



INNOVATIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL SOCIETIES

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Innovations for Successful Societies, Bobst Center for Peace and Justice
Princeton University, 83 Prospect Avenue, Princeton, New Jersey, 08544, USA
www.princeton.edu/successfulsocieties

PEAKE: Good evening, it is December the 14th. I'm in New York City with Mark Kroeker, former Police Commissioner for the United Nations. Mark, first of all thank you very much for being so giving of your time and secondly, before I begin the interview I want to confirm that you have read, signed and attested to the release forms that are in connection with this project.

KROEKER *I have, Gordon. I've signed those things and of course, as I said earlier, my only additional thing is that no reference be made to my current position or any other positions other than the ones that I occupied in international policing.*

PEAKE: Yes, and that's going to be the focus of the interview. But I think it is good that we made it clear on the tape for the purpose of the record. Of course, you get to see the transcript before it gets released.

KROEKER *Great.*

PEAKE: So I'd like to begin by just asking you in very general terms to talk about your career in international policing, how you came to be involved in this particular subject? What did you work on? Where did you work?

KROEKER *I guess you'd have to say in the broadest sense, my career in international policing began when as a young boy being raised in the then Belgian Congo I had a glimpse from time to time of policing in the Congo and what that was like in the 1940s. When I would see police stations in the Congo and elephant hide whips on the side of police stations. As a young boy I was asking my dad what those were for. He told me they were used by the police, military and Belgian officials to keep people in line. It was the policing way. I was horrified as a youngster thinking about the brutality of that. Then those first ten years of my life, just being in Africa and seeing what things were like in that country and then following on my departure, descending evolution into war of the Congo and following it. I guess that's the origin. Then 32 years in policing in the Los Angeles Police Department, watching from afar and taking a Master's Degree in International Public Administration at the University of Southern California.*

I pursued, while in a domestic law enforcement career, the things international, what was going on, what were the needs of the people and this post war state. Watching the bipolar world fragment and break away and the connectedness of the states with the Soviet and the American side of things come apart. Then Africa comes apart, and West Africa begins to slip into the abyss and all of that as I watched it. I developed this interest and in the LAPD did some consulting for the Justice Department in projects in Haiti and the time right after the—they didn't call it an invasion, they called it—.

PEAKE: Intervention.

KROEKER *Intervention, yes, when Aristide was replaced. So I did some work there in developing the plan for the new Haitian National Police at the time in the early '90s. Then some other things in Africa going back to the Great Lakes area and looking at things post genocide in those years of the '90s. That's where it all began. Then being invited, as a result of that experience to serve in a UN capacity in Bosnia and later Liberia and then after Liberia in New York at DPKO (Department of Peacekeeping Operations) overseeing police operations in these peacekeeping missions around the world. So that's basically the underpinnings of my international law enforcement career.*

PEAKE: I'd like to ask you a question about context. I mean all police officers, as an axiom of being a good police officer you must understand the context around you, situational awareness I think would be the policing term. In some of the places in which you've worked overseas you've worked for short stints and you've worked for somewhat longer stints, how do you as a police officer working overseas get this situational awareness? How do you get this contextual background in order to be an effective police reformer?

KROEKER *I think situational awareness that you're referring to is gathered out of a value that we in international policing have to possess as the beginning and that is compassion. Because without compassion and a genuine concern for the plight of people, then the observation skills are not really honed, because you just go there to do some bureaucratic job or serve some purpose for yourself or other career reason rather than a real concern for the plight of people in war and post war. So I think it begins with that and with that compassion, then that opens up the refined observation skills to pick up this awareness of what life is like, what the plight of people really is in that environment.*

You begin there and then it begs the question as to the state of law enforcement. Bringing my own experience of many years in domestic policing to the fore and comparing the haves, the have nots, the competent, the incompetent for whatever reason, the policing with integrity and the corrupt policing. You make all those comparisons and see where the gap is. But if you see that and observe it, just from the standpoint of being an occupier, then really you don't go to that question of long-range, to use that term, sustainable approaches to offers of help.

PEAKE: I'd like to move on to talk about some of the functional areas in which you've worked on. The first of those functional areas is recruitment, recruiting new officers to serve within an existing police organization, albeit a reconfigured one. I wonder if you could talk about some of your experiences in recruitment.

KROEKER *I think there you have to go back to the effect of war on institutional frameworks and power structures and remnants of the old ways, or the war ways. In that context then recruiting of police becomes bringing the militias into the police, bringing the prior fighters into the police, sliding the hangers-on into the police, creating this post-war bloated policing that exists almost everywhere. Because along with the institutional collapse of countries comes the abandonment of standards by which to employ a truly professional police force with standards that have to do with the needs of policing in that environment. So recruiting police, especially in post war places or very difficult underdeveloped places where especially there has been an eroding of institutional fabric, we have to begin with what are the needs for policing and what are the standards and then recruit to those standards and stay with those standards.*

I was told in Liberia—and you can tell me if my answers are too long.

PEAKE: They're perfectly fine.

KROEKER *if we need to get onto other questions.*

PEAKE: No you're fine.

KROEKER *So in Liberia I was told for example, the war for 14 years has decimated the educational institution. You are not going to find police officers who even have the high school level of education required and you are not going to find women*

to serve as police. I took that on as a challenge. We put on the table by putting together a rule of law implementation committee post war, working forward in the framework of the comprehensive peace accords, we put standards on the table for policing. They were agreed upon. Those standards required certain things including successful completion of police academy training and all that.

So recruiting was based on standards. Those pertained to the broader picture of reforming the police for the long-range future so as to not bring into the police organization simply those who had fought. In Liberia I had a huge effort to bring in post militias who had just fought during the war. So as spoils as it were were meted out in power sharing. Part of that would be okay, if we're power sharing, that means you have to share the power of policing and we want 600 posts from this particular faction. I said, "No." We'll take all the posts from that faction if they're qualified, as well as the other faction. So it is not faction as in fighter faction from a certain brand of fighter, but it was from the standpoint of "are you qualified." Surprisingly while they said you won't find the women, you won't find the qualified, we did find the qualified and we did find the women.

I believe with this discussion, like in Afghanistan or even in other places where the literacy rate is so low you can't find police officers who can read. Then let's help them to read as they're candidating so that they move from illiterate to basic forms of literacy. So recruiting is a process of selecting people who fit the standards and then keeping them only if they continue to hold to those standards and values that have been agreed upon as part of a reform and restructuring plan. It is not an impossible mission and we shouldn't give in to the corrupt power structures that say, "take our people or we will buy positions. My political buddies, nepotistic style need a position." Or, "The President wants this many patronage style." But there must be an agreed upon standard by which a young man or woman becomes a police officer.

PEAKE: You mentioned some of the obstacles that were in your way to actually develop a fair and equitable recruiting strategy. You mentioned political pressure that was put on you from various quarters in Liberia. In Liberia what other obstacles were put in your way to developing an effective recruiting strategy?

KROEKER *Well always in post war and it was the case in Liberia as it was in Bosnia and other places where I've worked since, although Bosnia and Liberia are my two on-scene longer-range assignments, so I speak with more experience from those. Always it is the question of the war-time division of people, Croats, Serb, Muslim, or LURD (Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy), MODEL (Movement for Democracy in Liberia), and the separation of those in military alignments, or political alignments as in parties, religious alignments as in the Muslim, the Orthodox, the Croat Catholics. That alone is one obstacle, always. I went up to Brčko in the north of Bosnia and I asked how the joint patrols were going from a Danish police officer serving there with the UN. He said to me, "Well the Serbs and the Bosniaks are patrolling together and they're actually doing quite well. We find that they're sharing their bribes." Well good, but not good. But an indicator. I'll never forget that little reminder that while you solve one problem of getting them together, you're dealing with another one of getting them to work together with integrity.*

I guess the other obstacle of course is corruption. It is the obstacle that is ubiquitous in international policing. It's everywhere as an obstacle. It is THE thing that keeps bona fide wiring diagrams in the institutions from existing because you find that behind the bona fide wiring diagram is the corrupt one with all the money going through these little channels that are not institutional channels, but purely

under-the-table type channels with money driving what happens. While they smile and talk with you on top of the table—and I'm not speaking of Bosnia and Liberia only, but everywhere. As they smile and talk with you on top of the table, other things are going on about how they see personal stake in the aftermath of abject poverty. So it's a huge issue. So that's an obstacle.

The racial, religious faction obstacles are always there, integrated people working together serving people in a time of ethnic cleansing and all of that. That's an obstacle. Having one institution develop all alone because people seem to want to focus on the police or the judiciary or the correctional elements alone. They find that one of them operating alone is totally incapable, so that becomes another obstacle. Sometimes as I found in working in the time I suppose by number of days spent in a particular mission Haiti would be number three. Liberia, then Bosnia then Haiti. I found that in Haiti not only the fighters and the structures remained there, but the donors themselves were a challenge. The donors, and I found it in Liberia too—the donors would have something in their mind that came from a political structure in their country. But that political structure and that policy decision-making in their country, was sometimes at odds with the reform and restructuring plan that had a systemic holistic approach to development of police, in the place where things were being done.

For example, in Liberia, the Chinese wanted to give us motorcycles. Well, we weren't ready for motorcycles. My thinking of the police vehicle—we need to make this progression in post war. Get them out of the tanks, get them out of the armored personnel carriers and get them into cars. Then get them into bicycles and then get them into foot beats, community policing style. So from tanks to foot beats. But along in there, if you move too quickly to motorcycles, what are you going to do with fifty motorcycles? Well, we did something with it, but it wasn't the right gift at the time.

Then we went for money so that we could actually buy the things that did fit with the reform and restructuring plan and we went to a donor conference and we came back with nothing, nothing. There were one or two pledges and even those pledges weren't borne out. We went with a 40 million dollar plan and we came back with zero from the reform and restructuring. The Americans, the Brits, the—well after I left, a couple of other countries stepped forward, but it was a very meager and very disappointing support of the rebuilding needs of the police according to the plan. So even the donors sometimes can be a challenge, and adversary when we would think they would be there to help.

PEAKE: Thank you, I'd like to go back to a couple of things that you said were systemic problems and then ask you to talk me through how you tried to overcome them or mitigate them to the best of your ability. You mentioned this discrepancy between formal structures and informal structures, you talked about the work-a-day corruption that was going on in some of the police services in which you've worked. How did you attempt to combat this every-day corruption? Cops taking money from people on the streets would be a visible form of corruption, to more, maybe more subterranean forms of corruption. How did you attempt to combat them? How effectively did you do?

KROEKER *Time will tell I guess how effectively we did. I'm not hugely optimistic, but the one consolation I retained and still have with me is that all things in international policing in the world of peacekeeping are incremental. So the question is, are we getting any better than where we were. Not is it a perfect structure, are we where we want to be? Are we in end-state? No. Oscar Arias, President of Costa Rica, offered a quote and he had brokered the Central American peace accords. He*

was quoted as saying, "Peace has no finish line." I believe police restructuring has no finish line. So we should not expect that Liberia will any day soon be a really great example of policing. But your question was how did we go about that.

I think the thinking that I brought to the table was, you attack this on several levels. One is you bring to the table a set of values that include integrity. So you're not always talking about corruption, rather you're always talking about integrity and you're getting the leadership to sign on to an integrity-based approach to policing that says, "Yes, we agree." "Transparency, yes, we agree." They'll all say that, "Yes, we agree." So you get them saying that first and you get the top saying it. Then in the police training you get them saying that. Up on the walls I would put the values of policing, beginning with compassion, courage, respect, integrity, excellence, service. They would shout these at police. They put them on the walls. I hold, maybe it's so today, even after these years, you ask a Liberian National Police officer, what are the core values of policing? The Liberian National Police, I've been told that they've held on to these. So you bring that into the language as integrity. Not "we're against corruption" but integrity.

Then along with that you bring, with a lot of struggle, the donors to give those things that can help and you encourage the local establishment to bring those things that can help to provide professionalizing of the service. For example, livable salaries for the police. For example, equipment that can be used. When we talk about corruption and not everybody shares this view, we can talk about corruption of the economic kind and corruption of the human spirit. That would be abuse of power. For example several people in several countries told me, "I have to beat people to get these confessions because, after all, how else would I get the confession."

I said, "First of all, you never beat people. Secondly you have physical evidence that you take to the judge for this. You have these techniques of interviewing people and getting some witnesses." They'd say, "Yes, but what if you don't have witnesses?" Not only that, "We don't have a crime lab, we don't have fingerprints. You don't understand, we don't have photographs that I can show a judge of anything." So I'd say, "No, no, no, we'll deal with that, but first you start with integrity."

So one police officer in Liberia said, "I can't feed my family on integrity." That made a point. But I don't alibi breeches of integrity by low salaries as so many people do. If you're going to have integrity in this police, you're going to have to pay high salaries. That's not the case because there are plenty of regional policing places, for example, Liberia compared to Cote de Ivoire where they pay really good salaries and the police are still corrupt, they're going to steal money. So it is a holistic approach. I honestly believe you start attacking corruption by not talking about corruption, but by talking about integrity and having that on everyone's lips and everybody is agreeing. Then you move with a program of integrity. Then, along with the equipment and things that you bring to that, you bring teeth into the laws on violation and breeches of the rules and the laws on integrity like accepting bribes and all the like. So it is a holistic approach and it is incremental.

PEAKE: I'd like to ask you a question about—you mentioned when you were in Liberia and Bosnia you were designing recruitment strategies, mostly in Liberia to get new members into the Liberian National Police. From where did you get the inspiration to develop this recruitment strategy? Where did the basis source material come from?

KROEKER: *It was a combination of—you used the term situational awareness—of Liberia. It begins with Liberia. It doesn't begin with the Los Angeles Police Department, the way we did it back home. I think that's a mistake a lot of people make when they come in. It's the Danish way, it's the American way, it's the British way. It begins. I wanted to see exactly when you were recruiting police back in the day, that is fourteen years ago, I could see that there was a remnant of the golden age of policing in Liberia where they had standards and there was once a police academy and you had these ranks and there was pride. That pride didn't go away. The pride of being a professional police. So looking at that situational awareness and looking at the police, where they were, where they had been, and then doing my best in communicating an internationally accepted professional police vision, imparting that vision and having that accepted. That was, to me that was what woke me up in the night. That was one of the big questions. How can I produce this famous buy-in, so it's not us versus them, but it is we, doing this together? We agree that this is where the police of the federation in Bosnia or these various cantons for example of the Republika Srpska and the other portion in Bosnia, or the Liberian National Police. This is where we are going. It's theirs and we are helping. So it becomes the power of we.*

So that inspiration, that's not mine, but it is in the ether of professional policing around the world. But the communicating of that with relentlessly speaking those words and then creating actual programs that took those words and put them into reality, with standards written down. That was what was at our disposal.

PEAKE: So whenever you were designing this recruitment strategy in Liberia, you mentioned that you weren't using the LAPD model, but was there any source material apart from your own convictions, your own sense of where you wanted to go in partnership with the Liberian National Police that you drew upon?

KROEKER: *The first question I asked was when you 14 years ago, when you were recruiting police officers what were your standards? You know what? They were not all that different from the Los Angeles Police Department standards. I never once said, "You know, back where I come from—" I said to them, what were the standards? What do you believe they should be for the years ahead? Mr. Police Director, where do you want—and Mr. Minister of Justice or Minister of Interior. Justice in Liberia, Interior in Bosnia. Where do you want this police to be five years from now and what are the standards we should have?*

Lo and behold, they said the basic same things. We should have police officers who can read and write. They should have a basic standard of education. They should have good moral standing. They should have a good reputation in the community, not have participated in war crimes. They should have a fairly clean record, not having used narcotic substances and the like and should be able to stand tall and proud in the community and pass the psychological balance test of some kind. If they can do all that—I asked them to describe and lo and behold that's not all that different from policing in any country. But it was theirs and it had been there and we just brought it forward and into the future. We added a few; let's say a little bit more sophisticated things.

PEAKE: You've looked at international policing from both sides of the fence in a way. You've been in the field working on projects and peacekeeping missions but you've also been in New York directing the entire operation across the various peacekeeping missions. So I'd like to ask you a question about headquarters-fields relationships. When you were in Bosnia and in Liberia, we can talk about recruitment but it may be other elements as well, did you get any guidance from headquarters about what to do and how to do it? What was the relationship

between you, Mark Kroeker, Police Commissioner of Liberia and UNMIL (United Nations Mission in Liberia) and headquarters in New York?

KROEKER *It's two different eras and there was a sea change between the two. In the police division of '97, '98, still being a part of the military division and a handful of people, a coordinator in the police division who kind of looked after Bosnia. There was a gentleman, Mr. O. P. Rathor, the Police Advisor at the time. I remember coming through, it was a little shabby office over across the street with papers everywhere. That was the support. A phone call or two during the year I was there in Bosnia, not very much guidance at all. The guidance that I got came from the papers of agreement on the table, arising, emanating from the Dayton Accords. I had those. I had those agreements, signed agreements about police integration of these various factions. I had that.*

I had the guidance from a police commissioner, the one that started from Denmark and the one I finished with from the UK because my job there was Deputy Commissioner in Bosnia, although my assignment was reforming and restructuring. So that was that side of things. But in 1997, 1998, very little from New York.

Now Liberia is the years of 2003 to 2005, roughly a year and a half there, a little less than a year and a half and completely different. Now I came to the police division, established in the UN headquarters in the department of peacekeeping operations with a police advisor there, mission manager team, a dedicated mission manager for support. E-mails frequently from the Police Division, a notebook this thick with all the various papers and things that gave me the guidance of syllabi and curricula from different police training programs. I had a ton of things when I went out to Liberia that helped me along. And I referred to those things. I kept them not only on my shelf but I would open them up and look at those and follow those. So it was a totally different approach from one time to the other. I think it marked a significant change in the way police leaders were being handled as they went out into the field.

PEAKE: I'd like to move on a little bit to talk about some of the things that you've touched on already about professionalizing the police which involves a lot of training of the police. I wonder if you could talk a little bit about some of the police training programs that you've been involved in. What you focused upon? Why you focused upon those particular areas? How you carried out the training?

KROEKER *As you look at those things that need to be done in post war, post conflict policing, just as a general sense, the training programs really need to focus heavily, not only on the trade craft of policing, those things that a police officer needs to use as tools but the kind of intellectual shifting and adaptations if you will, to move the police away from the domination of the military, or the domination of the loud-talking politicians, and accountability of the people. So that needs to lace everything that is done. A certain independence from political and military, while realizing that the elected or appointed leadership—certainly there is accountability in the police officers and leadership to that body. But the true accountability at the base level needs to be with the community and to the law. So a rule of law in the mind of the police, always talking about that, the law, the law, the law is above everything and the community is who you serve above everyone. A selfless approach to serving. Yes, you report through chain of command to your structures and so forth and the Minister of Interior and all that.*

So that had to permeate more heavily the training apparatus than it did let's say in average policing. You had to talk about these things but you had to invoke

them all the more in the training apparatus and post conflict approaches to things.

PEAKE: I think Liberia may stand out as an example of this, but you had to abbreviate or go very quickly through a relatively large training program in a relatively short period of time. You're talking about the values you want to inculcate in the Liberian National Police. Can you talk about how you managed and how effectively you managed to put so much into such a relatively short period of time?

KROEKER *I think the key there is having a clear picture of where we wanted to be and then working back from that and giving ourselves the time to put the police academy classes together and derive a project style approach to that. At the same time hold fast on quality. That was not always easy because the demands were, be it exit strategy, be it posturing for whatever reason, be it we're in an interim phase and before moving to the long-range election phase and all of that, we have to have local police stood up. A mistaken use of that term, standing up. Giving the impression that once they're stood up then we can exit. It's a bad way of looking at things rather than the linear approach to where we're going.*

Certainly there were benchmarks. But I guess, to answer your question, to do things rapidly, but in a systematic way, and aggressively, I don't think was the impossible mission. But if we made compromises on allowing people to pass or on moving too rapidly and sacrificing quality, which is possible, then it was a mistake and it's a mistake that I regret. If you made a mistake, for example of inadequate backgrounds and vetting of people coming in, then it's a mistake, it's a mistake that I regret. I will not say that all of the work that happened in Liberia or Bosnia for example in police training was churning out top quality police officers and meeting those deadlines with top quality people. I will not say that. But I will say that my greatest nightmare, recognizing what happened during the war with this horrific violence that took place, sexual assaults for example by the military and this raping and pillaging that took place during the war—.

PEAKE: In Liberia?

KROEKER *In Liberia. My worst nightmare was the idea that I would have sitting in that police classroom a serial rapist or two, or three. Was I ever sure that we didn't? No. And it's one of the things that bothered me the whole time I was there. I looked at the surveys about how many of the fighters actually participated in sexual assaults and how many of the villagers were actually victimized by sexual assaults. You put those overlapping factors together and if you don't do your homework in vetting of police candidates, you have a very good chance that you are going to hire a serial rapist. Can you imagine that? Having been in the policing, having tracked the serial rapist, hey there's a serial rapist loose in our neighborhood and we have arrested him, won, great, now everyone can relax. Well one thing is to arrest a serial rapist, the other thing is put him in the police academy. This was the thing that stirred me and really got me inquiring as to our checkpoints. Our background investigations weren't nearly as adequate as I would have hoped. But then I consoled myself it's not a perfect world, it's a dusty, bloody, muddy place. We have to do the best we can under these conditions with the resources we have. Let's do the best we can. That was the training.*

The numbers, the output on the other side, we made those deadlines. After I left in Liberia they continued under new SRSG (Special Representative of the Secretary-General) who really, I was happy to see Jacques Klein and then Alan Doss, really push the police mission heavily and also pushed for a departure

package for those who were vetted of the current police but didn't meet the standards and allowed them with sort of a golden parachute to leave with a hand shake and a nice departure pay check. I think it was a contribution by the British government as I was told. That also produced this quality engendering while moving along rapidly system that is in place in Liberia.

I haven't been back there to Liberia and I haven't been back to Bosnia since I left either but I'm just hoping against hope that those institutions that were put in place, the things that they might say some day, "we've always done it this way." Well they haven't always done it that way, but I hope that what they're talking about is quality selections of people to serve the police in an honest way.

PEAKE: You mentioned some of the problems in vetting in this environment. Can I press you a little bit further to talk about what were the difficulties in actually carrying out vetting in Liberia? Was it a question of not having sufficient time to do it properly or were there other issues?

KROEKER *Part of that was the tribal situation. We wanted to make sure that our recruitment tools went out to all the counties, the various localities of Liberia. Then there's sort of a Monrovia-centric approach that kept a lot of our energy located in the central city. When you got out there then the challenge of finding out who someone was, the posting in the newspaper being an inert way of "does anybody know any dirt on this name." I mean it's sort of an inert way to do vetting. You can still get by. The challenge was the inadequacy—I would never say inadequacy of staffing, because I think that is a misfortunate alibi. I never used it; I didn't like hearing it from other police commissioners. We need more people. Well, we always need more—.*

PEAKE: International people?

KROEKER *Yes, we always need more international people. I was skeptical about that. I learned after a while and in leaving the UN I formed the opinion that really what we could probably have done is scaled down some of our police operations to enhance the quality of the consultants who were there rather than just having wall-to-wall international police. So it wasn't a question of not having enough police, but it was a question of reach out into those areas, a question of adequacy of systems for figuring out who people were. Then, of course, the press for getting these classes filled. Start another class, start another class. So we were in a hurry to move forward.*

If we weren't looking at elections coming, the press of the disarmament, then the elections, then the institution building. All these things need to happen. The pressure of building a police during that time. Standing up, if you will, which I won't, use the term, then there was pressure, numerical pressure. We probably could have done better on vetting. If you spent, on an investigation more time, you're going to find out more things. So there you have it. You take a candidate and you pass all those things. Then you start a background check. You produce so many work hours on that candidate, you're going to know more than that many work hours cut in half. So it's a matter of algorithms here and the business of background checks.

PEAKE: I'd like to ask you, you've touched on it already, but just to drill down a little bit further. In Bosnia and Liberia, the new police institutions were composed of different factions, different groups, different militias, different ethnicities. How did that work in actuality, melding together people with very different backgrounds,

people who very well may have been fighting against each other in the years previous into a unified police service?

KROEKER Liberia and Bosnia both, I was stunned to realize that these younger, not always young, we had some that were a little older, but in their 20s mainly, some 30s. If you put them all together in a classroom, sitting next to each other by their identity number, serial number, and their name the amazing thing was—okay, there were some cliques and things like that would start to emerge, but with the commonality of policing values like respect as a value and the living quarters together, not segregated and all of that, those things just faded away to pre-war times. Like in Bosnia, I put together a police academy in Bosnia in about December of 1997 and we found this place that had been a hospital in a place called Suhodol, a beautiful kind of Alpine site outside of Sarajevo. I said this has to be an integrated Croat and Bosniak Muslim training center.

They all arrived on one day and they said, "Okay, on this floor will be all the Muslims, on this floor will be all the Croats." I said, "No. We will put them alphabetically." Sure enough, as they put them three in a room you'd have two Bosniaks and a Croat or whatever. These young people had no problem with it. But it was the politicians who did or the military leadership up here that wanted to drive the neighbors away from each other. I lived in Sarajevo. My neighbors would say come down and have a brandy with me and try to explain to me how the person who is living in your apartment or next door used to be a Serb and over here used to be a Croat and we used to be friends. Now they're all gone, but we were friends before all that started and our families were friends and we respected each other. So that same level of respect, bringing people under the umbrella of professional police values, it just seemed to melt when you worked together.

Now that's a little pollyannish because always you knew that the person next to you was a Croat and those people did that to us and our children. That's been preached to them in a way over the span of the war, and especially in Bosnia when they reach way back. Hundreds of years ago those people did that to our families and they speak this lore at their family table. So it's not always perfect, but I found that you could move on from that in the police academy setting. When everyone was there, you put them out in joint patrols and so forth. They got over that.

PEAKE: You've sort of alluded to in some of your remarks that sometimes it is the international element of police reform is emphasized too much. Too much about donors, too much about we need more internationals to make this reform work. I'd like to talk about sort of home grown success stories, things that you saw that you thought, that's actually something to feel good about that wasn't anything to do with international initiatives but was sort of more home grown in a way, emanating from Liberia, emanating from Bosnia. Is there anything that sort of stands out in your mind as being a sign that all the work I've invested in working on reform is now finally paying fruit.

KROEKER I guess I'd have to go back there and take a look. I met Alan Doss at a donor conference after elections and after the new President of liberal was installed. He was very—he talked in good terms about the general nature of policing today as compared to the way it was. The equipment that had arrived and so forth. But even when I was there, to see police engaged with the community in a service orientation on the street, completing a preliminary investigation, responding to someone's appeal to justice and saying "Okay, on this date, this goat was stolen from this person," writing the report, taking it in and so on, as opposed to the old

ways when I arrived which was someone would be sitting at a table at a police station and the officer would say, "Well, we'll investigate this but you have to clean my table." They would move their hand over the table meaning, you have to clean this table with a little bit of money if you want me to investigate that. I will get your CD player back for you because I think I can figure this out, but you have to make it worth my while. They hadn't been paid for a year or something like that, or more, the Liberian National Police. No salaries. So all the money that they were getting was from this table-cleaning exercise.

So to actually see them follow through on cases, do their work, get an \$80 per month salary when they had received before that \$12 a month and they had \$80 and a bag of rice is \$30 and you can feed your family for about a month on a bag of rice. So you knew that some space was in there for something other than survival. To me that was a real encouragement, seeing them do their work with the community and do it right and do it well with a good service approach, very encouraging.

PEAKE: Let me ask you though, what happens when the internationals go home? What do you think are the biggest challenges these police forces, maybe in Liberia and Bosnia, maybe elsewhere that you've looked at, whenever the internationals withdraw.

KROEKER *That's the test isn't it.*

PEAKE: You were in Timor for a while I think.

KROEKER *That's the test. You saw it in Timor when you were there too. We had several ages in Timor, you know, these various UNMISSET (United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor) and the last being UNMIT (United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste). I thought sometimes thought it should be called UNMET, UN Mission in East Timor. But it would be fitting because they were unmet goals. Well they never named it UNMET, maybe they should have. But I went out to the various places, several visits to Timor, sometimes staying weeks in Timor when I was in New York, before UNMIT, the new mission started and its approach. I would go into some of these places and Timorese police would take me into the police station and they would show how they were doing their work. There was a big generator out there that no longer worked because they didn't have the fuel for it. There was a police station that had a leaky roof because they didn't have any money to fix it. And on the walls I could see the exact date in some cases where the international police left because they had deployment schedules and they had them all, on this day, these police officers arrive, Timorese police. You could see their assignments and all of that and after that date there was nothing. That was the date they left, and they stopped doing all of that. That's a bad report card.*

PEAKE: Why do you think that was?

KROEKER *Because we did it for them. We had to push for too many, too soon and then we left too soon, we, the internationals left, Timor with a shallow foundation, with very little Timorese-built infrastructure, with inadequate administrative skills about how to do the infrastructure of a police like motor maintenance, paying the payroll, communication systems. We left them with inadequate knowledge of how to do all that because we were doing it for them. We were providing the cars and all that. Oh don't worry, we'll do this, as though we were going to do that forever. The way I saw that, and maybe it was a little shallow because I hadn't been there in the early days. But from all accounts I got, we did not adequately show them*

how to do a payroll, or have the motor mechanics that would keep the fleet in operation. So all those, what were those Indian cars that were left to them, I forget the name of it, anyway, you saw them when you were there, the old remnants. I'd go in the police station they would have cannibalized three cards to try to keep one running and then that one died. They had no cars and they had maybe a motorcycle that somebody knew how to fix and they would get out there. But this is the descending into the earlier abyss again.

PEAKE: Let me ask you two more questions.

KROEKER *Leaving too soon.*

PEAKE: Yes, leaving too soon. One is a very general question and then I'm going to allow you to—whatever, when I arrived at this interview with a set of notes, so I'm going to allow you to mention some of the things that you wrote in your notes.

KROEKER *I think we've covered them.*

PEAKE: My penultimate question is a very general one which is, if you were tasked and had the time to write a handbook on how to do international policing, what to do, what not to do, what would be the chapter headings? What would be the things you'd like to focus on that you think are worth focusing on?

KROEKER *That's a wide open question, I might take five minutes or so with that one. I think one of the things I would do—there would be a chapter that says, don't do it for them. As a dad, I come outside, my youngster is caught up in the tree and he's crying and he says, "Dad get me down." I said, "No, you got yourself up there. I will tell you how to get down." "No, no," crying. "Now look, underneath you there's a branch, put your foot on that branch." He put his foot on the branch. "Now, grab that limb over there." He'd grab that limb and pretty soon he's down. He got himself down. As soon as he got himself down, without me touching him, I said, "Now climb back up there." "Are you sure?" "Yes, go, you had fun. I'm right here. Now climb back up there and now get yourself down." Now, to this day, this one has climbed mountains. I mean, he's an alpine climber, a climber-climber. The face of El Capitan in Yosemite. Three times. A thousand meters, face, two nights on the wall. He's a climber-climber.*

So what's that illustrating? Now maybe he would have climbed anyway. But what I'm saying is, we need increasingly to not go in and be the occupying, "we'll do it for you." This is where we have this problem with this executive authority, or hybrid, or whatever, as opposed to the mentoring role. So we moved away from the police monitor in Bosnia. What is your job? I don't know, I stand around and I observe, monitor, that's my job. We moved them from that to the reform and restructure and all of that. So don't do it for them, that would be one chapter heading.

Another one would be, it's never the wrong time to do the right thing. There's the constant discussion that community policing is costly, it's expensive, you need sophisticated police officers who can understand communities and all this psychobabble. What we need to show them how to do is be tough and do policing and be competent and stop crying and whining. So the idea is community policing fits in any context if you really subscribe to the principles of community policing. That is, an overture to the community, policing in the specific needs of that community, solving problems, involving the community in specific roles and all that. It fits. It fits even more so in post conflict places than it does in

the average urban complex around the world. So that would be another chapter I guess.

Another chapter would say, would have something to do with you can't be a military police officer. You can be military or you can be a police officer but not military police officer although there is the term military police. But that's being, that's policing militaries. But there's a tendency that comes in the war world and that would be that whole chapter about demilitarizing police organizations and converting them to local police.

Another chapter would be about how you can't reform and restructure a police without rebuilding it. When you rebuild it, you have to rebuild according to the local needs, not sophisticated technology in a location where they lack sophistication. For instance, Liberia, I would have given anything for 500 manual typewriters, it would have been perfect for Liberia. I don't even know if there's a manufacturer who makes them today. I suppose there is. But they don't have computers and they don't have power. But a typewriter with some carbon copies and so on, that would have been fine. But what do we do? We send them these computers and no peripherals and we wonder why can't they do their work. So we have to incrementally bring them forward from where they were. Like this doctor who said he brought an MRI, or somebody brought an MRI to Cuba and in three months time it was dysfunctional because they didn't have the sophisticated peripheral supplies or the know how to keep it operating. So this million-dollar MRI sat there.

They had an MRI in Liberia but the thieves got to it and took all the copper wiring out of it and sold it. That's what happened with MRI in Liberia. But you have to rebuild according to local needs and you have to rebuild according to a plan. So that would be another chapter.

Another chapter would be you can't rebuild the police alone. There would be some discussion about police in the context of rule of law. You have to have a judiciary with integrity and a correctional system with integrity. You can't buy your way out of it and you don't have to get thrown in there like a debtors' prison because you stole something and you can't pay them off. Like in Liberia, you'll get out of here when you pay that person what you owe them. Well how can I pay the person what I owe them because I'm in here? We found in looking through the triaging of prisoners that most of them were in there for minor offences for a long time. Then the prison was overcrowded. So you have to rebuild all three. Those would be my chapters.

Probably there would be something to do with corruption. I'd make my point that it's not about corruption, it's about integrity. It probably would be a chapter heading, it's not about corruption, it's about integrity. Yes, "we're against corruption," everybody is. "We're for transparency," everybody is. But this idea of integrity and your decision making, doing the right thing at the right time, that's integrity-based policing and there's no substitute for that. So there'd be my chapter.

There would be a chapter about donors and I would unload all my baggage about donor fatigue or donor apathy or donor interference or donor preoccupation with their political needs as opposed to the local needs. I had a string of visitors from a variety of countries in Liberia and Bosnia both. They said, "What is it that you need here?" Thank you for asking. "We need some way of rebuilding this prison because it's desperate in there and people are literally dying in there. Beyond deplorable and inhumane." "Yes, but we build schools. I can't convince people

back home to build prisons for Liberia, that's imprisoning people and keeping them in the squalor."

They're going to have a prison. If you have rule of law you're going to have a place to incarcerate people. Make it a humane place with rights, treated well for the poor wretches that are in there. "No, we build schools." Okay, donors, I'd have lots to say about donors and their approach.

I made a note here, regional conflict is the preoccupation. One remark there would be probably about the preoccupation of war and moving from that to the post occupation policing era. So the police are not the occupying army, they're a service entity helping people to get access to justice that they were denied. A third final chapter would be you can't really have a sustained peace unless you have a competent professional police. That's peace in the neighborhood, peace in terms of getting the markets open, the schools open, kids sleeping in their beds at night and getting up and getting cleaned and dressed and off to school. The banks opening. You can't have that unless you have a decent level of policing. So there would be my book if I were to ever write it. There would be the chapters of it. There would be stories that come from Timor and Bosnia and Sudan and Haiti and Darfur and the Congo, Liberia of course.

One Egyptian police officer in Darfur whose words I'll never forget when I said to him, "Okay, you have 26 police at an IDP (Internally displaced people) camp in Darfur. We're standing there and all these IDPs behind me in their little tents. I said, "So you've got 26 police here," African Union Police Officers, Egyptian captain. Got 26 police, how many of them are capable, you can work with?

"I think four or six, something like that." "What do you mean?" "The rest I have no use for, they can't drive a car, they can't speak any language that works including English or Arabic or anything that works here. They speak a language that is native to their country so I tell them to just stay there and I'll work with these six." So there would be some implication that if you care about this world then you care about security at the neighborhood level. If you're going to send somebody, send somebody who can do something other than capture their mission subsistence allowance of \$90 or €90 a day. Come on, it's not a place to go to get rich, it's a place to go help the people so they can send their kids to school and put them in their cute little dresses and have a life. So there's the whole summary.

PEAKE: Sounds like it's going to be quite a book.

KROEKER *Not likely, not in my lifetime.*

PEAKE: Thank you Mark Kroeker.