

Monday, 26th July 2010

(2.00 pm)

SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN GBE QPM

SIR JOHN CHILCOT: Welcome, everyone, and welcome to our first witness of the afternoon, Sir Ronnie Flanagan. Welcome.

SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: Thank you, Chairman.

SIR JOHN CHILCOT: We will be hearing later this afternoon from Sir Peter Spencer, who was formerly Chief of Defence Procurement, but our first session this afternoon is the testimony from Sir Ronnie Flanagan. You were, of course, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary for England, Wales and Northern Ireland until 2008.

SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: That is correct, Chairman.

SIR JOHN CHILCOT: In late 2005 you were asked by the then Defence Secretary to conduct a review of the United Kingdom contribution to the policing strand of security sector reform in Iraq.

SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: Yes, Sir.

SIR JOHN CHILCOT: For the record the report of your review which you presented to the Government on 31 January 2006 was declassified last month and subsequently published on the Inquiry's website. In this session we are going to look at some of the issues raised in your report and

1 we would also like to draw on your unique capacity and
2 experience as an HMI, a long career in operational
3 policing, and working closely with the British Army in
4 Northern Ireland, to present the experience of all that
5 policing as it relates to the Iraq context.

6 Now I say this on each occasion. We recognise that
7 every witness gives evidence based on his recollection
8 of events and we check what we hear against such papers
9 as we have access to and which are still coming in.

10 I remind each witness on each occasion he will later be
11 asked to sign a transcript of evidence to the effect
12 that the evidence given is truthful, fair and accurate.

13 With preliminaries I will ask Baroness Prashar to
14 ask the first questions.

15 Good afternoon, Sir Ronnie.

16 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: Good afternoon, ma'am.

17 BARONESS PRASHAR: This was quite an unusual commission for
18 you. Could you just start by telling me who appointed
19 you, when were you appointed and what was the brief you
20 were given?

21 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: I was first contacted by Dr Reid's
22 office and asked if I could attend a meeting with
23 Dr Reid and the Ministry of Defence. When I attended
24 that meeting it was just -- in September of that year,
25 of course, we had the dramatic scenes where young

1 soldiers were seen diving out of a tank which was on
2 fire and young soldiers who were ablaze at the time.
3 I think that caused such a shock back here at home,
4 together with messages I think from the then General
5 Officer Commanding in the south-east of Iraq, General
6 James Dutton, I think that drove the Secretary of State
7 for Defence to request an examination by me of the input
8 that we were giving to developing the Iraqi Police
9 Service.

10 I think in recollection of my conversation with
11 Dr Reid the Government had decided at that time as well
12 that this responsibility would pass from the Foreign and
13 Commonwealth Office, the development of the Iraqi Police
14 Service, to the Secretary of State for Defence's office.
15 So that's the background that I gave.

16 BARONESS PRASHAR: What was your brief? What were you
17 precisely asked to do?

18 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: Well, I engaged in wide-ranging
19 discussions, after the meeting with Dr Reid, across
20 a number of departments, including the Home Office, to
21 which I was attached but from which I was independent,
22 of course, in my position, the Foreign and Commonwealth
23 Office as well as the Ministry of Defence to come up
24 with terms of reference which are quite long and
25 detailed and I think appear at page 12 of my report.

1 If I may refer to those, ma'am?

2 BARONESS PRASHAR: Yes. These were drawn for you or did you
3 draw them after you have had discussions with the
4 Government departments?

5 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: After discussions across the number of
6 departments. If I was going to visit, one I was things
7 I was particularly being asked to examine was the
8 effective necessary of the carabinieri approach in one
9 of the four provinces for which the UK had
10 responsibility. That was Dhi Qar. I think the feeling
11 on General Dutton's behalf, as reported to me, was that
12 this was the least troublesome of the four provinces for
13 which he was responsible and perhaps the carabinieri
14 approach might be a more appropriate approach than that
15 of trying to impose a UK model of policing.

16 So that was a specific request, and I wanted to
17 determine in agreeing terms of reference that I could
18 meet the sorts of requests that were being made of me.

19 BARONESS PRASHAR: Did you feel what you were being asked to
20 do was realistic? Did you feel you had enough
21 resources?

22 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: I didn't think there was a problem
23 from my point of view in resources. It was obviously
24 given a great degree of urgency and I did have quite
25 a busy day job as well. So certainly there would have

1 been a range of challenges in being able to see exactly
2 the people I needed to see in Iraq, in being able to see
3 and review documentation, because many reports had been
4 written up to that point before I went to Iraq, to
5 hopefully read myself into the position.

6 So the challenges were of constraints of time rather
7 than of resources. I was very fortunate to have
8 an inspectorate of very good colleagues on whom I knew
9 I could depend completely and whom I asked to accompany
10 me on my visits to the country.

11 BARONESS PRASHAR: Was your brief Iraq-wide or was it
12 looking at MND South East? You just made reference to
13 the carabinieri approach. I still don't have a feel of
14 the broader brief you had.

15 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: In my view, and I would like to almost
16 apologise for the number of acronyms in this report --

17 BARONESS PRASHAR: We are getting used to them?

18 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: -- but it wasn't written with a view
19 to being read publicly. It was written for the people
20 who invented the acronyms, so I apologise for the
21 language and index. So for example, what's called CPATT
22 would be the American administration in Baghdad. Quite
23 frankly it would be impossible to look at policing
24 arrangements in the south-east, in the four provinces
25 for which we, the UK, assumed responsibility, without

1 looking at least at the connections, the relationships
2 between Baghdad, the American administration, other
3 members of the coalition, and indeed taking a much wider
4 remit, as it transpired, for example, to examine what
5 was going on in the training centre in Jordan.

6 So while the remit certainly focused on what we call
7 MND South East it was my view from the outset that I
8 could not do anything meaningful without also examining
9 the much wider context.

10 BARONESS PRASHAR: And that was your own assessment?

11 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: Indeed.

12 BARONESS PRASHAR: You said that in developing this brief
13 you talked to the FCO, the Home Office and the MoD here.
14 How do you think it all fitted in, in the field, with the
15 FCO, ACPO and the Home Office?

16 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: If you look at the report, there are
17 quite a list of things that the Secretary of State for
18 Defence wanted addressed, but I condensed those, if you
19 like. As the work got underway, that long list which
20 was included in what might be described the terms of
21 reference evolved for me into three broad areas.

22 Number one, the strategic direction and integration
23 of the policing reform effort.

24 Number two, how effective and efficient was that
25 policing reform effort? Specifically also to look at

1 the carabinieri, and is that an approach, if successful
2 in Dhi Qar, we should attempt to apply in the other
3 provinces?

4 Additionally, should we be trying to create a police
5 service in Iraq rather more along the lines of
6 the carabinieri or a gendarmerie than, for example, on
7 UK lines or US lines.

8 The third evolving, overarching issue I saw as the
9 effectiveness of the then existing training programmes.

10 BARONESS PRASHAR: We have heard from a number of witnesses
11 that there was no overarching strategy for policing in
12 Iraq and there was no clear notion of how a new Iraqi
13 Police Service should be structured and how it should
14 link with other parts of the criminal justice system and
15 who it should be accountable to. It is something you
16 have actually flagged up in your own report as
17 a concern, because you make reference to "no overarching
18 blueprint". You found references to about four
19 different strategies, you know, and so on. You have
20 highlighted that.

21 Where would you have expected this overarching
22 criminal justice strategy to have come from?

23 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: I think, first of all, before
24 I specifically address that, if I may, I think it is
25 important for those who are critical of the efforts to

1 be made, it is important to realise when a country has
2 reached the stage that Iraq had reached after the
3 conflict, and I saw it at first-hand in Kosovo, when
4 society has completely broken down, there is no banking
5 system, there no traffic light system, there is nobody
6 to direct the traffic, there is no registration of
7 vehicles, you can't write cheques, you can't use
8 plastic, when society I think has broken down to that
9 point, I think one has to realise the difficulty of
10 building it back up again.

11 So yes, of course, I think I was quite properly
12 commenting on the absence of overarching strategies, but
13 I don't think that should be interpreted as: this is
14 an easy thing to do and somebody should have provided
15 that from the outset.

16 I was very taken by the fact that there are 18
17 provinces and even when I looked quite close hand at the
18 four provinces for which we had responsibility, they
19 were all very different in their nature. So it is not
20 easy to develop one plan on the basis that one size fits
21 all.

22 What I wanted to be sure was that the Iraqis
23 themselves had an absolutely integral part to play in
24 developing, for example, their national policing plan.
25 Yes, perhaps they needed a draft from the coalition

1 forces, but during my first visits the position was that
2 the coalition forces were in the course of writing one
3 for them. I felt that they should be involved. The new
4 Minister of Interior should be involved working with the
5 18 chiefs of police in the 18 different provinces.

6 Rather as we have 43 police forces at present in
7 England and Wales and we have a lot of mechanisms to
8 make sure that national standards apply, but within the
9 application of those national standards some freedom for
10 slightly different application of those national
11 standards.

12 So that was my thinking.

13 BARONESS PRASHAR: That was at the local level, but the fact
14 you were commissioned by John Reid to go out there, you
15 had conversations, there must have been some notion of
16 what they expected to you to do. You know, what were
17 their objectives and strategy and was the Prime Minister
18 involved in this? Did you have any conversations with
19 the PM at that stage?

20 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: I didn't have direct conversations
21 with the Prime Minister, but in the conversation with
22 Dr Reid he described it to me as a Government decision
23 and the Prime Minister's name was mentioned in that
24 context, that the decision had been taken that this
25 responsibility for developing policing should move from

1 the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to the Ministry of
2 Defence.

3 I had known, of course, Dr Reid in Northern Ireland
4 and he knew I was then Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of
5 Constabulary.

6 BARONESS PRASHAR: But did you get an indication of why they
7 moved the responsibility from the FCO to MoD? Because
8 the move took place. It must have been for a reason and
9 they must have had an overarching idea what they wanted
10 to do locally.

11 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: I think, and this has to be in part
12 speculation, I think simply because the army were
13 working so closely with the local police -- and that's
14 one of the things I will perhaps come to later in
15 applying hopefully some learning from
16 Northern Ireland -- what I wanted to happen was as the
17 Iraqi Police Service developed, if they needed military
18 support, that it should actually come from the Iraqi
19 armed forces rather than continuing to have to depend on
20 our armed forces.

21 So I have no idea, I was not told why the decision
22 was made, but I think the necessity of day-to-day
23 operations in Iraq and the closeness of military
24 personnel working with policing personnel I assume made
25 it a plausible decision to move that responsibility from

1 the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

2 BARONESS PRASHAR: I am sure my colleagues will pursue that.

3 There is one other aspect I want to look at, because
4 you mention in your report the crucial difference
5 between the Iraqi justice system, in particular with
6 an investigatory judiciary, and the Common Law system
7 you know we are familiar with here. To what extent do
8 you think this distinction was fully understood by those
9 who were devising the strategy for criminal justice and
10 policing in Iraq.

11 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: I learned it by accident. I learned
12 of this difference in conversations with judges, in the
13 country.

14 BARONESS PRASHAR: In Iraq itself?

15 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: In Iraq itself. It was a conversation
16 about some very good work being done to develop the
17 Iraqi Police Service forensic capability. An individual
18 judge said, "We should be given that development". It
19 was only then I learned they had almost a Napoleonic
20 system, almost the French *juge d'instruction*.

21 I have to say that the judges did not hold the Iraqi
22 Police Service in very high regard. I think they saw it
23 as their job to hold the scene of a crime where the
24 investigating magistrates turned up to actually embark
25 on the investigation.

1 Now that made a difference. It at least increased
2 in my mind the great need for the judiciary and the
3 police to be working hand in glove and frankly I had not
4 been briefed on that difference and I learned it by
5 accident. I am not sure if it was known on a wide basis
6 at all up to that point.

7 BARONESS PRASHAR: You said earlier from your point of view
8 there was a need for a coherent framework for a strategy
9 in terms of involving the Ministry of Interior, the
10 police and the local courts and so on and so forth. Was
11 that understood by the Iraqis or by the coalition in
12 Iraq, or was it a kind of ad hoc approach to different
13 aspects of the security?

14 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: To me I think it was probably more
15 understood by those Iraqis who had been in any way
16 connected with previous systems, and of course most of
17 those been moved and were precluded from holding public
18 office. I am sure the Inquiry has heard a lot of
19 evidence as to how good a decision that was or
20 otherwise. Certainly from my point of view it made
21 reconstruction of a credible police force very, very
22 much more difficult.

23 Certainly in later interaction with them defined
24 that there were previous very senior police officers
25 from the old regime back in position who didn't have any

1 truck with the old regime, but were now being allowed to
2 bring their previous experience that bear, I think that
3 was a big advantage.

4 So I think this difference that we are considering
5 at the moment would have been known to Iraqis. If it
6 was known to the coalition, it was never briefed to me,
7 and if it had been known to the coalition it might have
8 made a difference in the sort of balance, developing
9 forensic capability, not only for the Police Service but
10 perhaps for investigating magistrates as well.

11 Now -- I am sorry, ma'am, to go on --

12 BARONESS PRASHAR: No, no.

13 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: -- only by virtue of the fact that
14 a very good friend and former colleague of mine,
15 Mr Stephen White, whom I think has given evidence
16 recently, and whom you heard from, did I become aware of
17 the EU Justlex programme. It was a programme whereby
18 those members of the EU, even those countries who did
19 not support the invasion in the first instance but
20 realised a lot of help must be offered to develop the
21 country and therefore their first stance was: we will
22 provide this training to judges, to prison governors, to
23 senior police officers, but not in country, in Europe,
24 in the first instance.

25 So again had Stephen White not been a close friend

1 and colleague I might not even have learned of that
2 programme. So there certainly was not a joined-up
3 approach. There was not nearly enough jointery, if
4 there is such a word as that. It is a word that was
5 certainly developed in Northern Ireland and became
6 probably a word by common usage.

7 BARONESS PRASHAR: Did you get any sense the coalition were
8 talking to the Iraqis about this? Because if the Iraqis
9 told you this, were the coalition not aware of it? Was
10 there not a level of communication between the coalition
11 and the Iraqis?

12 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: That would be an unfair conclusion.
13 There may have been much more -- I don't want to make
14 any great claims. I visited Iraq four times in all.
15 I visited twice in relation to this report. I think
16 Dr Reid simply wanted to know, "Are we on the wrong
17 lines? Should we go on the lines of the carabinieri,
18 either doing what the carabinieri are doing or indeed
19 creating a carabinieri style police service for Iraq?"
20 I think those were the immediate questions he wanted
21 answered. It became very clear to me I was certainly
22 not going to be able to make any meaningful contribution
23 to that through one visit. I told him I certainly
24 wanted to go back and spend some time with the
25 carabinieri and Dhi Qar before coming to any

1 conclusions.

2 BARONESS PRASHAR: But you did feel that it wasn't joined up
3 really?

4 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: No, but I go back, ma'am, to the state
5 of the country. It is not surprising it wasn't joined
6 up. These things do take some time.

7 BARONESS PRASHAR: Thank you.

8 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: Could I turn to a different aspect,
9 Sir Ronnie, of the policing model debate? I think it is
10 pretty well understood now from a lot of evidence we
11 have had and indeed from your own report that, by the
12 time you looked at the situation, we were two and a half
13 years in the invasion and the planning for it had been
14 three years and more going on. There was an initial
15 requirement, as things turned out, to resuscitate
16 a largely broken society -- you have just told us about
17 that -- including law enforcement, public order and the
18 rest of it, but further on there was going to be
19 a longer term rebuild job to do.

20 I just wonder whether a whole series of different
21 models in people's minds, from the United States, civil
22 as well as military, from our own experience and then
23 the different members of the coalition as they were
24 assembled, the Danes, there were Italians and others,
25 was this just a melting pot in which the long-term

1 reform of policing in Iraq within a larger justice
2 system reform was shaping or were there particular
3 visions being offered and thought about?

4 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: I coined a phrase at the time,
5 Chairman, that we had to realise we were not building
6 a police service for Hampshire and that our American
7 colleagues had to realise we were not building a police
8 service for New Hampshire. We were building a police
9 service for Iraq, which is exactly why I wanted not only
10 to look at the training facility in Jordan, but to look
11 at the construction of policing in Jordan and to do some
12 small research in the application of policing models in
13 the region generally, because it was different and there
14 are different models. I wanted in the immediate weeks,
15 months following my visit to draw operationally on what
16 experience had been gleaned in Northern Ireland, where
17 clearly in Iraq the police were going to have to work
18 very closely with the armed services for quite some
19 time.

20 So it is true with all these different countries
21 contributing to the developing of policing that that can
22 be dysfunctional, and I think there was a degree of
23 naivety. We quite properly had a very heavy reliance on
24 building human rights into all aspects of training and
25 that is, as I have said, absolutely proper, but I think

1 we were doing it believing that eventually there would
2 be a democracy that would evolve exactly like a western
3 democracy.

4 I think we saw elements as well when we consider to
5 consider if the rogue elements within the Iraqi Police
6 Service had deliberately infiltrated the police service
7 or whether it was rather more a question of ancient
8 tribal loyalties coming to the fore. I think it was
9 a bit of both. Certainly tribal loyalties I found to be
10 tremendously important and something we would have to
11 take into account in developing a coherent model for
12 policing for the country.

13 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: You have talked both in your report and
14 already this afternoon about the preponderance of the
15 military presence in Iraq in the post-invasion years.
16 A huge disproportion in terms of numbers, weight,
17 resources.

18 Was there a risk that the policing model within the
19 larger justice system model would, as it were, be shaped
20 by the military preponderance? You were best placed
21 probably of almost anyone from experience to judge that.

22 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: I think there were two risks,
23 Chairman. One is the risk you describe, that that very
24 heavy need for a very heavy military presence might
25 shape policing.

1 Secondly, I think the risk was also that if
2 policing -- I think there just wasn't enough
3 concentration on policing in the earlier years, so much
4 so that General Casey -- just before he stood down to be
5 replaced by General Petraeus, with the surge that I think
6 came about after December 2006, I think, I can't be
7 certain of that -- General Casey I think had declared
8 2006 to be the year of the police. I think that was
9 a recognition that they were making quite good progress
10 in rebuilding the Iraqi armed services, but it was now
11 time to give a greater degree of concentration on
12 policing.

13 So the two risks were the heavy military presence
14 might inappropriately to some degree shape policing, and
15 the second risk I saw was that not enough effort was
16 being given specifically to policing.

17 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: I have a couple of other things. You
18 were given a very specific and direct issue to address
19 in your review, namely that of: was a carabinieri model
20 something that should be adopted in preference to, if
21 you like, a more civilian community-based policing?

22 I think the question that's starting to come out for
23 us in evidence is whether there is not, in fact, a bunch
24 of different -- not different models of policing but
25 different contributions from a policing system that you

1 need as a situation like post-invasion Iraq develops.
2 You need a powerful, mobile, self-protecting policing
3 force which the carabinieri represent for some purposes.
4 You have quite different needs perhaps in terms of
5 border policing. Above all you still have to police
6 pavements and streets, and fields and villages alongside
7 each other rather than one or the other.

8 Is that in your judgment right?

9 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: It is absolutely right, Chairman.

10 I think the constitutional history of policing in the
11 United Kingdom is such that it doesn't lend itself
12 easily to expeditionary forces, expeditionary missions.
13 For a police officer from the UK to serve on one of
14 these missions that police officer has to decide it is
15 something he or she wants to volunteer for. Their
16 Chief Constable then has to agree, and their Police
17 Authority have to agree.

18 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: Sorry to interrupt you, but we had from
19 one general that it was a system of double volunteering.
20 It is actually treble volunteering, isn't it?

21 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: Indeed. If chief constables were
22 going to allow numbers of their individual force to be
23 deployed overseas, invariably they would be firearms
24 trained officers for these types of missions. So that's
25 a big gap back at home. Invariably they would

1 understandably seek finance not just for the
2 continuation of those officers abroad but backfilling
3 them with other officers because they had targets to
4 meet and a policing service to deliver back here at
5 home.

6 So for all those reasons, and I am not sure it is
7 widely known, but if the French Government decide they
8 are going to contribute to a UN policing mission, then
9 they can send the gendarmerie. If the Italian
10 Government decide, they can send the carabinieri. If
11 the UK Government decides, it has to depend on
12 volunteers. The Government can't say, "We will send
13 people", which is why we ended up relying very heavily
14 on recently retired officers. I have to say recently
15 retired officers who were doing a sterling job. So the
16 constructive UK policing does not lend itself to these
17 types of missions.

18 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: I think later in the session we would
19 like to take your mind to an assessment of how looking
20 much further ahead you could plan for the follow-through
21 to the immediate post conflict issues that present
22 a policing challenge, and whether the United Kingdom can
23 contribute to it.

24 In the meantime let's stay with where we were in the
25 middle of 2005/6 and I will ask Sir Roderic Lyne to ask

1 questions.

2 SIR RODERIC LYNE: As you say, there was not a single
3 overarching strategy, but did you feel that the military
4 and civilian police when you visited were working
5 towards a single agenda, a single set of objectives in
6 Iraq?

7 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: I think again I mentioned status
8 earlier in my evidence when talking about the judiciary
9 and the Iraqi Police Service. It was also my experience
10 that the Iraqi armed forces did not hold the Iraqi
11 Police Service in very high regard, and where there was
12 joint working, it was my feeling in the areas I examined
13 that there was too great a degree of dependence on our
14 UK armed forces.

15 My recommendation at the time -- we were, for
16 example, approaching a general election in Iraq, and my
17 recommendation was that, building on the Northern
18 Ireland experience -- and within Northern Ireland
19 there were areas when the Troubles were at their height
20 where we needed complete jointery between the police and
21 the army, joint operations rooms, joint operational
22 planning, joint operations being conducted on the
23 ground. There were other areas of Northern Ireland
24 where right throughout the Troubles we did not need
25 military support. It was my recommendation that we

1 should begin to look at our four provinces in that
2 regard, and that where military support was needed it
3 should be provided by the Iraqi armed services and
4 I said that the forthcoming election at that time would
5 perhaps be a good vehicle through which to develop this
6 and test it, that the Iraqi armed services should be
7 providing all the necessary protection and support to
8 the Iraqi Police Service in the management of those then
9 forthcoming elections.

10 SIR RODERIC LYNE: What about our own people there, our own
11 military commanders in Baghdad and Basra, and our senior
12 police officers deployed out there? Were they on the
13 same page?

14 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: I think in my first visit, General
15 James Dutton was coming to the end of his career -- not
16 his career -- I beg your pardon -- his tour of duty in
17 Iraq. I think it is fair to say that General James
18 experienced some frustrations.

19 For example in terms of movements of the civil
20 police. Out of bounds areas were decided by the
21 representatives still of the Foreign and Commonwealth
22 Office. He, the General, made such decisions in terms
23 of his troops, but suddenly he could find himself having
24 no accompaniment because the decisions for the other
25 contractors were made by other people. That was one of

1 my recommendations, that the general should be trusted
2 to make those decisions and should be given the
3 responsibility to make decisions.

4 I think the absence of the general's ability to make
5 such decisions did lead to frustrations, "If these
6 people are confined to barracks what are we paying them
7 for? What are they doing for me?" I think sometimes
8 those frustrations arose, but certainly not in any way
9 being the fault or being something that could be laid at
10 the door of those civilian contractors or those police
11 officers who were willing to go and offer help.

12 SIR RODERIC LYNE: I mean, you talk in your report about
13 your concerns over a lack of corporacy at a strategic
14 level, which sounded like a diplomatic way of saying
15 that the top players were not joining up very
16 effectively, and then you specifically referred to
17 tensions over primacy, over who was in charge, and then
18 you recommended a slightly complicated model in which
19 the GOC retained overall control but the implementation
20 was in the hands of civilian police officers.

21 How deep were these divisions between civilian and
22 military? I mean, you have mentioned movements and I
23 think others may want to go into that a bit more.

24 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: I mean, when I talk about the lack of
25 corporacy at a very high level and a very strategic

1 level I was also referring to the interim Iraqi
2 Government and the various ministries, and it seemed to
3 me that there was a complete lack of corporacy there
4 between the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of
5 Defence, the ministry which had responsibility for the
6 judiciary. So when I talk of lack of corporacy --

7 SIR RODERIC LYNE: It is on that level?

8 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: -- it seems to be on that level.

9 Which was why -- perhaps not for me to say -- some of my
10 recommendations related to a coalition helping with
11 nation-building beyond security, but helping folks who
12 were going to be elected to be in a better position to
13 discharge the responsibilities of their new office and
14 to have support mechanisms along the lines of
15 a civil service that would help them.

16 So I saw the overall improvement in security as
17 something which had to be looked at in a much wider
18 context.

19 SIR RODERIC LYNE: But down in MND South East were we not
20 joining up at a senior level on the British side?

21 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: I think not sufficiently, because at
22 the time I visited the most senior British police
23 officer spent most of his time in Baghdad. Drawing on
24 the experience of Northern Ireland in those areas where
25 we needed jointery, for me that police officer should

1 have been embedded with General Dutton, and that was one
2 of my specific recommendations, which was followed up.
3 I think -- I hope that that was beneficial to General
4 Dutton in discharging his responsibilities.

5 GOCs spent only six months in theatre. That's not
6 a matter for me, but I did recommend that that should be
7 looked at. I am not sure the GOCs were particularly
8 happy about that, but six months seemed to me a very
9 short time.

10 SIR RODERIC LYNE: This is a question that has come up in
11 many of our evidence sessions, and exactly what is the
12 right time is difficult to define.

13 One of the police officers who has given evidence to
14 us made the comment that he sensed that the work in
15 developing the Iraqi police was seen as second fiddle to
16 work with the Iraqi army.

17 Was that what you found?

18 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: I wouldn't say deliberately seen as
19 second fiddle. I think immediate priorities
20 post-conflict meant a much heavier concentration on
21 developing the Iraqi armed services and then, as
22 I described, General Casey declaring 2006 the year of
23 the police. I think that was an acknowledgment: we need
24 to pay much more attention to developing the police
25 service.

1 SIR RODERIC LYNE: But two and a half years had gone by by
2 the time you went out there before they had this
3 realisation?

4 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: I think I come back to my much earlier
5 evidence. I think there was -- there had developed
6 a complacency back home. I think there was a feeling:
7 everything is going fine in our area. Great troubles up
8 in Baghdad, and then these shocking images of young
9 soldiers aflame I think led to all this, it is not going
10 as well perhaps as it had been felt up to that time.

11 SIR RODERIC LYNE: Okay. Thank you very much.

12 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: I will ask Sir Lawrence to take up
13 questions.

14 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Sort of following on. Resources.
15 You have military and civilian efforts both trying to
16 support Security Sector Reform, but completely different
17 scale of resources in each case. Is that always going
18 to be the case? Can you sort of imagine ways of you
19 balancing the resources?

20 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: I would hope, and I think the Chairman
21 said that towards the end we might be looking forward
22 to: what should the UK's role be in the future? My
23 great hope would be that part of the lessons to be
24 learned -- that immediacy may require a great
25 concentration on working with the armed services, but

1 I think one of the lessons to be learned from this
2 post-conflict effort is that it shouldn't be at the
3 expense of concentrating on policing and that much wider
4 context as well.

5 I mean, one of the departments I did not mention and
6 I saw some tremendous work being carried out by them out
7 there was DFID. They were doing some tremendous work on
8 trying to develop the infrastructure, not really to do
9 with the security effort, but at least trying to improve
10 the daily lot of the Iraqi people.

11 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: I mean, you are suggesting this is
12 a lesson to be learned. Do you think it was something
13 that could have been appreciated prior to the invasion,
14 or one of the major issues if Security Sector Reform
15 were being discussed it might have been possible to
16 configure the operation more from the start in the way
17 you are suggesting we should look to in the future?

18 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: I think -- and this is a personal
19 view, and it is really outside my specific area of
20 expertise -- there was a belief that having toppled
21 Saddam we would be welcomed with open arms, and that
22 everything would be much easier than it transpired to
23 be.

24 So looking back now with hindsight and looking at
25 Northern Ireland, looking at the Balkans, one might say,

1 "We should have anticipated a different environment and
2 perhaps we could have anticipated a different
3 environment".

4 I keep coming back to, I think you have to be in
5 these countries to see the state that they have reached
6 and to see how much society has been broken down to
7 realise exactly how difficult the rebuilding of society
8 is.

9 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: I think in that respect, that as you
10 have already alluded to, this debate that went on as to
11 whether our effort was best focused on the country as
12 a whole and therefore based in Baghdad, or best focused
13 on our particular area, MND South East, you sort of give
14 an indication you thought that's where it should have
15 been concentrated, but that was part of the general
16 discussion of strategy.

17 Again, in retrospect, with the benefit of hindsight,
18 where do you think it would have been better to focus
19 right from the start in terms of a UK effort?

20 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: When I mentioned 43 police services
21 for England and Wales, I wasn't making a direct
22 comparison. Iraq is a very federal country and has 18
23 provinces with very different policing needs and, you
24 know, the north, Kurdistan, very different ...

25 So I think it may appear complicated and I think you

1 probably need a number of centres concentrating on the
2 needs of the surrounding area of each of those centres.
3 So I don't think you can say, "Let's just focus it all
4 on Baghdad". What I certainly found was that there was
5 not enough communication between Baghdad and our area in
6 MND South East but there were some good examples.

7 We created in Baghdad a simple thing that you might
8 call Crimestoppers. It was known as "TIPS". The number
9 was very widely advertised, interpreters were employed.
10 We then established that in MND South East. Even while
11 I was there in the early stages of its development lives
12 were being saved. Explosive devices were being
13 reported. So a very simple thing -- that's an example
14 of good cooperation and learning from success in one
15 area and transposing it to an area. A very simple
16 example.

17 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: What that suggests -- we have taken
18 evidence on that which confirms what you have just said.
19 Just sort of another model, which would be, between a
20 concentration in the capital and a concentration
21 a particular region, something that was more nationally
22 distributed but obviously then very much more on the
23 advisory basis. Is the implication of what you are
24 saying that there was quite a lot of that could have
25 been done giving advice on how advanced policing

1 techniques, if you like, could be applied in very
2 distinctive regional settings?

3 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: Yes. Well, I would, Sir, offer
4 a health warning to the phrase "advanced policing
5 techniques", because what I saw time and time again was
6 technology that we would have been very happy to have
7 had in the UK and genuinely an inability to switch it on
8 and use it, and an absence of paper. When I visited
9 police stations and asked, "When members of the public
10 come in and report something or seek help, where do you
11 record it?" There was an absence of pens, pencils and
12 papers. So when we talk of advanced policing
13 techniques, of course they are very important, but
14 I think we can't ignore the very basics of policing as
15 well.

16 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: I don't think I was thinking just of
17 technology but just the sort of structures and systems
18 that have been developed. Again I suppose it begs the
19 question of whether our techniques are always the most
20 advanced.

21 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: In the joint operations centres I saw
22 very advanced technology. What I didn't see -- but
23 again I was there at an early stage of that particular
24 development -- was the training and the ability to apply
25 that advanced technology.

1 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: I mean, that leads on to some
2 questions that I had on what's needed in those
3 circumstances to develop an effective model for the
4 Iraqi Police Service and how you train in that regard?
5 You need obviously particular sorts of skill for those
6 doing the training to relate what they know to the
7 setting of the people they are trying to train.

8 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: I think that's -- personally, I think
9 the UK has a lot to offer, not only in offering basic
10 training but in training the trainers. Even on my short
11 visits there I saw very positive developments in that
12 regard. I sat in on lessons being delivered by Iraqis
13 to Iraqis, overseen by our instructors who had trained
14 the trainers, so to speak. I sat in on one lecture
15 room, which a week after I left was the target of
16 a lethal attack.

17 So I came to have great admiration for many, many of
18 those Iraqis who bravely came forward to join the police
19 service and I felt it was our obligation to make sure
20 they had a service through which they could help improve
21 the lives of their own people. But some very humbling
22 experiences and meeting some very brave people wanting
23 to do their very best for the development of their own
24 country.

25 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: But do you think the UK policing

1 communities have the right sorts of skills and training
2 capacity to --

3 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: I think we certainly have the right
4 sorts of skills and the right sort of people. I think
5 capacity will always be a question.

6 I have already described how our structures don't
7 lend themselves to very easy overseas deployments and
8 the problems that chief constables will have at home
9 will always raise questions about the capacity to do
10 what we would perhaps want to do.

11 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: But in terms of the skill presumably
12 you would say this is a comparative advantage of the
13 police as against the armed forces. This is the sort of
14 thing --

15 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: I think the skills -- the skills are
16 there and the people are there. The trick is to bring
17 about mechanisms to allow those skills to be deployed by
18 the people who have them.

19 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Do you think those skills are
20 recognised sufficiently by the defence security planners
21 in the UK?

22 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: I think -- I haven't read
23 Paul Kernaghan's evidence. I know he gave evidence
24 recently. Paul worked tirelessly. He through the
25 Association of Chief Police Officers held the

1 international portfolio and Paul was a tireless fighter
2 for proper recognition of those who would be prepared to
3 go over and participate in such missions.

4 It is not easy. What form does the recognition
5 take? Do we create a special medal? Do we allow
6 opportunities for promotion when they come back, having
7 served? How do we ensure there is recognition?

8 I know Paul certainly felt that there was not
9 sufficient recognition. He was constantly striving to
10 have that level of recognition increased and enhanced.

11 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: So, just to conclude, you have
12 spoken of major capacity constraints and the stretches
13 of our police forces, problems of recognition. That's
14 already quite a formidable list.

15 Are there any other reasons why you think it was
16 difficult for us to get sufficient police?

17 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: Finance will play a big role in any
18 such decisions because, when I came back, part of the
19 recommendations were that we must bring about the
20 reconstitution of what was called the "task force", to
21 look at how the UK could contribute. We looked across
22 the departments -- FCO, Ministry of Defence, because
23 again the MOD Policing Guarding Agency do
24 a very good job. They are a policing agency that is
25 routinely armed and they are very willing to help as

1 well. So we very much involved them and we brought
2 together, even at ministerial level, senior Home Office
3 ministers, senior members from the Foreign Office,
4 Ministry of Defence, and there was a great willingness
5 but the inevitable question would always be: who is
6 going to pay?

7 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: But even if there was more money to
8 pay, presumably the chief constables would still be
9 a little nervous about letting too many of their best
10 people go to Iraq?

11 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: Yes, and I think they quite properly
12 insisted that when they were willing to do that, that
13 somebody should pay for the backfilling of those
14 vacancies that were left and I think that's reasonable.

15 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: But would you say there was
16 sufficient resource -- sufficient people then could have
17 been found and the backfilling accomplished?

18 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: I am certain sufficient people could
19 have been found. Whether it would always have been the
20 willingness on the part of their chief constables and
21 their chairs of local police authorities I can't say.
22 That would vary very much across the country. We
23 included the Association of Police Authorities in our
24 task force, because we even considered: should there be
25 a change in the law, that if the police themselves

1 decided "we are going", that then perhaps -- this was
2 only something to be considered -- the Police Authority
3 themselves should not hold a veto.

4 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: Okay. Thanks very much.

5 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: I will turn now to Sir Martin Gilbert.
6 Martin?

7 SIR MARTIN GILBERT: I would like to look at the question of
8 duty of care. Your report is very informative on this
9 and the way it varied from department to department.

10 We have heard quite a lot of evidence on the
11 question of duty of care and it does appear to have been
12 a particularly difficult area for police officers in
13 Iraq.

14 Paul Kernaghan explained to us in his statement that
15 he had taken the view that since the FCO had stipulated
16 their deployed civilians should not travel in Snatch
17 vehicles, the same standards should apply to deployed
18 police officers, who were of course civilians. This
19 clearly caused tension between the military and the
20 police.

21 In your view what are the practical implications of
22 the police advisers being subjected to different
23 protection standards than military personnel with whom
24 they were having to work?

25 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: I think the tension between the two

1 was a consequence of those deployed police officers in
2 terms of their own safety, sometimes operating to
3 different decisions than the military counterparts they
4 were there working with were being subjected to.
5 I referred earlier to, I know General James at times
6 felt that the civilian police who were being deployed
7 were being confined to barracks in circumstances while
8 they were never going to be risk-free, but in
9 circumstances where he held the view that it would have
10 been safe enough for them to be deployed to let them get
11 on.

12 So that's why I made a specific recommendation which
13 was followed up, because certainly in my experience in
14 Northern Ireland no GOC is going to take such decisions
15 lightly. I think they are decisions that they can be
16 absolutely entrusted to make.

17 SIR MARTIN GILBERT: When you refer in your report to the
18 risk-averse nature of the FCO, can you elaborate on that
19 for us?

20 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: No, just, and it is very
21 understandable, if you have certain pieces of
22 intelligence and some of that indicates that there are
23 risks, I am not saying for a second that we don't
24 absolutely discharge our duty of care. Of course we
25 must. We must never be reckless, but I did see some

1 evidence that the procedures that were being followed
2 were such that I would have been happy to be deployed
3 personally, and if I applied that thinking to myself, I
4 would have been happy in respect of the police officers.

5 The telling thing for me as well was that the police
6 officers and the recently retired police officers who
7 were working as contractors experienced this frustration
8 themselves. You know, it is not something they felt,
9 "I am going to be subjected to too great a risk". It
10 was something they felt, "I am being constrained in
11 doing what I want to do and what I would actually feel
12 safe in doing".

13 SIR MARTIN GILBERT: Was there a sense in which the
14 risk-averse approach created risks for the policing
15 mission?

16 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: There was always that possibility, but
17 I certainly did not see evidence of that.

18 SIR MARTIN GILBERT: If I could turn to your report and its
19 recommendations, can you tell us what became of the
20 recommendations?

21 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: I think most of the recommendations
22 were followed. I was asked to go back to Iraq I think
23 in December 2006, which was almost a year after the
24 report had been submitted, and one of the things --
25 General Casey, just before he was replaced by General

1 Petraeus, and one of our generals, General Graeme Lamb,
2 working together in Baghdad, asked me if I would come
3 out and spend some time with them and specifically
4 hopefully in the application of learning from
5 Northern Ireland, and we facilitated a number of
6 sessions, for example, between local Kurds, local Sunni,
7 local Shia, and talked about the Northern Ireland
8 experience. During that visit I was actually able to
9 see what I thought to be improvements in the policing
10 effort and a greater prominence being given to the
11 policing effort.

12 So I think I characterised it in the report, up
13 until those dreadful scenes were shown here in September
14 2005, I think we were too optimistic, too complacent,
15 and did not realise the difficulties that were being
16 experienced or likely to be experienced, but I think
17 afterwards at some stages we were too pessimistic as
18 well.

19 Out there on the ground I think there was evidence
20 of a more positive picture.

21 SIR MARTIN GILBERT: Where did the initiative for your visit
22 in December 2006 come from?

23 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: The initiative for? Sorry, Sir?

24 SIR MARTIN GILBERT: The initiative for your visit in
25 December 2006?

1 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: Personal contact to me came from
2 General Lamb. So I think it was just something he and
3 General Casey had discussed. It was not a specific
4 follow-up to this report or these recommendations, but
5 I took the opportunity just to look at what was
6 happening. So when you ask what was done, I think
7 virtually all the recommendations were picked up and
8 there certainly was an appetite. I sense no lack of
9 appetite at any level to keep developing, keep making
10 improvements.

11 SIR MARTIN GILBERT: Thank you very much.

12 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: I keep coming back to how difficult
13 a job it was and is.

14 SIR MARTIN GILBERT: Thank you very much.

15 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: I think we would like to turn in the
16 closing part of this session to the future, looking back
17 at the whole of our Iraq experience from 2003-2009, and
18 looking in particular at expeditionary policing and the
19 UK's contribution or potential contribution.

20 Can I ask first: you concluded your report back at
21 the beginning of 2006, that there might be merit in
22 reconvening the Strategic Task Force on International
23 Policing. We don't yet know what happened after that.
24 Did it reconvene? Was there any outcome?

25 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: It certainly was reconvened. It was

1 within that forum we considered the sorts of things
2 I mentioned earlier. Should a police authority have
3 a legal veto on officers in their force being deployed,
4 etc. How do we, first of all, muster a force to be
5 applied in a particular theatre? How do we select them?
6 How do we look after them when they are out there? How
7 do we reintegrate them when they come back? How do we
8 look at the whole package?

9 One of the things that I particularly looked at,
10 having seen the importance of such assistance in Kosovo,
11 are interpreters, because it was my experience if you
12 are going into a deeply torn society and depending on
13 interpreters from one part of that deeply torn society,
14 you can never be absolutely sure if you are getting the
15 full picture.

16 So I am offering that just as a simple example of
17 the things we considered in this task force. Up until
18 let's say two years ago there certainly was great
19 appetite right across the departments. What we intended
20 to do was create a register of officers across the UK,
21 officers who would be willing to be deployed on such
22 missions, listing their skills and their experience, and
23 the whole question of a body being convened to decide on
24 an appropriate expeditionary force who could be mustered
25 and sent to match a specific set of circumstances.

1 The first thing the Government has to decide is, "Is
2 this something we want to do?" If they decide it is
3 something they want to do, then I think we have to
4 acknowledge that our existing structures do not lend
5 themselves to such deployments and we must find
6 mechanisms to either adjust them or work within them in
7 ways that do allow us to make such deployments.

8 But the people themselves, I think, coming back not
9 only to the duty of care, not only in respect of their
10 safety but in terms of their career pattern, because
11 sometimes -- I was always insistent that individual
12 forces should have welfare mechanisms for their officers
13 deployed in such missions and for their families back
14 here at home and provisions in place so that they could
15 be properly reintegrated when they return home from such
16 missions.

17 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: There is a lot in this to follow through
18 for us.

19 Can I just ask: the task force was a mixture of
20 Government and professional police service participants?

21 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: Yes. Right across departments. DFID
22 were involved.

23 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: Did anybody own it?

24 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: I mean, that was the -- that was part
25 of the question as to who should own it. I think the

1 Home Office felt that, "Yes, you know, we have the
2 skills through our police officers to contribute, but
3 actually it is not the responsibility of the Home
4 Office". I think probably the F&CO.

5 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: Right. Yes.

6 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: I think that's where most of our
7 meetings were. So I think sometimes that gives a clue.

8 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: We have had invented the stabilisation
9 period for other purposes, mainly for relief and
10 reconstruction. In a sense this is a part of that or
11 a parallel to it.

12 I would like to come back in a moment to the real
13 difficulty of ensuring career protection, if you like,
14 for those who accept on a voluntary footing deployment,
15 but for the rest of it how much of a constitutional
16 issue or how much of a legislative problem is there
17 in -- and it would have to be I suppose Government at
18 the end of the day taking power to enable this kind of
19 deployment?

20 Paul Kernaghan thought it was a very small matter.

21 Others have argued it is really quite profound.

22 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: I think it is quite profound, Sir. If
23 I could give you an example of being contacted while
24 I was Chief Constable in Northern Ireland by the late
25 Robin Cook, who was Foreign Secretary, to ask if I would

1 send 65 officers to the UN policing mission in Kosovo,
2 because the UN had decided it would be an armed mission,
3 that things were still very volatile, and frankly my
4 colleagues in England and Wales, because it was an armed
5 mission, didn't feel that they could contribute to it.

6 So we can get the position -- and I was in the
7 position where I had to have the support of my Police
8 Authority to do that. So we could have the
9 constitutional position that our Prime Minister agrees
10 that he will send 65 officers, in this case to the UN
11 policing mission to Kosovo, but all these
12 Chief Constables and chairs of authority say, "No.
13 Sorry. We are not", which is quite a profound
14 constitutional issue.

15 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: I would like to ask you about one
16 possible parallel, because we heard interesting evidence
17 last week from General Sir Louis Lillywhite, who was the
18 head of Defence Medical Services, Surgeon General. The
19 Defence Medical Services sponsor reservists within the
20 National Health Service. In other words, they pay for
21 them on a continuing basis as well as for their
22 pre-deployment training if needed, and they are then on
23 call. They have volunteered, as it were, in principle,
24 and their employer, the National Health Service, has
25 accepted that condition on their employment and the

1 Ministry of Defence make suitable financial
2 arrangements.

3 Does that strike you as a possible mould to follow?

4 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: It does. It is not one of which I was
5 aware. It is not one I ever looked at, but it does
6 strike me as something on which we could draw, from
7 which we could learn.

8 We looked at a number of models. We looked, for
9 example, at the Australian Federal Police, but they do
10 have an expeditionary capability and responsibility.
11 But they provide this: from recruitment through
12 deployment to reintegration. They provide something
13 from which we were trying to learn.

14 The model you have described -- the other model was,
15 of course, simple contracts going out to contractors.
16 I think the model you are describing to me would be
17 preferable.

18 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: There was a considerable number of
19 contractors who were mainly members of your former force
20 of course.

21 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: That's right.

22 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: But that will pass with time, that
23 opportunity, won't it?

24 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: I certainly hope so. I hope in the
25 future they don't acquire that sort of experience or

1 need to.

2 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: Sure, but if one is looking to
3 a sustainable model for the longer future, it has to be
4 something --

5 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: That, I think, without having looked
6 at it in detail, but certainly, Sir, it sounds to me to
7 be an attractive possibility.

8 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: I think there is one other aspect of this
9 that I would like to ask, which is: how far should we
10 consider the possibility of needing deployable police
11 officers for operational police duty as distinct from
12 police advisers, trainers, mentors, who may even be
13 mentors embedded within a national police force or
14 service?

15 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: I think constitutionally the only --
16 when I sent 65 officers from what was the RUC, it was to
17 a UN policing mission, which eventually became an EU
18 policing mission. So my imagination is that we would
19 not be doing it just as the UK Government. My
20 imagination is we would always be part of the bigger
21 mission.

22 Part of the problem with that is usually when
23 a country contributes, for example, to UN policing
24 mission, they hand the resources over and it is the UN
25 then who decide where they are deployed, what they do.

1 I was actually in quite a luxurious position in
2 saying that if I were going to send my folks to Kosovo,
3 I wanted them to be in the British sector with the
4 support of the British Army, because I didn't know what
5 I was sending them into. That was quite a detailed bit
6 of diplomacy on the part of the Foreign Office to get
7 that agreement from the UN, but I just pose that further
8 constitutional difficulty. If we do deploy we are
9 usually part of a bigger mission and thereby lose some
10 control.

11 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: Then you have to answer difficult
12 questions, which I think you did in Kosovo, about the
13 law under which you operate as well as the hierarchical
14 authority, Command and Control and all that.

15 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: What we were doing was fulfilling
16 a dual responsibility to actually police the place.

17 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: Yes.

18 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: As well as developing a Kosovan police
19 service.

20 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: I have really only a postscript point on
21 that. Is there a whole order of magnitude of greater
22 difficulty in operational deployment for active policing
23 even when deployed United Kingdom police officers are
24 asked to mentor embedded within a local police
25 structure?

1 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: One of the difficulties I encountered
2 in the facility in Jordan was that the UK had
3 numerically the biggest number of trainers based there,
4 but did not have even proportionate responsibility at
5 the higher levels of policing in terms of organising the
6 training. I again come back to the duty of care. In
7 this case the duty of care we had to exhibit towards the
8 Iraqi police officers whom we were training and whether
9 we were giving them sufficient training, for example, in
10 terms of them being able to protect themselves when they
11 got back home.

12 So there are difficulties. If you are working as
13 part of a very broad coalition, then I think you have to
14 acknowledge that there will be some ceding of control
15 over the resources that you send.

16 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: I would like to ask what you may consider
17 not to be an answerable question on that before closing,
18 whether from the two perspectives you brought this
19 afternoon from Kosovo and our participation there and
20 from Iraq, in the one case a United Nations mandated and
21 organised effort by the international community, in the
22 other essentially a two and several little bits
23 coalition nationally, albeit with United Nations
24 Security Council approval. Was there a big difference
25 in the contribution it was possible to make as between

1 the two cases? It is about --

2 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: The reason I am hesitating, Chairman,
3 I am not sure whether any conclusion would be based on
4 my visits and hard evidence or based on my own thoughts
5 and all the media reports down through the years.

6 Certainly my instant impression is that it was
7 actually easier under a directed UN -- I have to say
8 that didn't come without its problems either, but it was
9 easier to fit into such a structure in my view than it
10 was to bring about all the necessary coherence and
11 cooperation and sharing of information, sharing of
12 lessons to be learned than existed in Iraq in the time I
13 was there.

14 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: Yes. Just to be clear I understood that,
15 the difference being one preponderant coalition leader
16 as a single nation as against the United Nations array?

17 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: I think that was -- there was
18 certainly an array. You know, the UN mission in Kosovo
19 was a very wide array, a very wide array of nations and
20 a very wide array of skills, but there was the
21 UN Commissioner, and the reporting lines were clearer it
22 seemed to me.

23 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: Thank you.

24 We would like to come to your final reflections in
25 a moment, but just as we do can I ask my colleagues if

1 they have any last questions? Lawrence, I think you
2 have some.

3 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: There is nobody who has more
4 experience of the Northern Ireland situation than you.
5 The Northern Ireland experience was frequently sort of
6 called in aid to give Britain credibility in these
7 discussions and indeed it did give Britain credibility.

8 I was just wondering whether you think this was
9 always as helpful as it might be, whether we perhaps
10 drew more on the Northern Ireland experience than was
11 perhaps wise or perhaps wholly appropriate to the very
12 particular conditions of Iraq, whether perhaps it gave
13 us more confidence in some of our other judgments than
14 the circumstances warranted?

15 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: Trying to be objective, it was my
16 belief in Iraq that there was great application of a lot
17 of the learning and particularly in looking at different
18 solutions for different provinces.

19 When I looked at Dhi Qar -- and this was by
20 admission of the carabinieri, so no reflection on the
21 sterling work carabinieri carried out, but Dhi Qar was
22 a province where more than 90 per cent of the population
23 were from the one tradition and religious background.
24 That applied to the local chief of police, it applied to
25 the local governor, the then interim Minister of

1 Interior. So it was a very benign area compared to
2 other areas, but looking at the other provinces this
3 question of what we call tasking coordinating groups
4 which were developed in Northern Ireland which now are
5 commonly deployed throughout policing, as a TCJ, it is
6 a well-known phrase as part of what we call the national
7 intelligence model, the allocation of those tasking
8 coordinating groups where the army would work with the
9 police into which all intelligence would flow, where it
10 would be analysed and used to deploy resources
11 operationally, I think, had great application.

12 Also, on the other side of that coin, in those
13 benign areas why apply such things when they are not
14 needed? Why would we apply such a thing in Portrush,
15 for example, in Northern Ireland, compared with
16 South Armagh? So I think the ability to look
17 geographically and territorially in different ways was
18 one of the big lessons that could have application.

19 SIR LAWRENCE FREEDMAN: So in general you think
20 Northern Ireland was a helpful source of insight into
21 the problems to be faced in Iraq?

22 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: I think so.

23 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: Any other final questions?

24 Well, Sir Ronnie, thank you very much. I would like
25 to hear any final reflections you have. Looking back,

1 it is now four years or more since that report you did,
2 but you have been able to follow the thing from outside
3 I guess.

4 Are there lessons you would like to draw at this
5 stage of the game, either for police/military
6 interaction operationally, which have you have just done
7 a little, or indeed in the planning phase, which I think
8 would particularly interest us, the pre-planning.

9 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: I think one of the lessons to be
10 learned is not to assume that because -- not everybody
11 believes it, but because even if we have done a very
12 honourable thing in the removal of a dictator, not to
13 presume that everyone will welcome that, and that
14 therefore the forces that we have deployed will always
15 be welcome.

16 Right at the start in Northern Ireland I remember
17 one of the first GOCs describing that it would only be
18 a honeymoon period. Nobody else believed it would be
19 just a honeymoon period. So I think in the pre-planning
20 I think what we must look at are virtually the worst
21 case scenarios. Hope for the best and plan for the
22 worst.

23 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: Well, in conclusion then, the military
24 have, as you so very well know, an immense,
25 comparatively immense planning capability. Permanent

1 staff, well staffed, a lot of experience in developing
2 extremely detailed alternative plans. It is a system
3 that's not replicated in the domestic UK policing
4 system, it is not called for. But without something,
5 not perhaps on the military scale, but in the nature of
6 a national police staff capability, is it going to be
7 possible for future operations to plan a policing
8 dimension alongside the military?

9 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: I think -- I can't, Chairman, give you
10 an absolute up-to-date position as to where the task
11 force stands today, but I think certainly the work that
12 it was doing up until two years ago represents the basis
13 for a model whereby, notwithstanding the fact that our
14 current structures do not lend themselves easily to
15 overseas deployments, the work that they were doing
16 I think allows for that. I have to commend the
17 Association of Chief Police Officers. Currently Colin
18 Port, Chief Constable of Avon and Somerset holds the
19 portfolio internationally that Paul Kernaghan used to
20 hold.

21 So there are planning mechanisms through which
22 people can be identified with the right skills, and
23 provided we provide that ongoing support right from the
24 point of selecting who would be deployed, supporting
25 them through the deployment and supporting them in

