jack Straw, the foreign secretary, and Sir Richard Dearlove, then chief of MI6. The full minutes of the meeting were published last month in The Sunday Times.

The document said the only way the allies could justify military action was to place Saddam Hussein in a position where he ignored or rejected a United Nations ultimatum ordering him to co-operate with the weapons inspectors. But it warned this would be difficult.

“It is just possible that an ultimatum could be cast in terms which Saddam would reject,” the document says. But if he accepted it and did not attack the allies, they would be “most unlikely” to obtain the legal justification they needed.

The suggestions that the allies use the UN to justify war contradicts claims by Blair and Bush, repeated during their Washington summit last week, that they turned to the UN in order to avoid having to go to war. The attack on Iraq finally began...
Ministers were told of need for Gulf war ‘excuse’ - Sunday Times - http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,2087-1650822,00.html

in March 2003.

The briefing paper is certain to add to the pressure, particularly on the American president, because of the damaging revelation that Bush and Blair agreed on regime change in April 2002 and then looked for a way to justify it.

There has been a growing storm of protest in America, created by last month’s publication of the minutes in The Sunday Times. A host of citizens, including many internet bloggers, have demanded to know why the Downing Street memo (often shortened to “the DSM” on websites) has been largely ignored by the US mainstream media.

The White House has declined to respond to a letter from 89 Democratic congressmen asking if it was true — as Dearlove told the July meeting — that “the intelligence and facts were being fixed around the policy” in Washington.

The Downing Street memo burst into the mainstream American media only last week after it was raised at a joint Bush-Blair press conference, forcing the prime minister to insist that “the facts were not fixed in any shape or form at all”.

John Conyers, the Democratic congressman who drafted the letter to Bush, has now written to Dearlove asking him to say whether or not it was accurate that he believed the intelligence was being “fixed” around the policy. He also asked the former M16 chief precisely when Bush and Blair had agreed to invade Iraq and whether it is true they agreed to “manufacture” the UN ultimatum in order to justify the war.

He and other Democratic congressmen plan to hold their own inquiry this Thursday with witnesses including Joe Wilson, the American former ambassador who went to Niger to investigate claims that Iraq was seeking to buy uranium ore for its nuclear weapons programme.

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The Gulf War was notable for the levels of use of precision-guided weapons. They had not been used to this level before, leading to the war being called the first "computer war". Comparisons of night-vision video footage to video games were abundant for a few years after, including by Terry Pratchett. Jarhead tells the story of US Marine sniper Antony Swofford from boot camp to a tour of duty during the Gulf War. An adaptation of the autobiograph of the real Swofford. The Big Lebowski takes place during the Gulf War. Further research was needed to try to pinpoint the causes more precisely, the report said. Lord Lloyd believes illnesses must be properly recognised. However, that was no reason for the MoD not to accept that the illnesses were the result of service in the Gulf. Lord Lloyd said many veterans had been told they were not ill, and that their problems were all in the mind. "A small proportion of those who are ill have the classic symptoms of post traumatic stress disorder, but this could not account for the great majority of those that are ill," he said. Veterans Minister Ivor Caplin said: "What I need to do with officials at the Ministry of Defence is to give the report proper consideration. "I have always said, as has the government, that there are Gulf veterans who are ill. That's never been denied. Though the Persian Gulf War was initially considered an unqualified success for the international coalition, simmering conflict in the troubled region led to a second Gulf War known as the Iraq War that began in 2003. Background of the Persian Gulf War. When their foreign ministers met in Geneva that July, prospects for peace suddenly seemed bright, as it appeared that Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein was prepared to dissolve that conflict and return territory that his forces had long occupied. Two weeks later, however, Hussein delivered a speech in which he accused neighboring nation Kuwait of siphoning crude oil from the Ar-Rumaylah oil fields located along their common border. MINISTERS were warned in July 2002 that Britain was committed to taking part in an American-led invasion of Iraq and they had no choice but to find a way of making it legal. The briefing paper, for participants at a meeting of Blair's inner circle on July 23, 2002, said that since regime change was illegal it was necessary to create the conditions which would make it legal. This was required because, even if ministers decided Britain should not take part in an invasion, the American military would be using British bases. This would automatically make Britain complicit in any illegal US action. One is Qatar's support for Islamists. Qatar acknowledges providing assistance to Islamist groups designated as terrorist organisations by some of its neighbours, notably the Muslim Brotherhood. But it denies aiding jihadist groups like al-Qaeda or Islamic State (IS). Qatar has a population of 2.6 million, but only about 300,000 of these are Qatari nationals. The other key issue is Qatar's relations with Iran, with which it shares the world's largest gas field. The Shia Muslim power is Sunnis' main