

1 Monday, 26th July 2010

2 (2.00 pm)

3 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN GBE QPM

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

7 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: Thank you, Chairman.

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

15 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: That is correct, Chairman.

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

20 SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: Yes, Sir.

21 SIR JOHN CHILCOT: For the record the report of your review  
22 which you presented to the Government on 31 January 2006  
23 was declassified last month and subsequently published  
24 on the Inquiry's website. In this session we are going  
25 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

1           reintegration afterwards, I think the circle in a sense  
2           can be squared.

3   SIR JOHN CHILCOT: With that I will say thank you very much  
4           indeed to our witness this afternoon,  
5           Sir Ronnie Flanagan.

6           We will break now and resume at 3.30 when we are  
7           talking evidence from Sir Peter Spencer, Chief of  
8           Defence Procurement from 2003 to 2007.

9   SIR RONNIE FLANAGAN: Thank you very much, Chairman.

10   (3.10 pm)

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