



INNOVATIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL SOCIETIES

Innovations for Successful Societies Oral History Project

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PEAKE: Good afternoon, it's the 11th of December, 2007 and I am in Brooklyn, New York, with Bill O'Neill. Bill, before I begin the interview I want to thank you for your time that you're investing in this and also to confirm that you've read and signed and attested to the release forms that are part of this project?

O'NEILL: *Yes, I have, and it's all fine.*

PEAKE: Thank you. We'll begin now. I'd like to begin by asking you to just sort of briefly characterize your career, working on, working with, working for police services.

O'NEILL: *Sure. Basically, I think it grew out of my work with the U.N., in particular in peace operations. I really started from the human rights perspective. I was involved with the U.N. Human Rights Commission in Haiti which was one of the first peacekeeping or peace operations that included a lot of civilians shortly after the efforts in Salvador and Cambodia. I was head of the legal department of this Human Rights Commission. The first part of it we really were in a purely monitoring and reporting mode because the de facto government in Haiti which was a military dictatorship was running things and we weren't actually allowed to work with any kind of capacity-building efforts to support government institutions. Once that changed and the President was returned after a U.S.-led intervention, we had a democratic government and we also then had U.N. police who had arrived because prior to that we were really the only ones in town.*

We had U.N. police in and U.N. military. So one of the first major challenges all of us faced in the post military dictatorship period in Haiti was what do you do with law and order. The army had done this before. There was no separate police force in Haiti and the Constitution required one, but it never had been created. The army was in the process of melting away. So there literally was no one to ensure law and order domestically, no Haitians. So that kind of thrust me into a lot of activity. How do you create a police force and who do you work with locally and internationally with the U.N. police and others. So that was really my first exposure to these issues in a post-conflict setting. From there I had experience in Rwanda, Kosovo and briefer forays in other peace operations in Africa and Afghanistan. So that's really how it got started. Nothing planned, just born of necessity.

PEAKE: You mentioned that you spent long periods of Rwanda and Kosovo. I wonder if you could talk a little bit about those experiences, what you did there.

O'NEILL: *Rwanda I went in the first time, it was after the genocide. So it was again, after most of the horrific violence that occurred, when the genocide started in '94. I got there in mid, late '95. I was brought in to help—again it was a human-rights-focused initiative by the High Commissioner of Human Rights; that post had just been created the week before the genocide started in Rwanda. It was the first major field presence of the High Commissioner of Human Right ever was charged with deploying. They had had a really bad time of it. They didn't really start working until late '94 and the first six, eight months they really had difficulties. I won't go into all of those now, but I was asked to be part of a very small team that came in to try to help this mission get on its feet.*

Again, one of the challenges there was working with, at that point the Rwandan Patriotic Army had taken over. They had defeated the genocidaire, as they're called, and had chased out the military and former police and they were taking over all aspects of security and law and order. So we had to deal a lot with the Rwandan Patriotic Army. Again, these are military folks who at that point had

been successful in two wards. A lot of the Rwandan army senior leadership had fought with (Yoweri) Museveni. They were Ugandan, they were refugees in Uganda, grew up in Uganda and fought with Museveni to overthrow (Idi) Amin and (Milton) Obote and they were—so they had success in that war in Uganda. Then they came home to lead a successful second war against the former Forces Armees Rwandaises (Armed Forces of Rwanda) the old Hutu-based army.

So dealing with these folks was quite interesting, especially when it came to police issues, prisons, dealing with civilians, because they really had been military guys who had been in the bush, literally, for many years. On subsequent trips to Rwanda, I went a second time to focus more on judicial reform efforts, but again, there was a lot of overlap with police issues and detention. I spent several months working, again with the U.N. human rights team, helping them define a strategy along with people in the Ministry of Justice on legal reform that also implicated police reforms. Then the third time I was back in '97 to actually head the human rights commission there, the U.N. human rights field operation. So I was more a manager at that point, running a team of 110 internationals and probably that many nationals. Our primary focus was two fold but joined; it was monitoring and reporting on the human rights situation, but also trying to help support local institutions to protect their human rights.

Among our primary beneficiaries or hoped-for beneficiaries I could say, would be, were the police, the army itself, corrections, justice and then a lot with civil society. We spend a lot of time trying to work with a lot of NGOs that were also concerned about these issues.

Kosovo, there I was, my title was Senior Adviser on Human Rights to the Special Representative of the Secretary General, the SRSG. In that role I was much more an adviser and more involved in policy than in operations. I kept that intentionally. I didn't want to be managing—I guess maybe that's coming from my Rwanda experience, which was good, but I didn't necessarily want to be managing a huge team of people. There in the UNMIK (United Nations Mission in Kosovo) structure at that point, the main human rights monitoring and reporting effort had been assigned to the OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe), which was pillar three if my memory serves. So they had a team deployed all over Kosovo in regional offices that was doing great work, gathering and analyzing and reporting on human rights situations. My job was really then to try to make sure their information and their analyses fed into the reporting and the policies and practices at the highest level possible which in this case would be with the SRSG and with the heads of the pillars.

As part of that work, I ended up spending a fair amount of time, again on police issues, because it's no surprise in a lot of these post-conflict settings, many of the human-rights issues have something to do with police work, either prevention, protection or problems. So I got to know the head of the police academy fairly early on and the head of the U.N. police, CIVPOL (International Civilian Police) they were still called then I think at that point, the commissioners and assistant commissioners. Right from the get-go, this would have been in August of '99, so barely after the bombing ended in June and the U.N. really wasn't fully in there until mid-July, early August. As early as late August, I was having discussions with U.N. police and the police academy on how the recruiting was going, what kinds of standards and criteria and then what would be the content of training, and oversight issues, deployment. So the police aspects, I think, were quite important in the overall analysis and advice I was giving to the SRSG in my capacity as Senior Adviser on Human Rights.

PEAKE: I'd like to ask you a question about context. You've worked in a lot of countries, you mentioned some for fairly long assignments and others on a more short-term basis, how do you, coming in fresh from the plane so to speak, get to be aware of the political context, the social context, the cultural context which is probably necessary if you want to understand policing because policing is a very context-specific activity. So how did you go about familiarizing yourself with these unfamiliar lands?

O'NEILL: *I think in my case I was lucky in my first extensive experience in Haiti because I had been working in and on Haiti for a number of years before that, with a different hat so to speak. I was, most of the time I was first off representing asylum applicants here in New York as a lawyer, pro bono. Then I was also doing work for an NGO in New York called the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights. I had gone to Haiti several times on their behalf to do an assessment of the justice system and the courts and again, that always involved police and detention issues. So I was fairly familiar with Haiti before I ever set foot in the U.N. mission. I knew lots of people, NGO's, government people, Haitian friends. I spoke some Creole and I speak French. Most Haitians don't speak French, the ones I often have to deal with do and I could get by with my Creole with the ones that don't. So in Haiti's case I had educated myself and had been in the country quite a bit already which was a big advantage.*

In Rwanda, I'd never set foot in Rwanda before I went to join the U.N. mission there for the first time. What I did, again, I think networks are crucial. So in the kind of human-rights, law-reform community I knew the handful of people that actually had been working on Rwanda before the genocide, or I knew how to find them. So I picked their brains, got them to send me whatever they thought I should read. I can remember on the plane going in, remembering that some of the stuff I had brought with me to read on the plane might be kind of sensitive. I had no idea, again, having never been to the country what the security might be at the airport. So I literally remember going into the bathroom on the Sabena flight and putting stuff down the trash dump in the bathroom because I thought, I don't want to have these papers on me when I face customs because who knows what they're going to do. That was a good reminder how you really do need to do your homework.

Once there, again I made it a point to try to talk to as wide a range of people as possible and not just get stuck in the U.N. little bubble. Again, here my background, maybe having worked with or for NGOs, I think was a good practice, I can use that word because I sought out right away some leading members of civil society, NGOs, bar association, professors, journalists and just tried to educate myself as much as possible. But it takes time, especially in that kind of situation where you haven't been to the country before and you don't really have a track record.

Similarly for Kosovo. I had never been to Kosovo before I went with UNMIK. But again, I think what has happened over the years, we're talking about—. My first time in Haiti was '93. By 1999 when I went to Kosovo there had been enough—or there had been clearly more, international civilian efforts in a variety of countries to tackle these issues of police reform, justice reform, human rights. It was a kind of fraternity, sorority, a network of people who've worked in these setting had started to develop. Sure enough, when I showed up in Kosovo there were at least half a dozen people in the OSCE Human Rights Commission that I knew from previous experience.

Even more interestingly I think, was there was a soldier. My first day in Pristina, I remember walking down the street and this British army jeep is going down the street and all of a sudden it pulls over in front of me and this soldier jumps out. It was somebody who had been in a course I taught at the Pearson Peacekeeping Center in Nova Scotia two years before that. So he jumps out, runs up to me, big greeting, "Hey, how you doing. You're here, what are you doing? You want to come out with us on patrol? What do you need to know? Any documents?" That was tremendous because, sure enough, within five days I was going out on patrol with him up to these isolated Serb areas outside Pristina that the British army was trying to protect or trying to deliver humanitarian assistance to.

That was, having those kinds of contacts accelerates your learning curve. You don't have to go through the ritual of do you trust them, how do you know them, what's your background. They know you already and people just literally throw open their files, set up meetings, ease your transition. I think that, if anything, has only gotten better over time. It's a bad sign that there have been so many operations that we need to do this because so there are so many trouble spots in the world, but if there's a benefit to that, I think there is now this group of people—. I mean, I can go just about anywhere. I was just in Nepal and again, same thing, ran into at least half a dozen people I've worked with before in various places.

Burundi two weeks ago, Haiti last week. I ran into three former students from various courses who are now working with the U.N. in the new stop in Haiti. Not counting the dozen people who are there who were there when I was there in the '90s. So often, if that's the case, and I know they're there, I really will run right to them and then ask them, who should I talk to? What should I read? What should I be aware of? What's the burning question? Again, I try to do as much of that before hand because now, again with the Internet, I would say that's another huge advance.

When I was going to these missions in the early days—I sound like such an old foggy but there was no internet, there was no e-mail. Now I can send an e-mail to somebody in Timor or DRC (Democratic Republic of the Congo) or wherever and say, "You know, I'm going to be there in a month, here's my assignment, what should I read? Can you guys share your latest? Who should I talk to? How do I get in touch with them?" Again, it makes it a lot easier, a lot faster to start doing your homework before and then once you're there. Then I think the other more classic ways of checking key web sites—again, there's so much information now, the challenge is to try and find the right, the best information and not get distracted by the not so good.

But again U.N. web sites, the [Indecipherable] web site, International Crisis Group. There's lots of stuff out there now on almost any country you're likely to go to. You can probably find the half dozen or so key documents in the space of an hour and then have eight e-mail contacts to send. Then when you hit the ground you might be hitting it maybe not running, but at least you're more than walking.

PEAKE: You mentioned that you spoke French, so that obviously aided you in Haiti, and especially in Rwanda. In countries in which you've worked in which you have had to make—there's been a linguistic gap between you and those that you're working with, how have you tried to negotiate those, negotiate a bridge to the differences of language. Is there any specific recollection you have of problems and how you went about surmounting them?

O'NEILL: *It's hard. I was spoiled because my first two missions I hardly ever used an interpreter because in Haiti again, it either was French or I could manage in Creole. In Rwanda, it was a little more of a challenge because again, about 30% of Rwandans speak French and everybody speaks Kinyarwanda. But Kinyarwanda is a very difficult language, it's really tough. I was there, I think there were a few times when we had to rely on interpreters.*

Then Kosovo was a mix. A lot of people spoke English, even Kosovars, but a lot didn't. What I tried to do is, I always tried to learn, and I know I'm not going to have the time to learn the language, but I try to learn some basics, just to show some good faith, to show that I'm interested, that I'm a little bit sensitive to the local culture. So I try to learn 30, 40 key words. Hi, how are you, thank you, whatever. I know I'm not going to carry on an interview or deliver a lecture, but at least I think that can help. Especially if you're interviewing people, and it can be sensitive stuff, I think it is an ice breaker and it can help show people that you're serious and you've done a little bit of homework about the place.

Then you really are at the mercy of interpreters. Again, I'm talking about live situations. There my experience has been there are the do's and don'ts. I don't know how well known they are, I'd like to think they are. One is to talk to your interpreter before hand a little bit about—if you know, about what you're going to be talking about, so they have a chance to either think of vocabulary—. A lot of the work I do might involve technical terms regarding judicial terminology, police terminology. Something like indictment, detention, warrant. I might just throw those words out but the interpreter might—so I try to give them ideas so that they have a little time to think about the vocabulary they might need.

Secondly, if it's a very sensitive issue, if it's going to be upsetting for them—usually the interpreters are from the country. This is almost always the case. There could be cultural sensitivity issues for them, there could be security issues. People know they're working for the U.N. People might have, for whatever reasons, interest in knowing what they hear in meetings, what they've learned. They're supposed to be understanding confidentiality and I'll go through that with the interpreters, again remind them in a nice way, I hope that they're bound by promises not to share this information, this can be very confidential. But also just to give them an out.

If they say, "I really don't feel comfortable with this interview, it involves sexual violence, my sister was raped during the war, I won't be able to do it." That's fine, OK. Then you try to find another interpreter.

PEAKE: Do you have any specific examples that you're thinking about in these cases?

O'NEILL: *Just that one I gave of an interpreter whose family had really suffered during the conflict and there were some issues that just hit too close to home. So that was fine. You find somebody else who had either not that experience or had figured out a way to manage the trauma. The other issue was always gender. That I ran into in Darfur where—I actually could never could do an interview on sexual violence in Darfur because no local woman would ever talk to a male. But you had to remember also, with interpreters, we had to make sure that it was an all female team, that there was a female interpreter and a female interviewer. But those issues are important. Also the issue of—and this is hard to avoid in Rwanda, we had a situation where most of our interpreters were Tutsi because after the genocide most educated, experienced Hutus were gone, they had fled. Most of the people who were available, for whatever reason, to do interpretation who knew French or English and also Kinyarwanda, were Tutsis. We had trouble*

sometimes going out to interview at that point villagers who were being victimized by the Rwandan government, the Tutsi government at that point, post genocide. Everybody knows, it's a small country, they knew everybody's ethnicity. We had some people who wouldn't talk because they knew the interpreter was Tutsi and they didn't trust—they thought the Tutsi interpreter would share whatever they were telling us about what the army or police had been doing to them, with the army or police and they feared reprisals. There's really no answer to that other than trying to find different interpreters, or another way to get at the language question. Is there somebody who speaks French here and not have to work through Kinyarwanda.

It's a tough issue. I know it happened. I didn't experience this directly, but I heard it in Kosovo and Bosnia where you had the same issue. If you brought an interpreter from the "wrong" ethnicity into an area, people just wouldn't talk. So that language issue can be really dicey. One little "trick" if I may use the word that the U.S. military used in Kosovo because there were some, actually slightly different problems in Kosovo, there were allegations that the interpreters, in this case mostly Albanian, were slanting what they were being told to an advantage for the Albanian position whatever it might be. It was very hard to know that. If you don't speak the language, how do you really know that's going on?

The U.S. military in their work, when they would use interpreters, they had some Albanian-Americans in the U.S. Army who would listen to the interpretation, outside. They worked it out, who knows, a one-way window-mirror, whatever, but they were able to use these Albanian-Americans to monitor the interpreters to see if they were really interpreting accurately or were they slanting and twisting things. I was told, I don't have first-hand information, but I was told in several cases they did find that this was happening, not with every interpreter, but a couple of interpreters were really not doing their jobs.

Another thing I know first hand is the Finns, the Finish military contingent in Kosovo brought—I don't know where they found them, but there were Finns who spoke Albanian and they only used their own interpreters to avoid this whole problem where interpreters may be caught up in being less than impartial. If you can't rely on the information you're getting then your whole enterprise is endangered. So lots of issues around language when you really do need to rely on interpreters and trust them. Develop a bond and then just hope they're doing the right job. Then figure out a way, every so often if you can check it.

The last point I'll make on that is something I've learned that I think is important is, you have to give your interpreters breaks. It's really hard work and it's exhausting. My experience, I have to remind myself, it's actually—there are some advantages in those kinds of interviews because while things are being interpreted you have time to think of the next question. You have time to make sure if your notes are accurate or not. Some people start thinking about what they're going to have for dinner that night or whatever. But while you're doing that, the interpreter is still working, they're working all the time. So I think it's really important to remember they need a break and then afterwards they may need some time just to decompress, especially if it has been about issues that are very sensitive, traumatic and difficult.

PEAKE: I'd like to move on to some of the functional areas in which you've worked, the first one being recruitment, recruiting new police, vetting police officers. Can you talk a little bit about some of the experiences that you have in terms of recruiting?

O'NEILL: *Sure, with recruiting, in several places, especially the three places I worked the most extensively which were Haiti, Rwanda, and Kosovo, and we were in early enough in those places to have a say in the recruiting, and here we found that it was really important to think hard about the profile of the police officer that you wanted to have. In all three cases it was going to be a new police force. All three countries really were charged with creating a brand new police force. That's important because the experience for the population with the previous police force in all three, was so terrible and so negative, that changing that dynamic around and changing it quickly was going to be one of the biggest challenges. So how do you literally show that the new police is going to be quite different from the old police. That starts with who they are and their makeup and their qualifications, their competence, their backgrounds.*

We spent a lot of time, I'll use Haiti as an example, thinking about what type of educational profile do we want, geographic distribution, age, gender is a big one in every country I've been in. Women have always been underrepresented in the police, so how do you try to start changing that. That brings in all kinds of issues, allegedly cultural. I use the word allegedly because a lot of times when you dig a little bit deeper you find that these aren't cultural at all. It's just for different reasons, different people have interests in keeping things the way they've been going. That may include keeping women out of things. So addressing that problem of women and encouraging women to join, is going to be hard too. Again, the image of a police officer was such a negative that who wanted their daughters, sister, whatever, to join the police. Not many people.

So a fair amount of time on that and then also on how you were going to reach people, what kinds of campaigns. Again, especially in places like Haiti and Rwanda, I'd say more so than Kosovo, where infrastructure is so bad, roads, virtually no—there's certainly no national television coverage. Radio works but rarely one radio station hits the whole country. A lot of people can't read or write. Now those aren't the people you want in the police force but how do you reach the ones that can read or write. That's what we decided, that was a minimum, you had to have people that could read or write. But you shouldn't assume that because the old police forces in both those places, you had a lot of police that couldn't read or write.

But there aren't newspapers, there aren't magazines, or very limited. So what kind of outreach effort were you going to design so that you would try to attract the candidates that you wanted in the police. That was a big issue to face.

PEAKE: *So in Rwanda for example, an A to Z of how you designed the recruitment strategy. You talked about the general issues that you faced. How, in practical terms did you go about taking the concept of a new Rwandan police service and making it into reality?*

O'NEILL: *Part of the Rwanda problem, and it was similar in Kosovo was that the army wanted to put a lot of its soldiers into the new police. In Kosovo, the KLA (Kosovo Liberation Army) wanted to put virtually—they wanted the whole new police to be made up of Kosovo Liberation Army people in the beginning. So there we actually had a bit of a fight at the start with trying to keep down those numbers. This gets a little bit into the vetting question. We were really negotiating not from a position of strength, but how could we convince them to lower the percentage of soldiers, that's really what they were, who would be admitted into the new police and then how could we screen them? How could we ensure that those officers were, had the potential to become police officers. What kind of system*

and what kind of criteria would be used. That actually took a lot of time and took a lot of energy.

Then the second and related question was OK, then how are we going to get new people, people who weren't in the Rwandan Patriotic Army or who were not in the KLA. How do we design a recruitment program to reach them. Basically what we did was we sat down with authorities, in both cases it was Ministry of Interior types. In Kosovo it was different because it was the U.N. itself and it was mostly the U.N. police. But we just said OK, here's the kind of person we want. We literally put it down on paper, education level, age, and then we decided to figure out we need to have some type of application form. Then put it in what languages? In Rwanda it would be in French and Kinyarwanda. In Kosovo it would be in Albanian, Serbian and in English. Then how do you distribute these? Through which channels? Here we decided to use, in Rwanda we used, again the Rwandan Patriotic Army was pretty organized and so they had offices, they had the Ministries—not great offices but they had representatives throughout the country. We decided to put application forms in various government offices. Then we also used NGOs, non-governmental organizations, and we used the press to the extent it existed. There was one national radio station. There were a few local newspapers produced, especially in Kigali.

Kosovo was a bit easier because even though there had been destruction from the war Kosovo was much more organized. Yugoslavia, people forget, was a pretty develop infrastructure with roads, communications, education level quite high. Certainly a whole different story from Africa, most African countries or Haiti. So there it was a question of again using the U.N. offices. Again we had an advantage there, U.N., civil affairs, political affairs, we were able to use their offices to not only have the application forms available, but then also to use the U.N. radio. Here we also did, in Rwanda there was a U.N. radio station for a while. It wasn't there the whole time we were there but in the beginning. We were able to use radio broadcasts on the U.N. radio, talking about the police, here's going to be the new police. Here are the types of people we're looking for. Get your application forms, return them. Then once that process started, there was a committee, as there always is, that started to review the applications.

Some you knew you could throw out right away, either they didn't have the right educational levels or they were supposed to attach records to show and it was shown that these were frauds or it wasn't the right school or there was some problem. Then from the pool you started to pick people that met your criteria. Then there were a series of—it wasn't over then, then there was a series of tests. Even in Haiti, which probably even compared to Rwanda had less to work with so to speak, we were able to again support, from it this case it was ICITAP (International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program) the U.S. entity that is involved with the national police reform. We were able to design a series of tests that—first of all, did test their reading and writing abilities, psychological tests, physical, they had to have some minimal level of physical fitness and then also HIV/AIDS. This is a huge problem in most of these places. Certainly in Haiti and Rwanda it was a big problem. This was sensitive too, because a lot of people first of all didn't want the tests, were afraid of what the results would be, the stigma in their communities. So this was again, not so straightforward as it might appear anywhere, but certainly not in these countries. So there was an HIV/AIDS test administered.

Then if people, after the recruitment, after the outreach, the publicity, the applications coming in, and if they then were able to pass these tests they were in the door to start the training. But it takes time. I think one lesson we learned in

these places is you can't rush this or you really will pay a price later because you'll just end up wasting your time and effort training people that you shouldn't have on the police force in the first place. But everybody wants—this is always the dilemma, the need law and order, and, as I said, in the three countries I have the most experience in, there literally was no surviving police force. So whatever policing that was being done in those places in the early days, well in Haiti's case was being done by the U.N., in Rwanda's case was being done by the Rwandan Patriotic Army which was not a good answer, and in Kosovo's case was being done largely by NATO troops, certainly for the first six to eight months before even U.N. police were able to get there in numbers and deployed to a reasonable level.

PEAKE: You mentioned in your remarks that there was an issue in Rwanda that the Rwandan Patriotic Front wanted to put in a lot of the policemen, policewomen, into the police. You mentioned there was a similar dynamic in Kosovo which leads me into a question. How did you manage these outside pressures, the pressure to make the new Rwandan police full of Rwandan Patriot Front, to make the Kosovo police full of KLA? How did you also manage in these very two very sensitive ethnic situations to deal with the fact of ethnic balance issues in the recruitment?

O'NEILL: *It's very difficult. I'd say Rwanda was harder because we really were there by ourselves at that point. The U.N. peacekeepers had left and had been disgraced by—it wasn't their fault personally—but by failing to stop the genocide. So the Rwandan Patriotic Army was really feeling its oats. They had defeated the genocidaire, they chased them out, they were in charge. We had very little to negotiate or bargain on these points with them other than appealing, in this case we appealed to their professional pride. We also, I think got through—this took time, but I think they finally realized that if the police did not really represent the society, they were going to have serious problems. So it was in their own self-interest to try to be more inclusive because the Rwandan Patriotic Army you're talking was all Tutsi, completely Tutsi.*

So if you were going to have a completely Tutsi police force in a country that was still at this point let's say 60-70% Hutu, a lot of Hutus left but I'm even being kind of generous in that—I'm being conservative in that estimation, it might have been higher, but let's say 60% Hutu, you're going to have problems. I think they realized that and they saw that they were going to have to reach out. Again, we would often say, you want to show you're better than they are. They did whatever they did and you would never let that happen on your watch. So again, we tried to appeal to their professional pride and their self interest to create a police force that was going to reflect a bit more Rwandan society at that point than the purely RPA.

The other factor we had that we were able to start to convince them that these guys might have been good in the bush and good as soldiers, but it's a whole other skill to be police and dealing with the public and interacting in tense situations. How do you avoid using lethal force as opposed to it being your first instinct, how do you make it be your absolutely last. I think they started to realize that a lot of their soldiers really wouldn't be suited to this and they really were going to create more headaches and problems for them down the road if they did become police officers then if they tried to find something else for them to do.

In Kosovo, the KLA certainly wasn't in nearly as strong a positive as the RPA was, they can claim whatever they can claim, but it clearly was NATO that chased out (Slobodan) Milosevic. So there I think we had much more strength to

say OK, we'll give you some slots but certainly not 100%. I think we finally got them down to 25% is my memory, 25% of the new KPS would be KLA members. The other 75% would be open competition.

There, because I think the U.N. was in charge at that point, the notion of having a truly multiethnic police force wasn't such a tough thing to sell. Again, here, the argument with the Kosovo Albanians was, again, you want to be better than they are. You want to show you're much more professional, you're much more inclusive, you really do mean it when you say you care about minorities, ethnic issues, human rights. So it would be important to have Serbs, Roma, Turks, in your police force. I think that message came through. I think there were some hardliners in the KLA that weren't happy with this. But I think here, as opposed to most of the other initiatives in Kosovo, I think the U.N. did a good job of identifying and supporting the moderates on this and not being taken in by the extremists. I think the moderates were able to prevail and say, yes, we're going to need Serbs in the force, we're going to need Bosniaks, we're going to need Turks, even Roma as they would say it, and more women.

Here, I think the role of the police academy comes in. I know that's more of a training issue, but I think the police school [KPSS, the Kosovo Police Service School] in Vushtrri from the get-go made creating a truly multiethnic police force in Kosovo one of its primary missions. I think everybody who came into that academy understood that and that became the ethos which was, I think, absolutely vital to set that. Again, I go back to getting things right at the start. If there's one cost-cutting lesson I've learned it is that despite the pressure of time, which are real, in almost any initiative I've worked on, human rights, police, justice, you name it, it's worth taking a little more time and getting it right, or as right as you can at the outset, instead of rushing and then trying to clean up messes later. It's much more difficult. You've lost credibility, you've lost even more time I think if you tally it up. You probably end up losing more time by being diverted on these problems and headaches that you might have avoided if you'd invested a little more time up front.

PEAKE: You mentioned investing time up front and all the work that is required later on if you do not invest this time up front, in cleaning up messes, I think you used the phrase.

O'NEILL: Yes.

PEAKE: Is there any country that is sort of in your mind when you're thinking about cleaning up a recruitment mess after the fact?

O'NEILL: *I'm not, I came to it later in the day so I wasn't involved in the early part of it, but it seems like Timor, Timor-Leste, something obviously went very wrong there in the first round of the police, creating the PNTL (National Police of East Timor) in the early days and then having it become such a—. From my understanding the divide between the police and the army, and one of them being seen as pro East East-Timorese and the other being pro West East-Timorese and the way that just literally exploded in the spring of 2006. I think, again, there's clear proof of those issues of who is in your force, what type of ethnic and regional, geographic representation do you have, have the right leaders been chosen, is the oversight right? I know they were very rushed and they pulled out probably—not probably, they pulled out way too soon, the U.N. did. So I think that's probably one case study--.*

Slightly, one I'm a little more familiar with and here, even though we took the time in Haiti to try to get it right in the beginning, I think the U.N. itself pulled out too soon. I think there wasn't enough time later to let some of what I'd hoped were the good practices or the good systems really get entrenched. I think they were still too fragile when the U.N. left. Again, similar to Timor it all came apart. Now everybody is back in there doing it over again which is very discouraging frankly. For the people certainly, for the Timorese and Haitians most of all, but I have to tell you, when I was just in Haiti two weeks ago and I'm looking at the police school and the judges' training and the workshops, I'm thinking, we did all this 10-12 years ago and now we're doing it again.

PEAKE: I'd like to move on to talk a little bit about training, you mentioned this, and talk about some of the training programs that you've been involved in. You mentioned you've been involved in training on human rights, maybe some other elements as well. I wonder if you can talk about—an be as specific and detailed as possible about some of the training programs that you've been involved in.

O'NEILL: *Sure. Again, I'll start chronologically. In Haiti I was involved in helping design and deliver the basic training that the recruits got at the police school. Again this was a first in Haitian history. There had never been a police force. It had always been—policing had always been done by the army. They had people in different color uniforms and they said they were police but they really were soldiers. So Haiti had never had any experience with the recruiting, screening and then training and deploying police officers. So this was really working from scratch. So we were involved again—at this point again I was still with the human rights team in the U.N. Mission but working with U.N. police, CIVPOL, with ICITAP this U.N. agency with some bilateral assistance from Canada and France. We were putting together the curriculum, basic police training curriculum.*

One discussion we batted around back and forth was whether to have human rights be a stand-alone unit or whether to try to incorporate human rights in virtually every training module that you could. I always argued for the latter. I always thought that it would be much better to show police officers that doing their job and respecting human rights went together, it was not something that would make it—some of the allegations it was soft policing or it makes policing less effective. I think our goal should be to show that by respecting human rights you're actually a more effective police officer and you'll get better results. It went back and forth.

Eventually—at the beginning, I lost that argument and human rights was—I think some of the trainers were better than others at trying to interject, let's say on a module on a stop or a search or whatever, but it really was more something that was tagged on at the end. I think there you just ghetto-ize it and it's not taken seriously. I think that was a mistake. Later on, after I was there, I'm told that the training was adjusted somewhat. I said you could do both. I think they ended up doing a bit of both where every module that leant itself to a human rights principle or discussion would have it and then you would still do something at the end. I think that was one of the biggest challenges we had though, how to handle those kinds of questions.

The methodology, one we insisted in, and here I think there's kind of broad agreement on using—here I think police are better at this than a lot of others, is practical. We designed practical exercises, case studies, that were based on Haitian reality. In fact, I think one of the important innovations we made was we would use the information coming in from our human rights monitors on particular problems. This was especially true after the police started to be deployed on

what the police were doing or not doing. Then we would feed that information back into the training academy and into the curriculum. The curriculum writers were then incorporating really recent, fresh challenges, problems, into the learning.

The other innovation, and that's the word, we involved Haitian civil-society representatives in the training program. We had what we called a Wednesday night forum where we would invite, say, a women's organization of whatever town, or the lawyers' group from another town, and somebody from that group would come, in a very informal setting, sit down with the cadets and talk about what they did, what their work involved and any issues they had with the police. Were there problems? Were there successes? What they expected from their new Haitian National Police. I think that was something that everybody seemed to appreciate, the police more than I would have thought and certainly the civil society representatives, so again this was a first. The police were somebody you were always terrified of, that you ran away from, you didn't want to have anything to do with if you could. So trying to bridge some of the gaps at the training, not only not waiting until they're deployed but while they're still in their training mode was something that we did in Haiti and carried over when I went to Rwanda. That was something they weren't doing there and I said, wouldn't this be a good idea if we got some of this group to come while the police were still at the school and start talking to them about issues, community concerns, what are the crimes they're worried about, what they expect from the police. Then we can give the police a chance to ask them what we need from you if we're going to help you.

So I think building that into the training, I don't know—it certainly hadn't been done to my knowledge before in any peace operation. In Haiti, in Rwanda I think it was quite successful. It's something that they're doing now, I'm glad to see. As I said they're doing what we did all those years ago. Also they've continued having people from what is called civil society come in.

So I think that the training, the pedagogy, using case studies involving challenges, dilemmas from the country as current as possible, involving civil society representatives and the last point I'd like to make at least is we also, in Haiti, started mixed training. We would have police, judges, prosecutors and some prison officials. Not all the time, but on special exercises we would have them all in one group. Again we would use recent case studies, we would have role plays where they would adopt a role, not their own. So a judge would play a police officer, a police officer would play a prosecutor. That way, again, the exercise itself helped to build some bridges, build some communication links between people that didn't really communicate that need to if the criminal justice system is going to work. But it also gave them a real insight, they told us, and I think it's true, they got a better understanding of what the other person had to face, the challenges and hurdles they had to deal with in their job. Say you're the judge, you had a little better understanding of what the police officer is facing, or vice versa. That's again something that has been carried over in other countries.

I know they're doing it again in Haiti. They were doing it I think when I was in Liberia and Sierra Leone. There were some instances of this kind of joint training where people from different parts of the criminal justice system would do a week—I'm not saying long term, I'm talking about maybe a two-day exercises, four-day exercises, a week maximum. But at least they would have that opportunity.

PEAKE: How did you decide what was going to go into the training curriculum?

O'NEILL: *Here, it was a mixture of—back to your question on context. I think we—this is where we—. I think there was a happy marriage in most cases, and I'm speaking with my hat as a human rights lawyer, what were the problems the country has faced and was likely to face when it came to law enforcement and policing and providing security and dealing with crime. Based on the types of violence in the country, the issues of poverty, geography, infrastructure, we, I'd say we, the human rights people tended to know that the best of any of the international partners. On technical policing issues, that's where the U.N. police, obviously they tended to have much more experience and expertise than I did or my colleagues did. So I think in our discussions we really tried to maximize the advantages that different people at the table brought.*

So we'd present the context and say, OK, here you are in Haiti. You've got no roads, incredibly poor communication systems, 80% of the people don't have access to clean water or a phone and you have a population of 8 million, 70% of them in the countryside, very mountainous terrain. Again, no roads, very few communications and you're talking about a police force of 8,000 or 9,000. Now, police officers—what type—first of all that helped also in the profile, what type of police officer are you most likely going to need in that force? What types of policing skills might they need. If a lot of the disputes are over land, thief in the market, domestic violence, routine beating of children, some theft, but you don't have organized crime, you don't have those issues. You might have some drug trafficking but that's really international, using Haiti as a drop-off, a transit point. So given that context, and you're going to have this many police, what types of equipment are they going to have? How are they going to be deployed? In what numbers? Then what skills will they need given the fact that you might not get backup. Say you have a big problem arise out in town A, backup is a day away, two days away. So what is in the curriculum then, what needs to be a priority, what types of policing skills? Self defense? They're probably not going to drive much, there are no roads so spending eight hours on driving a car when none of them know how to drive anyway, not really—maybe motor scooters? Horses? They actually have horses in the Haitian police.

That I think, relying—I think that marriage, as I said, our ability to explain really what the context is, the types of violence and then the police officers understanding of policing, I think led to a pretty good curriculum in Haiti and also in Rwanda. In Kosovo, it was so different. It was a much more developed—they have roads, have telephones, people are educated, literacy level was practically 100%. There it was more a question of, again, the real challenge was the ethnic division, segregation of minorities, the types of violence that was being inflicted on them. You had a lot of organized crime, very sophisticated. So there the policing skills—the curriculum in Kosovo was frankly quite different from the one in Haiti. I think that's a good sign. I'd start to worry if the curriculum was exactly the same for both of them because they're such different challenges.

PEAKE: You mentioned, looking back you said, “we left too soon” in terms of Haiti. “Some of the courses I worked on in 1994 iterations are happening in 2006, 2007” which gets me to the question of follow on. What was the follow on to these training programs? First of all what happened next?

O'NEILL: *This is one of the biggest flaws, I think, in our work. That's across the board, not only police. There wasn't enough and it wasn't rigorous, the parts that happened were rigorous enough. In Haiti there was a very weak effort to have some type of mentoring, co-location, coaching, on-the-job training where U.N. police would be literally in the station houses with the Haitians, going out on patrol with them, watching them, and then providing some feedback, constructive criticism,*

whatever. But it really wasn't done well, it wasn't done well at all. That's a tough things to do.

PEAKE: Why not?

O'NEILL: *I think because, the biggest problem was I don't think the right people were chosen for those jobs. The U.N. police that were chosen, with some exceptions, were not able to do that job. It's a hard job. I'm not underestimating that because you have to be part of part diplomat, part mediator, good teacher, communicator, be sensitive. You want to be clear and if you need to be negative—but how do you do that in a way that is going to encourage the person and not have them get defensive or shut you out.*

Having said that though, I don't think the U.N. found the right people. So in a lot of cases, unfortunately, the mentors were just not interested in doing it. They saw it as a way to sit out in the station house and not do much work. Frankly a lot of the times I would go out to these places and you would see them just sitting around and not really engaging with their Haitian colleagues. The Haitian colleagues soon had little respect for them, because they just saw them as lazy, sitting around and going off for the two-hour lunches and disappearing at 4 o'clock and nothing really—. I think that's unfortunate, because I think there is a real need to do—it's not over when they finish at the academy. Even though in most of the initiatives I've been involved in they've come back, people do some field work, they get their experience and they come back. In Kosovo the police recruits went out I think for six months after they got their initial training and then came back to the academy for not that long, two to three months more and then out again.

I think this mentoring, coaching aspect, as long as the U.N. is there and has these U.N. police is vital and it has to be done right. I think it was done better also in Kosovo, not perfectly, but compared to Haiti, I think they had these field training officers as they were called, FTOs when I was there. There they had special training for them, this is what we expect, this is how you do your job. They have a little handbook with guidance and even evaluation forms for them to use as they were monitoring their Kosovo counterpart. They had a checklist to judge how they were doing, suggestions, recommendations, and then at the end when they were finished the field training period, there was a form for them to do an overall assessment of the officer. Again, I'm sure it wasn't always done perfectly, but my experience was that it was done pretty well. That Kosovo model was a good one, but unfortunately it was an exception.

I think there isn't enough structured, rigorous, follow up to see if the training actually is sticking and is it making a difference in how they do their work. Are they implementing what they learn. That also feeds into their own domestic systems on internal oversight, discipline. I think if there is another lesson that I've learned is that you can't spend too much time or money, and again as early as possible, trying to make sure you've got the right oversight team, people and systems in place so that you do have this also. You're not always relying on outside international mentors, but you can do it yourself at some point. So your internal ability to assess the performance of your police is sound.

I'll just take an example. Two weeks ago when I was in Haiti, I was talking to a senior official in the Inspector General's office at the Haitian National Police and he was distressed. He was saying, and this brings up another issue, he says, "we're having problems. We're having problems with the oversight." I think the biggest reason he told me was "we don't have the right—," in English it's the

station chief. They don't have the right people in charge of the different station houses.

PEAKE: You mean Haitians in charge?

O'NEILL: *Haitians in charge, that middle management level. They haven't gotten it right. They have too many in there that shouldn't be, that don't belong, and they're not instilling, as he put it, good work and discipline in the station house. So they do the training, they do, yes, you're supposed to keep the record book for detainees, you're supposed to do this, you're supposed to do that, and then they go out and there is not a system in place to make sure they do it. If they don't do it they're reminded of it and if they don't do it again, they're punished for it. He said, that's something that's really worrying him. His answer was, we've got to deal with the station commanders.*

PEAKE: To get a little bit back to training and something that you mentioned at the beginning of the interview was about reading and writing. Some of the countries in which you've worked and you mentioned Rwanda and you mentioned Haiti and there may be others where there may be problems of basic literacy and innumeracy which also may apply to the police. How do you attempt to get around these issues of basic literacy and innumeracy both in terms of recruitment but also in terms of training.

O'NEILL: *It's a big problem. In Haiti it's interesting, there is such high unemployment, there are such few jobs, that you're getting people with university degrees in Haiti who are flocking to join the police because it's a paid job, it's a regularly paid job. Despite whatever the image of it was in the past, there is also some idealism that they want to make it better for the future. So because the economy is in such shambles, believe it or not, even with only 30% literacy, you get some fairly highly qualified, literate people applying for police that in other countries might be trying to find jobs in other sectors, but because they don't exist in Haiti—*

Similarly in Rwanda, it wasn't quite as stark because—not that the economy is any better, but, I don't know why exactly, it was more of a challenge to get people with basic reading and writing skills on board. In some places, in Rwanda too, there were people on the border. There there were classes. We had built in some time to do remedial work. People who, obviously, if they were completely illiterate, this was not the place. But if people had sort of a primary education plus a year or two, you could work with them.

Haiti, we actually had the qualifications, you had to have a baccalaureate which is not an easy thing to get in Haiti, it's like a 12th-grade education level. A lot of people had them.

One area I can talk about, one initiative that is really interesting and this relates to gender and it is going on right now in Liberia. In the effort to get more women, and here it is a huge problem because in all these countries, there's just systematic discrimination against women. Whatever the literacy rate is for men, it's usually much lower for women. Liberia was finding it was really tough to find women to meet—and there I think it is eighth grade. You just have to have like a primary school education level, read and write. It was very hard. So what they've done in Liberia is with help from Norway, God bless them, they've created a special program, it is like a 12-month accelerated educational year for girls who—I think they have to pass some kind of test that shows OK, they're close. They're not quite there, but they have enough of the tools.

They get a year of this accelerated education paid for, room and board included, because it's in Monrovia, it's very intense. It's a bit like the service academies here. In return for this year, I think at the end of this year they get either a high school equivalency or whatever the Liberian one would be, they promise to join the Liberian National Police, assuming they can meet the other parts of the test. So that's a way, and I think it is a very creative way to get at this problem. It could apply to men too, but in this case it is specifically designed to get more women into the police.

So the women who say, "yes, I promise. If I pass the test at the end of the year, I will apply to join the Liberian National Police and if I am admitted I promise to stay." I forget the number of years they promise to serve, but it's like somebody here in the U.S., if they go to the U.S. Military Academy, it's a free four years but then they have to promise five years after, which I think is great.

PEAKE: Let's talk a little bit about vetting, moving on to talk about vetting. A lot of the places in which you've worked maybe formally or informally there was an integration, an amalgamation of different units into one cohesive unit.

O'NEILL: Yes.

PEAKE: That involves, you've talked about some of the elements of recruitment as well, but one of the other elements is also vetting, making sure that the good guys get in while the less good guys stay out. So can you talk about some of the vetting programs that you've been involved in?

O'NEILL: *Sure. In Haiti in particular. That was my first experience and probably the most intensive one. We set up a program right away because again there was this, as is often the case, former military and people interested in supporting them wanted to get them into the new Haitian police. The dilemma you face often is that in places like Haiti it's not unique that some of the military are highly educated, have those management and kind of command skills, leadership, that you would want in a police and they're not really that many others where you're going to find those kinds of skills in the rest of the population.*

So there is a natural temptation in some ways to say yes, let's take those folks in. But then, what were those folks doing before. That's where the rubber hits the road. So there we said, "Fine, anybody can apply, anybody can apply to join the police but we will say—and everybody's record is going to be scrutinized. Even if you were a civilian we want to know your background." I forgot to mention this in the part about recruiting. We did require, in Haiti, getting some affidavits from neighbors and from people that might know the person that yes, this is who they say they are and they've lived here and they're a good citizen and never been involved in any problems.

Obviously with the military you had a record to work with, the former Haitian military. Again, one of the interesting aspects of the vetting in Haiti was that I was part of the human rights team that was in Haiti while the military was running things. As I mentioned, we were there when the de facto government had overthrown the President and was running Haiti from '91 until '94. So we had information from our monitoring about a lot of military and what they had done. Our files were part of the process that was used by this committee, that was established. It included some ICSTAP people, U.N. folks and some Haitians. Again, once the legitimate government was back in place, representatives from the Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Justice were involved in the committee. We opened our files to them.

We found often, and I think this has also been shown in other countries, once somebody realizes that their past record is going to be scrutinized, they will often drop out of the running. They're not interested in going forward. So in a lot of ways, this becomes a kind of screening out people before they would even apply, especially if you have a situation where the army or police before was quite notorious and they're still around. A few of them might still try to get through but most of them are going to say, "First of all, I'm not interested because I don't want to be in a police force that can't extort or kill, the way they're used to operating." But there are always a few that do. There we had the record. In a lot of cases we had our own investigations, eye-witness testimony, all kinds of levels of proof that showed that Officer X or Y had been involved in something pretty bad and they were out, not all of them. So some were good. Actually some, I asked the Inspector General representative in Haiti when I was there two weeks ago. He estimated that 20, no, that's too high, probably about 15% of the senior Haitian police were former Haitian army. But they didn't have blood on their hands and they did have these kind of management, leadership, admin skills that are fairly rare in a lot of these countries.

The other interesting development I think that has happened in the last few years is vetting is now seen as I think, the end of a longer process which begins with registration. Again here Haiti is an example, but it has also been done in DRC (Democratic Republic of the Congo) and in Burundi and other countries. A lot of these countries, especially right after a conflict, don't even know how many police they have, who are they, where are they deployed, their backgrounds. So one of the initiatives that the U.N. has done in several places in the last few years is just what they call certification, doing a census. Sorry, registration. Who is out there? Again, we found, especially the case in Haiti after Aristide was thrown out again in 2004, and most of the Haitian National Police melted away, there were a lot of people who were claiming they were police officers and they had uniforms and they would look and act and talk like police officers but they weren't really. Some of them were former military who had been out of Haiti for many years, who had come back in with this group that had got rid of Aristide. They were claiming now they're the police of whatever province.

So part of this registration process was literally just to winnow them out. You claim you're a police officer but you're not really. This registration process has really been a very useful kind of pre-vetting tool to get a handle on how many are out there, where are they, gender, ethnicity, age breakdown. Then you get to the next phase of, OK, we're going to certify. That's sort of a provisional mid-term status where you say, OK, we have registered 7,000 Haitian police and they are in the following provinces in these numbers. Now, provisionally we've reviewed their records, we see they meet the minimal qualifications, they have the experience. So they're being certified as police but it is provisional. Now, once we can get a vetting process started, we are now going to do a more thorough review and then we're going to vet all of them. Then they describe the process. Then after that, if you are through the vetting, you will then be completely certified and off and running.

That is a process that I know has been done in Liberia, I think they're trying to start it in DRC, but that's such a huge, convoluted country and situation that it is probably going to take some time. But that has been an interesting twist to vetting that has emerged in the last couple of years.

PEAKE: You mentioned the work that you did in vetting in Haiti and you also alluded to it in Rwanda. Whenever you were developing these vetting programs where did

you look for guidance from? Was there any guidance in the U.N. mandate? Was there any guidance—this was pre-Internet days, but even now, where do you go to look for guidance about how to do a vetting program?

O'NEILL: *Now I think because there have been—Haiti was really the first one that I'm aware of that it was ever tried, so we were really just kind of making it up. One of the biggest challenges, again, the lawyer in me was how do we make this fair. We don't want to make this a witch hunt or a kangaroo court. In Haiti I was pretty confident of the information we had. If we had information that Officer X had been involved in rape or torture or something, I was pretty certain that was right. But in other countries things get flown around, allegations. So you wanted to have a system where people would have a chance to defend themselves and say, "No, I didn't do that, that's a lie." Then have some kind of process. It's always going to take a lot longer, but you needed to do that. But really, in those days, we were really operating by the seat of our pants if I can use that phrase.*

I think over time now that there have been these different experiences with vetting and especially the ICTJ, the International Center for Transitional Justice has done a lot of research on this. I think one thing we were scared of, looking at it historically, there was this lustration process in eastern Europe with communist countries and the transition into post communism and then people, all these secret files being kept and accusations flying around. That was something that actually worried us. That had just been starting really, 1990, '91, '92, when the Haitian vetting really began in late '94, '95. So that was the only kind of similar experience any of us were aware of and frankly it was one we didn't want to repeat.

There were very different situations. Haiti was not East Germany. Obviously there are some parallels, but I think one principle that helped, I remember at one meeting, I think I was even the one that said it. I said, "Being a police officer is not a right, it's a privilege. Being a judge is not a right, it's a privilege. If the person has shown by their behavior that they are not worthy of that privilege, then it can be removed." I think, getting back to the process, we have to come up with a process where we have evidence, we have some kind of proof and give the person a chance to rebut that. There's nothing that says once a police officer, always a police officer. I think that helped convince some folks who were a little worried about this.

The other worry you have is what do they do? What do these guys then go do? They often can cause trouble.

PEAKE: Those—.

O'NEILL: *Those that are vetted out. Yes, the ones that are excluded. Again, in places like Haiti, Rwanda, they know how to do one thing, that is use a gun and be violent. So in Haiti, I'm not sure of the success, but I think it was at least a good effort. The IOM (International Organization for Migration) started a job training program for former Haitian military. That again gets a little complicated. Yes, sounds great, give them something else to do, teach them another trade. Two problems that arose quite quickly. One, some people saw it, why are they getting a job program, these are the bad guys, what about the rest of us. Two, there were no jobs frankly at the end of the training, so that only led to their frustration.*

I'm just raising these. I'm not saying you don't do it, but you have to be aware of the complications and the reactions that may come from trying to do—what is they say, the road to hell is paved with good intentions. Here you did have some

serious reactions to this program. I do think that that gets into the disarmament issue. Again, I think there need to be better links between vetting, these processes and the larger disarmament programs.

PEAKE: I'd like to ask you a question about Rwanda that springs to my mind as an example of this based upon your testimony so far but there may be other cases. That is whenever you're bringing together different units, trying to knit them together into one police service, Tutsi and Hutus into the Rwandan police. In terms of sort of work-a-day interactions where different groups have to share the same police station, sometimes the same police car. Were there any tensions that arose on a work-a-day level and how did you attempt to ameliorate those tensions?

O'NEILL: *They do exist and there's no way to get around it. I think what I found is—here's going back to the academy and leadership. I think it is absolutely vital and I think here Kosovo is I think quite a good example. It is made very clear right at the start that the police is one and ethnicity shouldn't affect how the work is done any way. Right from the start, in the classes, in the dining room, in the athletics, in everything, this message is just reinforced over and over again. Then it becomes a question of then the leadership when they're out of the academy. If the leadership is still preaching that. It was interesting for me.*

I was in Kosovo last year for the first time in several years and I went to visit the police station, the head office in Gnjilane, in southeastern Kosovo. First of all it was really easy to walk in. The head of it was a woman who was Bosnian. This is an overwhelmingly Albanian town with some Serb minorities scattered around, villages outside. Her deputy was a Serb. The rest of the senior leadership was all Albanian. Just to see them interacting and talking and bring it up. They would say, "I'm a Serb." The guy would say, "I'm a Serb, and I'm here and we're doing this—." Maybe it was all for me, I don't know, but I got the sense this was pretty natural, this was the way they worked.

Again, you can't legislate this kind of thing really, but I think through leadership and through the earliest messages you send to the recruits at the academy that this is a new day. It might have been before this ethnicity, that ethnicity, but that's no longer the case. I think you can manage that problem. It's probably never going to go away. You even have issues here in the states, a noose at some Black police officers locker. My God, those are his colleagues who did that. You're never going to wipe it out. But I think from my own experience the question has really been early intervention so to speak and then really strong leadership.

PEAKE: This gets into an issue of management I guess, but how do you deal with issues of promotion whenever you've got different ethnic groups or different political tribes in the same police. It can potentially be very loaded. How do you deal with these issues of ethnic things in terms of a promotion system, in terms of human resources system, etc.?

O'NEILL: *I would just say that it relates to the hiring criteria in the beginning. I think if you make that really clear at the outset that you're hiring the most qualified people that meet these requirements, and that, again, are going to reflect the society, obviously there are always these tradeoffs. If you're looking for gender balance, ethnic balance, geographic balance, religious, whatever the issues are, are you then compromising sometimes—this is the affirmative action type question. This comes up a lot with gender. I ran into this a lot when I was looking at gender in policing last year for DPKO (Department of Peacekeeping Operations) and*

UNIFEM (United Nations Development Fund for Women) actually. There was this concern about lowering standards to let more women in. I think there is always going to be that element there somewhere that you may have to be fudging somehow. But I think when it comes to promotion, again, if you stick to that, that it really is on merit, it's on experience, it's on objective and impartial performance reviews, with, again, it's always going to be in your mind, getting women up to senior management, getting Bosnians, Hutus, whatever it is. My experience is that people can live with that as long as people see that there is a core competence level that is met. Then if there is a kind of tie, you're going to look for diversity, representation. But I think the merit is the most important. If people think the whole thing is skewed from the get-go, from recruiting to promoting, then you have real problems on your hands. I think that's clear.

PEAKE: I have two questions just to wrap up. One is about lessons learning. You've worked in a lot of places but is there anything about the context of specificity that means that lessons in say Haiti are inapplicable to Rwanda or to Kosovo, or are not applicable. Are all cases sui generis in a fashion, or is there utility in sort of drawing lessons learning from one case and then transferring it to another.

O'NEILL: *This is a discussion that has gone on and probably can go on forever. I'm of the belief that you can learn. You can learn intelligently. I think a blind application of 'we did this in Kosovo, so we'll do it here,' no. But a kind of careful, nuanced, serious examination of yes, that approach worked there and maybe with some modification here, realizing X, Y or Z, we might want to tweak it but that approach should be also the one we want to do here. I think that's how people learn. You always can argue it is so unique, but I just don't think it is ever that unique. I think there is always something you can bring from one experience to another, as long as it is carefully considered. It may be rejected, but you do it after thinking about it.*

I think people get in trouble, and this is where I think the homework issue comes back, some of the things you talked about before, understanding the context, doing your homework. Then that helps you, I think, realize which lessons, and to what degree. There is a core principle that maybe you could argue in some cases is universally applicable, but then on the outer edges of it it needs to be tweaked because the situation is a bit different from that. As I said with the curriculum, I would have been upset if the police training curriculum in Kosovo looked exactly like the one in Haiti, but I would also be equally upset if the police training in both places didn't use case studies from their countries that didn't involve problem solving skills that were trying to be developed, that didn't involve civil society having an input. I think those are lessons that I would argue that you should do wherever you are. The approach, the style may differ. Training of trainers I would argue is something you should always do. The sooner the nationals can do it, the locals can do it, the better. So that doesn't matter whether you're in Apkhazia or Timor, that's a lesson that I think is pretty clear now.

PEAKE: Final question is not so much a question but an opportunity for you to maybe alight on issues that this interview hasn't touched on, issues relating to the police, issues that you have worked on or issues that you think are important to record.

O'NEILL: *I guess the one, and here maybe it's my lawyer's background coming up, but this is another lesson that in my experience is universal. Figuring out ways to get the police and the relevant parts of the judiciary working together productively is really important and again, right from the start. Usually the justice system is in as big a shambles as the police are after these conflicts. I found that training or reviving the judiciary always goes at a slower pace than the police, even though*

we may think the police is going slowly. The court reform is usually behind and that creates all kinds of problems and tensions. So how we manage those, anticipate them, mitigate them, I think that's again—my experience has been, across the board, that has been part of the lay of the land.

There are no easy answers, no magic bullets, but I think being aware of it and trying to get people talking, the cross-training I was talking about earlier has been one tool that works pretty well. Getting working groups, getting Inspector Generals to talk to each other, the police, the courts, the prisons in itself, oversight issues, I think, for all three and how they might be able to support each other is another important area. So I think probably that would be just one issue I'd flag: judiciary, police, and, especially on criminal justice, the fits. They need to work together so closely and they often didn't before, and they aren't now.

PEAKE: OK, Bill O'Neill, thank you very much for your time.