

Iraq Inquiry Evidence of Douglas Brand OBE

Your appointment

Notice of and preparation for your posting to Iraq

1. As part of my national ACPO responsibilities for European policing issues I'd monitored the responses to the war by European and other countries. As a result of a conversation with an OSCE colleague I had alerted ACPO in early April 2003 to the possibility of requests for UK police support to Iraq coming from the MoD and FCO. Subsequently there was a Fact Finding Mission for policing conducted by Chief Constable Paul Kernaghan in late May 2003 which had identified the potential areas where UK police could support the Coalition effort.
2. Time between my selection (Mid June) and deployment, (July 4th) was short and there was not sufficient opportunity to be fully briefed on all aspects of the Iraq scenario. The areas in which I was least sighted were the previous Saddam security and police structures, and the post conflict reconstruction strategy (PCRS). I anticipated that I would be 'briefed in' on critical issues in theatre. Useful equipment for deployment was provided by the International Policing Section of the FCO. The issue of how this form of deployment affected existing life insurance coverage was raised early into my deployment but no clear guidance for my situation seemed to be available.

Lines of reporting – to the Coalition Provisional Authority and to the UK

3. In theatre I first reported to Bernard Kerik, then recently appointed as Senior Advisor for the CPA Ministry of Interior. Once he left at the beginning of September 2003, I reported directly to Administrator Bremer until the appointment of another American at the end of October. On the UK side of Iraq I reported respectively to John Sawers and Sir Jeremy Greenstock. Back in the UK my weekly reports were sent to the Iraq Desk in the FCO and were copied to Home Office, ACPO, and to my home Force of South Yorkshire Police.

Support provided by the FCO (as the department responsible for civilian secondments to the CPA), other UK government departments, ACPO and your home police force

4. I'm not sure what previous experience there was in the FCO of deploying chief police officers to this type of scenario. I was told I would be operating at a 2 star level and that my position had been part of an agreement between the US Secretary of State and the Foreign Secretary. However, prior to my deployment on Friday 4th July I was told that I should seek to negotiate my way in with Bernard Kerik, but if that failed, to return to the UK the following Tuesday. It was made clear that I was expected to engage and influence at the highest levels within the CPA and the military, but this proved to be quite challenging without any support staff. Of particular help in the initial stages of my insertion were Royal Navy Captain Tim Lowe of the FCO Iraq Unit, and later the head of the Iraq Desk, FCO.
5. A British Superintendent John Hughes-Jones had been sent from another mission to Iraq, but on my arrival he had already been absorbed into the small police advisory team operating in the CPA Mol. Once my presence was known in Baghdad I had many demands for both my time and my opinions from the

CPA and the Military, and it was quite tricky to manage the demand from these quarters and at the same time, to pursue professional agenda that was my remit. As I mention later I was generously helped by General Viggers with the support of a military captain in August 2003, but it was not until September that I acquired an administrative assistant, and late October 2003 before the first contingent of MoD police arrived and I acquired a staff officer.

6. I had a one day briefing from the Home Office prior to my departure but no other contact that I recall during my deployment. I made little demand of ACPO. My requests for staffing support were sent through FCO and Chief Constable Kernaghan of ACPO but they most often did not result in the support I requested, (see below re Special Branch and HMIC). The most responsive police organisation in terms of personnel was the Ministry of Defence Police. Dorset Police also provided a very capable Detective Chief Inspector. I made several requests for specialist personnel directly to the Metropolitan police and to my own Force but this was not forthcoming. My own Force assisted with transportation on the occasions I returned to the UK. My Chief Constable negotiated with my Police Authority to make my position as Deputy Chief Constable substantive.

Policing strategy

The overall plan for policing in Iraq, the UK's role and contribution and the arrangements for determining this plan

7. Prior to my deployment I was briefed on a policing plan that had been prepared in May 2003 and which had been updated in early June. While I don't recall the detail I do remember noting that the plan was high on aspiration but low on substance. It was not until late December 2003 that we had developed a comprehensive policing plan in consultation with the ministry, and not until late May 2004 when the plan was adopted by the 3rd Iraqi Minister of Interior.

8. In Baghdad a traditional train and equip approach had been adopted by the small team of about 9 former US law enforcement personnel, the authors of the previously mentioned plan, under the umbrella of the Dept of Justice ICITAP program. They had initially been sent to undertake an assessment of training need. But the assessment was cut short as the pressure to 'do something' became greater. On my arrival plans were advanced to engage existing police in undergoing a 3 week 'conversion' course, the Transition Integration Program, where issues of human rights, rule of law and democratic principles were taught by US military personnel, some of whom were reservists and were police officers in the USA. A recce to source a location for recruiting and training new police on an 8 week course outside of Iraq was also underway. The training activities, however, did not appear to have benefited from an analysis of what was actually going to be required for the police of a future democratic Iraq, nor had an in depth view of the current status, capability and calibre of those police units and individuals who had returned to work been undertaken. (The police in most towns and cities 'disappeared' on the imminent arrival of Coalition troops and subsequently, some numbers of those who had little to hide in respect of their behaviours under the Saddam regime gradually returned to work). This is not a criticism of the work of the small assessment team but rather an observation on the lack of planning that had been undertaken for the post 'war fighting' period.

9. A rough estimate in the then current thinking was to have an Iraqi Police Service for the basic station and patrolling functions of between 68,000 and 70,000 police officers. The time frame for this

exercise was professionally advised as being realistic in 5 years, but pressure for it to be done in 2 years and then eighteen months was strongly applied. To achieve the envisaged force size, approximately 32,000 recruits needed to be trained, equipped, and put into operational units in that eighteen month period.

10. A plan for conducting this major training project was submitted to the Administrator in mid July 2003 but no action was taken. Initially it was suggested that it couldn't be financed, but in the latter part of August its failure to proceed was attributed to political difficulties in the Eastern European country that had been identified as suitable. Whatever the case, there was no progress on the macro recruit training initiative until the offer of accommodation and facility for training was made by the King of Jordan in late August. The original plan was resurrected and adjusted for Jordan and the negotiations, led by US Ambassador Clayton Mcmenaway and myself, led to the identification of a site outside of Amman where subsequently, the first training course for just under 500 students started in late December 2003.

How policing fitted in with wider security sector reform

11. Policing did not appear to have been a major consideration in planning for the post war fighting phase of the conflict. While the US military had established a Combined Military Assistance Training Team, (CMATT), numbering some 400 plus staff under the command of a 2 star general to recruit and train the first battalion of the new Iraqi army, approximately 700 soldiers, there was no comparable initiative for the police. Much later the reports of generals Eikenbury and Kicklighter created a military led Combined Police Assistance Training Team, (CPATT) in March of 2004 and this followed a decision by the US Defence Secretary that all recruit, train, and equip tasks for police would forthwith be undertaken by the military. But in the CPATT model there were at least two areas that did not have sufficient resilience to meet the current and future demands of police training.

12. First, while the CPATT structure, led and supported by the Military could manage the volume training demands of recruit and other basic level training like Transition Integration Program (TIP) it did not have the expertise to handle specialist and specialized training. This includes specialist investigation, forensics, organized crime, people and drug trafficking, high end anti terrorist measures, money laundering etc. Second, unlike the CMATT structure, the CPATT model had no strategic professional police policy advice at the 'Washington' end to support the decision making of the Defence Department for the guidance of CPATT.

The arrangements and responsibility for developing overall strategy for policing / security sector reform

13. Initially, the police assessment team had drawn on experiences from Kosovo, Haiti and other missions where restructuring of policing had been part of stabilisation program and had applied the same principles to Iraq. So the initial strategy was a recruit, train and equip at the basic level in order to increase the quantity of police available to the country. The time frame of eighteen months being the same period that was to elapse before the 2004 US Presidential elections, seemed to be more than just coincidence.

14. But in the summer of 2003 the Military was impatient to stand up local police units, because in their view the sooner the numbers of police reached sufficient for local control, then the sooner the military could withdraw from the policing operations they had had to adopt. By August 2003 targets for police recruitment of 30,000 in 30 days were being openly spoken about in the military headquarters. While I don't know if

this figure and time frame were ever adopted as policy, the military seemed to grip the spirit of this target as a mission. The reported figures show an incredible increase in police numbers reported from the MSCs during August, September and October, and by November the new target figure for an adjusted police establishment of 70,000 had all but been reached in reported numbers.

15. 4 In the MSCs there were two patterns beginning to emerge.. The first was the ad hoc training of existing police in a variety of different skills according to perceived local need (Public order units were considered to be essential in the South East whereas in the South Centre area, the East and the North a 'SWAT' capability was deemed important). Some of this training owed its introduction as much to the enthusiasm of the military individual or Unit that championed it as much as it did the assessed need. The second was that new police were being recruited locally on an ad hoc basis and in large numbers. Though the national standards to guide recruiting were emerging, in many cases local tribes people or small militias were recruited en masse and their leaders made the police chief to fill the gap in police numbers. Variations of the TIP course were being used to train these new police, where training took place at all. In a number of areas Military Commanders chose to put former Iraqi military officers into the police in an attempt to 'stiffen' its leadership. While the case for expediency could be recognised, it could not be agreed. The formal advice to the military from me was that this recruiting would foster dangerous consequences. It would not only undermine the aim of establishing a professional police service by recruiting illiterate, unfit, and ill-suited individuals, but it could also put undesirable elements in positions of power in local communities. It would also undermine the focus on establishing one of the fundamental principles of democratic policing, that of developing the support and trust of the population.

How your own objectives and priorities in Baghdad were determined

16. On the day of my deployment, Bernard Kerik had moved out from under the direct supervision of the Senior advisor for Security, Walt Slocombe, a very accomplished public servant who had been a deputy secretary for defence under the Clinton administration, and had been made the senior advisor in the CPA shadow ministry of interior – the defacto minister. He had taken the advice of the small police advisory team and was progressing the train and equip strategy. Rumour had informed me that he was wary of having a serving British Police Chief because it might be seen as competing for his police 'supremo' role, which by then had been featured in TIME magazine and many other publications and had also been the subject of significant media coverage in the USA.. I followed my instructions and negotiated my way in. By the end of my first week I had had agreed the following objectives with him:

- On a date to be agreed, to take full responsibility for the policing of Baghdad under the policy direction of the CPA Director for the Ministry of the Interior, and the head of CPA.
- To support the above, to have executive authority to co-ordinate and direct the current policing activity being conducted by the CPA in Baghdad.
- To develop an implementation strategy for policing in Baghdad aimed at achieving transition from a military primacy to a civil police primacy.
- On the appointment of an Iraqi Chief of Police for Baghdad, to mentor, coach and train the individual to a level of competence acceptable to me [sic] and to the CPA Director for the Ministry

of the Interior whereby full authority can be formally handed over to the individual to direct the affairs and the operational priorities of the Baghdad Police.

- To advise the CPA Director for the Ministry of the Interior on International support for the Policing of Iraq.
- To advise the CPA Director for the Ministry of the Interior on the implementation of a strategy for Policing in Iraq.

17. On the 13th July I chaired a selection board, appointed a Police Chief for Baghdad, and started the process of reconstructing the police of Baghdad. However, one of the significant impediments to the Baghdad development, and that around the rest of the country, was the absence of good quality senior officers.

18. Later in 2003 and into 2004 I started to socialise the idea that if we could identify between 400 and 500 competent police officers of major, Lieutenant colonel, and colonel rank, we could prepare a program to 'hot house' these individuals with intensive training and exposure to international standards so that they could provide the core of a new police leadership cadre capable of being influential across the 18 governorates. This was agreed by the Commanding General, and a fragmentary order, (a 'frago' was the main means of policy communication between the Commanding General and his MSCs) was prepared. There was however an almost nil response from the MSCs.

Co-ordination between various nations, Intergovernmental Organisations, Whitehall and between military and civilian structures

19. At my level there seemed to be good coordination locally and I particularly enjoyed a close working relationship with senior American members of Administrator Bremer's office. I had no sight of other nations, Intergovernmental organisations, nor the Whitehall or military and civilian structures..

Delivery

The situation on the ground when you arrived and how it developed

20. No organised reconstitution of the police was undertaken until 6 to 8 weeks after the cessation of fighting in mid April. Additionally, the CPA order that effectively banned members of the Ba'ath party from holding public office bit deeply into the senior ranks of the police who had returned to work, leaving huge gaps in the police hierarchy. It was clear that the post conflict environment, particularly in relation to law and order, had not been given a high degree of consideration, planning or preparation. In Baghdad, the 18th MP Brigade of the US Army had started an excellent program of refurbishing police stations that had been all but demolished in the post war 'catharsis'. Most police stations had a US military presence either full or part time, and some had made an outstanding effort to develop standards and improve service by the Iraqis who had returned to work.

21. Outside of Baghdad, the Major Subordinate Commanders were making their own local arrangements for re-establishing the police in one form or another. By the summer of 2003 the national

strength made up of those who had been rehired from the previous police organization and new hires was about 38000. However, as I became more informed about the police organisational structure I was to find that bakers, cooks, car mechanics, servants, musicians and sportsmen in the police organisation were all classed as 'policemen'. So, of the 38000 who were back on the notified payroll, a significant number would not be recognisable or capable of being deployed as policemen in the conventional meaning of the word.

22. During the period between July and September 2003, when the shadow CPA Ministry of Interior was designing and planning the future national training program, those Major Subordinate Commands that had reservists in their ranks who were police officers in their civilian lives, drew on a combination of military and civilian police experience to direct the Iraqi Police and in many cases prepare and deliver ad hoc training and briefing packages. In Baghdad there was some close cooperation and sharing of ideas on training and briefing between the MOI civilian advisors and the US 18th Military Police (MP) Brigade. But the further away from Baghdad a province or city was, the less contact and influence existed between the MOI and the local coalition military. The exception to this was Basra where there was reported to be good communication between the CPA South and its Senior Police advisor, and the British led Multi National Division South East(MNDSE).

23. There were small groups of Iraqi police, particularly in Baghdad, that with the assistance of the military or civilian advisors were actually taking on crime fighting duties as well as seeking out the members of Saddam's regime who were on the wanted list. A number of significant successes were recorded in weapons seizures, rescuing of kidnapped children, and in other major crimes including murder.

What you were trying to achieve

24. Initially I had 3 main goals. First, to influence the very dominant US military presence that the development of policing was, like soldiering, an undertaking that required some professional expertise. Second, to get a successful and very large basic training initiative up and running, and third, to influence the police that were already back at work to regain their confidence and provide a policing service.

25. But there was a 'daytime' agenda too. Any operational activity affecting the CPA that was associated with policing found its way to my desk. I was assigned a number of sensitive cases by the administrator simply because there was no one else in the CPA HQ with the 'police' label. These included the car bomb attack on the Jordanian embassy, the Canal hotel bombing, the incident of the assassination of the first female member of the Governing Council, the murder of 3 CPA workers outside Baghdad, and a policing plan to disrupt the activities of Mocqtarda al Sadr in Najaf and Karballa.

26. Though our police presence in Baghdad was miniscule, we did try to have a larger than life presence by engaging in activities that had high visibility and importance. For the UK police, the leadership of the Baghdad training academy, the staffing of the TIPS hotline, (a form of Crimestoppers), and the development of the Joint Coordination Centre in the HQ of the 1st Armoured Division were three excellent examples.

27. I was part of an early decision made to make forensic training for police, prosecutors and judges a priority. This was part of the development in the wider justice system to move away from a heavy reliance on confession evidence in investigations and trials. As a result of a successful donor bid through the Conference in Madrid, forensic training was provided to 250 Scenes of Crimes Officers (SOCOs) and 50

laboratory technicians by a consortium of United Arab Emirates, Germany, and Japan in the early part of 2004.

The factors that affected what you achieved

28. Good communication was difficult to achieve in any part of the country, outside of the military network, which made it very difficult for Advisors and later, ministry officials, to contact or influence police chiefs in the provinces. There was great reliance on sending personal representatives or messengers to different parts of the country, with the attendant delays and potential conflict this could provoke. In some cases Provincial officials gave little or no credibility to the Governing Council or the CPA appointed ministers, either because of political disagreement or because of the potential for local power, recently acquired, being eroded.

29. The Major Subordinate Commanders, (MSCs) were kings of their castles and whilst many gave me polite hearings, from their perspective I had little to bring to the table, a situation I could understand but which was nevertheless very frustrating. It meant that every initiative from the centre in Baghdad had either significant scrutiny as to its relevance and importance, or was simply ignored.

30. To provide some consistency of police advice on the ground, I deployed police advisors from the US contractor Dyncorps to MSC Headquarters in early 2004 to provide civilian police advice to the Commanding General and the CPA Governance Coordinator in the Province. The reactions to these deployments were mixed. In some MSCs their presence was acknowledged as providing useful support to the Headquarters. In others they were all but ignored, given no accommodation or basic facilities, and had no inclusion in the decision forums of the MSC where their advice could be offered

31. Additional impediments were that none of the Dyncorps contracted police advisors, who were mainly former patrol officers or first line supervisors, had any security clearance. Given that access to most Military premises and meetings required a minimum of secret level clearance, the advisors were often not able to enter buildings without escort, nor were they able to attend relevant meetings. Also, in not being able to assess their experience, competence, and seniority until the advisors arrived in country, it was sometimes difficult to identify people with appropriate background and skills for the specific advisor jobs I needed to fill. Some of course were not up to the standard required and Dyncorps was very effective in quickly terminating their contracts and returning them to the USA. Finally, some advisors, having been identified by me to undertake a particular police support function because of their skill set, were then offered salary increases to work on other Dyncorps duties, like armed security of premises, which meant their policing expertise was lost to the mission.

32. In the four Provinces of MNDSE, senior British police officers of Superintendent rank had been assigned to the Provincial Police Chiefs. Reports of their success in being able to influence the police chiefs, the local coalition military commanders, and the CPA Governance Coordinators were very favourable.

The level of financial and human resources at your disposal

33. Financially I was both rich and poor. A congressional supplemental budget we had applied for was agreed toward the end of 2003. It allocated over a billion dollars to the development of policing, including Borders and Customs. Significant purchases of weapons and other equipment, construction, and other

facilities were targeted in this allocation. But the rules for the release of its funds were cumbersome and slow so that for instance, tendering exercises for items like body armour were not permitted to begin until funds had actually been released. Given the scale of purchases we were seeking to make, the tendering exercise itself could take several months to achieve and the subsequent letting of the contract added further time. My approach to a US Assistant Secretary of State to seek a more urgent, streamlined approach with the Congressional budget allocation process was met with a sympathetic ear but with clear instruction that any attempts to 'speed up' the process locally could result in the funds being frozen.

34. At the same time I had great difficulty in finding someone in the FCO system to authorise the cost of my airfare from Egypt to the UAE, when the first minister of Interior insisted I accompany him to meet his opposite number in Abu Dhabi, because he wanted my advice on what initiatives he should seek help from the Emirates on, or my hotel bills in Jordan when I was negotiating the establishment of the Jordan training centre.

35. An expression that has proven to be apposite in many similar situations since, and which I credit to Sir Jeremy Greenstock, is that, "in extraordinary circumstances, the application of ordinary solutions will often fail".

36. From a domestic perspective the provision of police personnel to missions was slow and fragmented. It was difficult to target police expertise and align it to mission needs. Generally the experience gained in international missions is not recognised or celebrated as adding value to the overall career profile of the seconded officers or to their Forces. Policing in the UK is an inherently domestic affair. The Police, unlike the military, is not geared for expeditionary activities. Support to international missions like Iraq has relied heavily on people who, despite performing admirably in foreign environments, are primarily recruited to provide home policing. Even though the cost of each individual advisor is borne by the FCO while he or she is on deployment, their home Force carries the loss of a trained officer, which cannot be simply compensated for by a new recruit. (This was one of the areas that was addressed in the cross Whitehall review of police contributions to international operations in 2005).

37. The affect in the mission can be quite impacting however. For example, an opportunity to affect the strategic direction and powers of the Iraqi Intelligence Service by introducing a UK police 'Special Branch' system arose, and over a series of meetings with US and UK security interests and myself, the Administrator was persuaded of the utility of the British system. The initiative was lost however, because the UK was unable to second an experienced Special Branch manager to put the structure in place. A similar opportunity was lost in the setting up of an HMIC type standards and inspection unit for similar reasons.

38. More broadly, the need for international police advice and support on the ground was recognised by practitioners to be urgent, but there did not appear to be a mechanism for bringing advisors into country without a great deal of delay or reticence on the part of donating countries. In the case of the US contract police advisors, they did not start to arrive in significant numbers until the early part of 2004 though the request for them had been made in the summer of the previous year. In the case of the UK, having agreed the modest contribution that it was to make, the system for actually identifying volunteers and getting them released from their home force was cumbersome and slow. In the case of non police advisors the situation was also critical. Despite being informed on a number of occasions by the Administrator and other senior members of the CPA of the priority and importance of the Mol function, the major players were unable to recruit sufficient people of the right calibre to fulfil the necessary functions.

Your relationship with military and other civilian staff in Baghdad

39. I was fortunate to have developed close professional relations with General Freddy Viggers, his equally capable successor, General Andrew Figgures, and their respective chiefs of staff. Both were appreciative of the challenges we faced in trying to reinstate the police, and took action to influence the US commanding general when military clout was necessary. As I had been deployed with no support staff, General Viggers loaned me a captain from a British unit to act as a staff officer and he also significantly influenced the commander of the US forces in Baghdad to help me set up a unit that would give greater awareness to the US military of policing operations. This initiative alone significantly reduced the incidents of 'blue on blue' shootings. I was also grateful to Andy Bearpark for his ability to provide the bigger reconstruction view within which the police had to operate. I was also enormously indebted to Sir Jeremy Greenstock, his predecessor John Sawers and their senior colleagues David Richmond and Dominic Asquith who were readily accessible, responsive and encouraging when I sought guidance and advice.

Your relationship with British military and civilian staff based in Southern Iraq

40. The FCO had selected a second chief police officer, Stephen White, to look after policing interests in the area of MND SE. While I had meetings with Stephen and his team either in Baghdad or Basra, my view was that he was responsible for that area and I had the rest of Iraq to manage. On visits to Basra I was always made welcome by the GOC in MNDSE HQ and by Hillary Sinnott in the CPA HQ

Your relationships and interactions with Iraqis, including your view of the effectiveness of the Iraqi police

41. I established good professional and personal relationships with the Iraqis I had contact with. It was because of their trust that we had so much success with the TIP hotline, and it was also because of trust and confidence that we got both a glimpse into the world of organised crime that was being undertaken by former members of the Saddam security forces, and the opportunity to take some action against them.

42. I was appointed to mentor the first Iraqi minister of interior, Nouri Badran. After a rocky start we established a close working relationship, and one of our joint successes, achieved over many late nights at his home, was to reconstruct the Iraqi Ministry of Interior organisational infrastructure to become functional once again in the new political climate.

43. Policing, the consequences of its absence, or its reintroduction in an ad hoc fashion, was not a big blip on the CPA or Military radar. Initially, there was simply an expectation by many in authority that the police returning to work would rise, phoenix like, and just resume or take on police duties. However, the de-bathification process had removed most of the senior ranks of the police, so there was an absence of a strong officer corps. Also, as I found out more about the police, (information was not readily shared by Iraqi colleagues until some measure of trust had been established over time) it became clear that under Saddam Hussein, the police had been at the bottom of the security pile, poorly equipped and paid, neglected in terms of organisational development and responsibility, and since the time of the first Gulf war, subject to nepotism and corruption in the officer corps whereby officers were given their ranks if they came from influential families, without going through three years of the officer training academy.

44. The police had not had all the duties of a modern police under Saddam either. There was no criminal intelligence, though in Baghdad there was an enthusiastic bunch of officers who had been trained in basic ballistic forensics and fingerprint skills. There was a criminal records department, some of whose enterprising officers buried a significant quantity of records in the gardens of their homes during the war to ensure they were preserved. (this situation only came to light after a period of time and after the individuals felt they could trust the internationals). Only in Baghdad was there a serious Crime Unit and even they did not enjoy full control of criminal investigations if one of the myriad of other special security forces claimed cases for themselves. So the police who came back to work had very few of the individual or organisational skills that would be found in the police of other cities in the Middle East. Expectations of them were nevertheless high, and sometimes fickle. A successful operation by a local police unit was often heralded by their military advisors, but I lost count of the times those same people blamed 'my' police when they had not performed so well.

45. The police had not previously been required to deal with bomb scenes or assassinations of a political nature, so when incidents of this kind began in earnest in August 2003, with the car bombing of the Jordanian embassy and then the Canal Hotel United Nations bombing, there was no recognizable command and control system that the police could work to, no system for expert senior investigating officers to lead the investigations (the officer in charge of the investigation was the senior officer in charge of the local station irrespective of his experience), and forensic support was as described above. There was no infrastructure for DNA collection, storage and analysis, nor any forensic data bases on which to search, contribute or refer.

46. A final comment on the capability and skills of the Iraqi Police relates to its reaction to attacks from terrorists, insurgents or criminal gangs. When Saddam released thousands of inmates from prisons in October 2002 he put back onto the streets a huge number of some of the worst criminals in the country. These criminals, in taking up their former calling, often came into violent conflict with the police. As the insurgency led by Moqtarda al Sadr grew in ferocity the Jaeish al Mahdi, as Al Sadrs army was known was an ideal recruiting ground for these criminals, and it became a common tactic for police or police stations to be attacked by the Jaeish al Mahdi as part of their campaign of disruption and insurgency.

47. As terrorists and former regime elements developed their bombing campaigns, their focus of attention too was often on the symbols of civil authority, mainly represented by the police. It has been said publicly and critically by some that the police had often given up their police stations, weapons and vehicles, or had run away when challenged by armed groups, rather than stand and fight. This was true in some cases but there are also many examples of where the police stood their ground and fought. But it is a point worth making that when faced with the numbers, the weaponry, and the ferocity of violence that had been inflicted on the Iraqi Police Service, which had cost the lives of over 500 policemen with many more seriously injured during my time, the police may be forgiven for determining the prudence of not facing such a lethal level of ferocity. They were not trained for it, and they were very aware that even the multi national military forces found difficulty in dealing with it. No police force in the world is expected or equipped to deal with this level of insurgency without military back up; and that was not always forthcoming.

Lessons for the future

48. I shall not labour the point that has been made, I'm sure, by many before me, but the restoration of security and stability under a framework of rule of law must be a significant component of the campaign

plan, with all the attendant implications for policing, access to justice and reconstruction support that will be required for success. This lesson, of all the lessons identified, seems to be the one most resistant to being learned.

49. If chief police officers are to be deployed in these circumstances in the future, the FCO and ACPO should seek to properly support them so that they can operate effectively at their level. It was a number of weeks after my deployment before a realistic assessment could be made in theatre of the risks that I would face in undertaking tasks. One of the outcomes of this delay was that I was not assigned a mobile protection team until some three weeks after I had arrived. This severely constrained my ability to move around Baghdad and other parts of Iraq in the early stages, which created setbacks in trying to quantify the policing situation on the ground and prioritise effort. Protection of the Principal should be part of the checklist of support. A useful model can be found in the support provided to a non operational military 2 star general.

50. Pre mission training is vital. In addition to generic training for international deployments there must be training tailored to the actual country to be deployed to and the conditions as they are known. Of particular importance is briefing on relationships and protocols expected with the different coalition partners, with sister agencies from the UK, particularly military and diplomatic, and finally, with the indigenous population in whose country we shall be operating. I am aware that pre deployment training has been developed since my initial deployment, but there is value in reviewing the content and emphasis to ensure that it continues to fit the need. Officers who have served in Iraq should be engaged in this review.

51. Iraq provided some unique conditions for the police, not least being a mission where the police advisors would be armed. The initial requirement for serving police advisors to undertake a full UK firearms course created delays in deployment. A full ACPO approved authorized firearms officer course was not required by these officers. As they were to be armed solely for self protection and did not require sophisticated offensive tactical training, a significantly scaled down course would suffice. As part of that self protection ingredient, I recommended that they should also have familiarity with the most common weapon to be found in Iraq, the Kalashnikov AK 47 assault rifle. This was because the standard of weapon handling by their Iraqi counterparts was poor and the UK police needed to know how to identify whether or not a weapon in their close proximity was 'safe'.

52. I had taken part in a cross Whitehall Strategic Task Force in 2005 which made robust recommendations on a broad range of options for the deployment of police in international missions. I'm not sure which of the recommendations have been adopted since, but my belief is that a dedicated police unit permanently established for international missions would address many of the concerns and frustrations outlined in my evidence. It would provide professional expertise for mission assessment and planning, for working with military, FCO, EU and UN elements to ensure appropriate interventions, timing, availability and skill sets of police advisors. As with the existing National Police bodies, there would be the opportunity for secondment to the international unit, and also a career path to attract skilled officers and good leaders. It would have responsibility for all pre-mission training and all requests for international police support from the UK could be routed through it. (Paul Kernaghan, former Chief Constable of Hampshire, circulated a 'Blueprint' document which expanded this concept admirably).

53. Of course It would require political will at the highest level to commit to such an undertaking but given that both the EU and the UN has acknowledged the inevitable growth in policing missions as part of

global stabilisation efforts, the current method of providing UK police to international missions is not sustainable.

54. It was often the case that expectations in London and Washington about delivery of information and decisions were unrealistic, and often did not take into account the conditions on the ground. An example was with the early demand from London for sight of a policing strategy for Iraq, despite the absence of information locally, the confusion of responsibility for the police as explained above, and an exclusive focus by the US head of Mol on meeting the demands for the recruit training program initially designed for an Eastern European country and subsequently negotiated with Jordan. The absence of an elaborate CPA strategy until the autumn of 2003 was also an impediment. Greater latitude should be given for responses when demands are made of operatives working in conditions like those in Iraq.

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