

Pauline Neville-Jones

11:34:38:00 **Lord Paddy Ashdown**

Dame Pauline, thank you very much indeed. You have enormous wide experience and I know of course you've been doing some work for one of the political parties on this, so we've really been keen and interested to talk to you. I'm going to ask David Hannay just to lead off our discussions with you if I may. David.

11:34:58:02 **Lord David Hannay**

I just wanted to try and cover the regional dimension a bit. Of course the Baker Hamilton recommendation that the regional neighbours of Iraq should be drawn in more closely into an attempt to stabilise the situation, which was I think rather unwisely but perhaps you could comment on that, identified as bringing in Syria and Iran. Whereas in my book at least it was just as

11:35:22:08 important to bring in Turkey, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Arab states as well. One shouldn't approach only the awkward customers but all the neighbours. But perhaps you could comment on that. And then could you go on from that to deal with how this is going so far and where it needs to go to if it needs to go further. Should we be looking towards eventually creating some kind of

11:35:49:16 sub regional organisation of confidence building measures, security guarantees and so on in which all those countries including most importantly Iran play their part, or is that a ridiculous structure of UN groupies like myself who think that that is, that the absence of such a regional organisation in this part of the world is one of the things that is wrong with it. And if you think that

11:36:18:15 it is a good idea to move in that direction how can it be done given that it clearly can't be an organisation or a development that comes out of the back of the United States hand. It's got to be owned by the region and it's got to have full buy in from the regional countries.

11:36:42:11 **Dame Pauline Neville-Jones**

Well the first part of your question which is, I would interpret as being what kind of political context do you need to have for a successful withdraw down, in effect removal of allied coalition forces underpinning in the country. I think one of the problems that we face at the moment is the absence of a political

context. And virtue of the sort of approach that was certainly being outlined
11:37:12:13 there in my view was that it began to open up potentially much more political
movement in the region as a whole and create, one would hope over time, a
much more favourable context for Iraq itself to settle down in. So I think it's
quite a serious gap in existing policy that such a move is not now afoot.
Whether it should be as you said, David, tied particularly to those rather
11:37:43:22 awkward customers I think is a separate question. What sort of context would I
see? Well I think that, we might talk for perhaps a moment later a little bit
about the draw down itself, but when the process of in effect removal of
coalition forces is under way it does seem to me to be very important that you
don't actually create a situation in which there was a total absence of any kind
11:38:17:12 of Western influence, any kind of American influence, any kind of allied
influence in the Middle East as a whole. This increases the vacuum if
anything. So I think I take the view that there are three things that you really
need to be doing. One is that I don't think that we can go on for ever more
waiting for a very weak Israeli government to seize any kind of initiative in
11:38:44:12 relation to the Palestinian question and you do need I think to re-open and
revive the Middle East process. Now that itself involves some problems which
I fully recognise. I'm not suggesting this is a simple thing to do but I do think
it's a necessary part. The second thing that obviously needs to happen, and all
of these are very long term, very long term policies. We need to open
11:39:08:16 up it seems to me policy from being extremely short term, focused on the next
few weeks or the next few months, and on Western military requirements, into
something which is much more concerned with the long term future of the
Middle East as a whole. So I put all of what I'm saying much more in that
context. But I think we have to start. The second thing that has to happen it
11:39:31:02 seems to me, again I don't think this can be done without quite a lot of changes
in the way policy is run because it involves countries other than the United
States, but we need a quite different approach to reform process in the Middle
East as a whole. And I do think that one isn't going to find Iraq settling down in

a Middle East that doesn't itself have a reform process going and of
11:39:57:15 which there is movement in some of the other countries who are her
neighbours. Because it seems to me that the terrorist forces that are active in
Iraq will continue to be active elsewhere and that you need to have a policy
which is aimed at long term stability, and I define that as being a combination
of reform and actual security, it's not just security by itself, under way. And
11:40:20:09 the third thing is the thing you mentioned which is the need for local security
organisations, whether it's a CSE process or whether it is something which is
more formally military in kind and where there are security guarantees, or a
mixture of the two. I think that is to be worked out. I don't myself believe that it
can be done in the short term without Western underpinning and I think that
11:40:45:01 Western underpinning can be other than American. The French have some
relationships, we have some relationships. We need to start building in
particular I think Gulf security. And you're right to say in my view that the long
term object of all of this should actually be indigenisation of local security
arrangements. Now in all of that of course I haven't mentioned Iran which is
11:41:10:14 an extremely difficult piece of the jigsaw which doesn't fit in as things stand. I
do regard all those things that I've just said as being both forms of containment
for Iran, which I do think actually in present time that is quite an important part
of policy. But I would want it of course over time to be something which turned
into a context and not just a containment. But I do
11:41:36:12 think Iran poses a real problem and I think policy on Iran at the moment is
narrowly focused, it's very importantly focused, but very narrowly focused on
the nuclear question. And I don't actually see personally much alternative to
the present policy but I am worried about policy in relation to the Iranians not
dealing with any other aspect and that's where I come back to what I was
11:42:01:17 saying about the need, it seems to me, to deal with the Palestinian question
which involves having to look at the situation in the Lebanon and also to bring
in Syria. So I think it's one of those situations where you can't I think start to
move any of the important pieces until you get quite a lot moving. And that the

11:42:24:07 way of dealing with at the moment where we only deal with the narrow question of Iran on a certain aspect of policy, an important one but not the only one you need to deal with, and on the politico military situation in Iraq, and you deal with these as isolated pieces and everything else is left stewing, doesn't seem to me a way forward that will succeed.

11:42:43:21 **Lord Paddy Ashdown**

If we were to talk about such a broader political context, it's something we've been discussing at some length ourselves, who could be the prime mover in this? I mean clearly it can't be the United States for reasons which are obvious. Although the United States would have to be involved, they can't be the prime mover. Could it be the European Union? Does it have to be the UN?

11:43:06:11 **Dame Pauline Neville-Jones**

Well auspices are very important. I don't think you will get anywhere unless you've got the US voluntarily involved. Whether it's the lead flag so to speak I think is a separate issue. I would have thought in practice that you've got to have all three. Something that is mandated by the UN I think is really quite important. I think that after that it's essentially a partnership. But I would

11:43:26:14 want to see, you know, countries other than Western countries come in. And the long term reform process in the Middle East seems to me should involve non Western powers. It should involve the Japanese, it should involve the Indians, it should involve other countries that have claims and credentials to being part of the democratic world, and whose values seem to me ones that

11:43:48:10 should be reflected there. So this becomes something which is rather less than Western policy imposing itself on the Middle East again, or rather more than, put it that way.

11:43:59:08 **Lord David Hannay**

I just want to take issue with one point, Pauline, which was the Middle East peace process. I agree with you 100% that it's extremely important to get something moving again there because neglect produces just continual outbursts of the kind we saw in Lebanon. But would you not feel a bit nervous about cutting the Iranians into what I would call the inner circle of the Middle East process, given that their role in the Middle East peace process has always been and is likely to continue to be that of a spoiler. And that if they have a veto on the process they are probably going to stop it getting anywhere at all. Now I'm not suggesting that Iran should be, we should not talk to Iran about the Middle East peace process, but I don't think they can be part of the inner circle, can they?

11:44:43:16 **Dame Pauline Neville-Jones**

Ah, no, I take that point. I wasn't actually, if I appeared to imply that, I mean it's not what I meant. I don't actually think that one can omit Hamas from the process. I however would want to find a way of enabling Hamas not to block the process that didn't actually automatically give it equal status with others given all the issues that I think would arise out of that. I think it's one that has to involve essentially the local parties with the quartet. I mean I actually want to see the Middle East process as we know it resume. And then you can enlarge it, you can change it. But I think it should start with the format that we've got. And I have to say that I think the Europeans are quite important in all of this. I think there's a big role for Europeans and for the European Union and for individual countries. And it's our doorstep. We should be doing this. And the Americans should want to have other people taking quite a lot of the load.

11:45:47:08 **Asim Siddiqui**

Pauline, moving to the domestic scene for the moment, do you think our actions in Iraq have helped or hindered the radicalisation process taking place

amongst some young British Muslims? Or to put it another way have our actions in Iraq made the average person in the UK more or less safe? And if your answer is less safe then what kinds of community engagement are required given that our foreign policy cannot be dictated to by suicide bombers?

11:46:07:24 **Dame Pauline Neville-Jones**

11:46:16:07 Just by way of preliminary I think that many of the roots of declining social cohesion which I think has become, or national cohesion, has become a code word for relationships between Muslim communities in this country and the majority community. I think the roots of that are much deeper, older and much broader in nature than this issue. I mean they go to living patterns,

11:46:52:20 cultural habits, educational opportunity, family custom, the position of women, a large number of things, all of which it seems to me do require action of various kinds both by the communities themselves and in terms of public policy. But that's, it's important to say that and not to axe the whole question of national cohesion on the issue of foreign policy. However foreign policy I

11:47:19:07 think has aggravated an underlying situation which itself needs dealing with but it has aggravated it. It has, I think radicalisation was under way before, as I say, before intervention in Iraq. But undoubtedly the intervention in Iraq and Afghanistan, and I have to say that whereas I think the majority population in this country would make a distinction between the intervention in Iraq and the

11:47:48:12 intervention in Afghanistan and the relative legitimacy of those two, I don't think my evidence that our group has been taking in the Muslim communities does not suggest in the Muslim communities that that distinction is really made. And that both of them I think have been extraordinarily useful propaganda weapons in the hands of those who have a radical agenda. And

11:48:17:20 it does feed, it does feel people's sense of alienation. The fact that the government, and we heard this directly from people we talked to, the fact that the government would say to Muslim groups that they met, and I don't know if

11:48:40:09 this is still true but this was the end of last year the beginning of this year, they would say to us rather angrily the government, when they come to talk to us, tell us that foreign policy is out of bounds, off limits, we can't talk about it. And that in itself made them angry, and I think you can understand why. So the fact that they couldn't get discourse I think was itself damaging and lays people open obviously to listening to other voices if there's no debate going on the other way and no attempt at persuasion. Has it had an impact? I think

11:49:06:14 it's had an impact. Do I think that the intervention made us less safe? Well I'm afraid I do and I think that's less to do actually with what I've just mentioned. It has I think more to do with the fact that the government ignored, to our peril, the analysis that was done at the time by its own advisers on the possible, and indeed I think the assessment was that it was

11:49:37:08 likely that it would increase the terrorist threat, and that does not seem to have been taken into account. So if you are going to conduct operations of this kind you absolutely must have an eye to the effect on national security and on domestic security. So I think that the counter terrorist operations, and I certainly commend the services for what they've been able to do, but I think

11:50:00:08 that the active provision for the means by which they were going to be able to do this came later than it should. So are we less safe now? I don't know. I mean that is obviously a combination of what is the level of the threat and what is the extent of the counter measures that you're able to take. And I wouldn't want to make any kind of assessment because I don't know. But I

11:50:21:12 don't think that it necessarily follows that we are less safe now. But we clearly do have a terrorist threat which has indigenous roots and that is a very serious development. And we have to deal with that, and we have to deal with that in terrorist terms, but we also have to deal with it in all the other ways that I was talking about which have to do with re-creating a sense of national

11:50:45:02 unity.

11:50:48:19 **Sir Paul Lever**

11:51:14:12 I'd like to move on to the question of the basis on which we should now take our decisions about our policy on Iraq, particularly about the continued presence of our forces there. I mean up to now this policy has been heavily influenced, some would say dominated by considerations relating to our relationship with the United States. The view that it's only by working with the United States that you can hope to exercise real influence in the world, that this means behaving as a loyal ally including a loyal military ally, and sometimes perhaps swallowing some misgivings about the intrinsic merits of the policy in question. Now to what extent do you think such considerations should continue to apply to the British government when it looks at the draw
11:51:45:10 down of British forces in and around Basra? Should we take the view that we went in as part of a coalition and we have to stay as part of a coalition, and so long as the Americans remain then so must we? Or should we say we should look at the particular situation in which our forces find themselves, consider whether we think objectively their continued presence is serving a useful
11:52:14:02 purpose? And if we decide that on the whole we feel it would be better if we left be prepared to say to the United States in effect we feel we've given you enough loyalty and we're now going to take a decision on the basis of what we consider to be British interests.

11:52:35:09 **Dame Pauline Neville-Jones**

Well you've mentioned I suppose two of the three elements which I suppose I identify as being relevant in this. The third one I'd add and I'll come to your two, the third one I'd add is actually the effect on our forces. They do have two concurrent operations. And the one in Afghanistan is extraordinarily important. And I do worry about the level of stress and fatigue which is now
11:52:58:07 beginning I think to be manifested. So though I don't think it is the one that you should necessarily place above all others, I do think it has to find a place in the list of things that you should be looking at. And unless you're much closer to the armed forces than I am I think you can't know the truth of the assertions

that are made about their condition. But it's certainly something
11:53:21:12 that if I were a minister I would want some answers about. Your other two, I
think I'd like to take them in the order of what are the right circumstances to
withdraw, which can't ignore the Americans, and then the American
relationship. This is an awfully difficult territory I think. I'm grateful not to be
having to deal with it. One of the key questions obviously is, is the mission
11:53:53:18 that they are now engaged in, and it's a much reduced one from the earlier
much more ambitious ideas that we had about the degree of security that could
be achieved and therefore the process, political and economic processes that
would take place in that context, we're now there I suppose to continue to
provide security in certain areas and to train the Iraqis to take
11:54:19:01 over. Do we believe that that mission that we are engaged in still has validity,
it's actually accomplishing worthwhile training, is a second set of issues it
seems to me. I don't the answer and I don't know the answers to my own
questions, but that's the second set of questions that I think you need to try and
answer. On the face of it, it seems to me, still worthwhile work is being
11:54:48:05 done. The question of course being is when you have trained them however
will they then succeed in holding the territory which they are then meant to be
in charge of? And that seems to be a more open difficulty and relates
obviously to the much broader political context of how Iraq itself is developing.
The third, then there is the question of what duty do we owe the Iraqi
11:55:18:17 government? I noticed that the Defence Secretary was saying we will stay as
long as the Iraqis want us. He has now added it seems to me what I would
regard as a, it's an addendum and it's also in a sense a caveat, which is and as
long as we're needed. Who determines as long as we're needed? But it does
go to I suppose the issue of first of all how much duty do you owe to
11:55:49:10 those whom you've helped create and support on the one hand. And is your
presence helpful or counter productive? And these are very difficult questions.
It seems to me that the Iraqi government would like us to stay and think we're
part of their protective cover. Whether that is the same thing however as being

- there able to do something worthwhile, that's to say to
- 11:56:19:17 continue to provide security which it seems to me must include being able to have a productive outcome in the insurgency, I'm less clear about. And by that I mean it seems to me that the insurgency has now taken on dimensions and nature which I have some real questions that whether any external force could conceivably deal with it. The worrying thing is if you then withdraw does
- 11:56:55:08 the situation then, as some argue, get better because the provocation has removed itself, or does it get worse because there is nothing holding the ring for those who wish to fight each other? I don't know the answer to that question. That's one of the questions that seems to me any government who's faced with this set of very difficult issues needs to have an answer to.
- 11:57:17:22 And it has to balance all those factors in the end. I don't think it can take any single one of them. But those seem to me the extraordinarily difficult questions that you need to try and answer. Then there's obviously the relationship with the Americans. Now we are very, we can't just throw over all our relationships and all our policies and all our past. Our reputation in the
- 11:57:37:09 States to us is quite important and, you know, what Congress thinks of what we do matters to us. It seems to me probably the barrier has already been crossed it seems to me about British policy moving towards draw down, and that was when I think we made our first announcement. I think it did hit the American political scene. But I think the Americans themselves are moving in
- 11:58:07:08 that direction. And I doubt myself that that is necessarily a very big issue. We do however say to the Americans when we want their help in other military operations, you know, in together out together. And the relationship between the militaries and the pledges that you make to each other are again not things you can ignore. Thirdly there is the issue of how do people leave
- 11:58:33:15 the country, how do they manage to get out, how easy is that going to be? We are on the exit route. What functions do we have as people on the exit route?
- 11:58:48:23 **Lord Paddy Ashdown**

And the supply routes for their continuing operations.

11:58:50:21 **Dame Pauline Neville-Jones**

Both routes. So it does seem to me that you can't just simply ignore the relationship with the people you've gone on with. And that has it seems to me to be something that does have to be worked out between the militaries, and I don't think this is something that can simply be politically dictated. And we're coming out, you know, and what we need to do is come out by the end of X. I

11:59:08:02 am thoroughly against time tables, not only because I think that in the end the history is that they put you rather than anyone else under pressure, it seems to me for this very good military reason it's probably the wrong thing to do. And on the whole I don't know that the politics of it are very good either. You can argue it the other way but on the whole I think that people should actually

11:59:30:24 feel that policy is still being made on the merits of the question and not against something which is being dictated by considerations which then are adhered to irrespective of the effect they have on the situation.

11:59:45:02 **Lt Gen Andrew Ridgway**

Well I think you've summed up the dilemma extremely well. Operating in a coalition is extremely difficult. It's even more difficult when your strategic objectives begin to diverge. And one can see, and I'd welcome your views on this, one can see Iraq becoming for the US a theatre of operations in the war on terror rather than having a clear objective which we're all striving towards.

12:00:16:15 And operations against Al-Qa'eda and other extremists could of course go on for years and years. Under that basis can we continue, important as our position is, sitting on the line of communication and with all the political dimensions that go into breaking away from the coalition? Is it a practical proposition politically to think that that could happen no matter how sensible it becomes?

12:00:42:03 **Dame Pauline Neville-Jones**

Well, definitely not, no. And I don't the American political context and background in Washington enables the Americans to have indefinite time ahead of them. And the problem is the rate at which these different contexts are running and they clearly aren't the same. One of my, as you could see, one of my anxieties about the whole draw down issue is does its effects

12:01:26:02 increase the challenge of the war on terror? Does it then, do we exchange not being able to stabilise the country for actually a major source of terror in the Middle East as a whole? And that's a possibility you can't rule out. You absolutely can't rule it out. That's why these decisions on draw down are really very sensitive indeed. Were that to happen I think that would be very,

12:02:02:19 very serious. I don't think we should under estimate how serious it is. I mean the war on terror is already itself a major challenge to us and I worry about it in that all the things that I've been saying by way of prescription, what we ought to be doing in the Middle East, are infinitely harder to do if you're running a major counter terrorist, anti terrorist operation in the centre of that

12:02:28:24 geography. It also I think will if anything increase the divergence that you mentioned of strategic objective between, and here I put the British very much on the European end of things, in the way we actually handle the terrorist challenge to our societies. The US has pursued a military model. And I don't actually think in the end that it's the model that can win. But it is the model

12:03:06:23 they're on and I think if we have Iraq as a major source of terrorism it would be a model that the United States would continue to pursue. What have we done here? We have a criminal justice model. It doesn't mean to say it doesn't have military aspects but it's essentially a criminal justice model and I think necessarily so. You can't declare war on your own people. But the

12:03:35:10 rhetoric and the approach which accompanies the military model of course makes our chances of actually succeeding in the approach that we've got, it reduces it. I mean it makes it more difficult. So we actually have I think, it seems to me, a clash of technique which I wouldn't say it undermines but it

12:04:09:01 certainly makes our approach more difficult to pursue and makes it harder to have success. So where does that leave you? It seems to me, I come back to what, the starting point with David Hannay which is given all these risks you must, you must try to start creating a political context in which the initially process of draw down takes place.

12:04:37:03 **Lord Paddy Ashdown**

Well thank very much indeed. We're drawing to the end of our time. I very much agree with you about the war on terror issue. Actually I think we're dealing with it as a security issue in Britain as well as criminal justice one, rather than seeing it as a political issue which is about changing the opinions, about enabling –

12:04:52:19 **Dame Pauline Neville-Jones**

But we're dealing with the security issue essentially through the machinery of the law.

12:04:56:15 **Lord Paddy Ashdown**

I agree with that. But it's not a political issue and that's what it should, but that's a different issue, which although it has reverberations we'd better not get ourselves onto here. I think what's very clear is your comment to David's initial statement about the political context and you're talking about a wider regional context in which Palestine Israel is a key issue. I want to ask you

12:05:15:06 whether you think within that, as part of it, there is a role for a specific dedicated international agreement secured under Security Council arrangements involving the neighbours, which would assure the territorial integrity of the sate of Iraq. And whether or not it's your judgment if such a thing had a part to play, we're not talking about Deighton here because

12:05:38:15 Deighton was American sponsored, it can't be like that. But you know what I'm talking about here. Whether or not such a thing would be a) helpful as part of

that context, b) helpful in terms of something more specific and short term within which you could build a longer term solution, and c) likely to succeed, i.e. would Teheran, would Syria want to play a constructive role in

12:05:58:11 that, or would they prefer to see, in your judgment, a developing area of chaos with the United States deeply humiliated and no constructive outcome in the short term. Sorry if I may add one thought to that. There is just a thought that goes along with that. I was very fascinated by your idea that you have to bring in other voices, not just Western voices, but voices elsewhere.

12:06:18:17 Again there is a sort of a model here in the Peace Implementation Council which brings in for instance Japan and so on as part of that structure. So can I have your thoughts on that since you were very much –

12:06:27:20 **Dame Pauline Neville-Jones**

I invented the Peace Implementation Council.

12:06:30:03 **Lord Paddy Ashdown**

I added the question specifically for that reason because I know you have great experience in that area.

12:06:36:23 **Dame Pauline Neville-Jones**

I mean I think the short answer to your question is, and it's a very big question, is that if one started off with that big idea straight away and that being the central idea, I think you'd find it quite hard to get there. However I mean I think there are some real virtues in that being, that one of the outcomes that you can have, and people understanding that that is something

12:07:04:22 that you, that is an objective of policy. It seems to me that probably you would have to build towards it by quite a lot of the things that we've been talking about. But what it of course would do which would be valuable and useful and in fact quite important, is that it would engage the members of the Security Council in themselves trying to put forward something that would be

- 12:07:32:09 a long term in a sense a security underpinning. Because if you get a security guarantee for Iraq a lot of other things also it seems to me both fall into place and follow from it and can start to be designed in a preceding way. And of course what that also does is to bring in players who might otherwise also be inclined not to be as helpful as they will be if they're involved, notably people
- 12:08:05:11 like the Russians. So I think there's quite a lot in that. It would constitute pretty big change in American policy but it would give the Americans a forum in which actually to be a leading player. I mean I don't see how it could work without them being that. But without them having to take all the weight. I think it's very important that the Americans do have quite a lot of the weight
- 12:08:37:24 shouldered by others. What is needed badly in the world it seems to me now is a context in which American leadership which remains indispensable to us but plays in a context where the Americans no longer make the mistake of thinking that being indispensable means that in the end they are the only players. And that I think is where some things went wrong. They are
- 12:09:03:06 indispensable, they aren't the only players and they need help and we need to give it too.
- 12:09:10:16 **Lord Paddy Ashdown**
I can't resist one final question. After Iraq, after Afghanistan, and I get very worried about how things are going there too, shall we ever intervene again and if we did will there ever be another unilateral intervention or is it essentially in the future going to be multilateral, as indeed the proposed solution you're just reaching towards, is essentially shifting from unilateralism to multilateralism?
- 12:09:32:00 **Dame Pauline Neville-Jones**
Well I think it shows the importance of political legitimacy. Political legitimacy means you've got to have widespread support which means usually that it needs to be multilateral. And I say political legitimacy rather than necessary

12:09:54:19 legal authority because I think they are, though they are clearly closely related they aren't entirely the same thing. I think liberal intervention jolly difficult, jolly difficult, and we should be careful I think about being terribly gung-ho about the duty to protect, though the duty to protect is an important concept. There are other ways of protecting and undertaking your duty to do it without getting to the reaches of liberal intervention. I think you have to take into account the tolerance of democracies, you know, for the use of their armed

12:10:21:14 forces too. And I think one of the lessons of Iraq is that people understand the armed forces being involved in natural, the national purse be used for and then dying for things which are identifiably related to the national interest, which in turns means they can see when there's a direct security interest of the country they'll give their support. I think that when that connection is lost

12:10:54:06 in the public mind you do have a problem. I'm not saying that actually these things don't exist and these links are there but they're not very obvious.

12:11:05:03 **Lord David Hannay**

If you define the national interest in quite as narrow a sense as that you're basically eliminating about 150 or 160 of the 192 member states of the United Nations who will never have a narrowly defined national interest to get their troops involved anywhere in the world.

12:11:23:13 **Dame Pauline Neville-Jones**

No, no, I'm not saying that.

12:11:24:21 **Lord David Hannay**

Well, no, but I'm sorry. That's why I would like you to comment on whether there isn't a wider national interest in the preservation of international peace and security which we as a permanent member of the Security Council are heavily involved in, and which has to be taken into account when you argue why it is that your armed forces should get involved. It's quite different from

12:11:49:06 of course the situation that arose over Iraq. I'm sorry for coming back on you on that but I do think that it is a question not about defining, about having a national interest, it's whether you define it narrowly or broadly.

12:12:02:20 **Lord Paddy Ashdown**

I'm almost as chairman going to rule this one out. I'm fascinated by it indeed and I've just written a book about it. But it's actually, I hate the word liberal interventionism. Liberal internationalism, by the way intervention is not just intervention with armed forces, we intervened in Macedonia to prevent a conflict.

12:12:17:09 **Dame Pauline Neville-Jones**

I'm just saying that, absolutely.

12:12:19:03 **Lord Paddy Ashdown**

This I think is a very important part of this. We have to find a new structure, unilateral, multilateral in order to be able to cope with some of the self interest points that David has raised.

12:12:35:03 **Lord Paddy Ashdown**

All right, in which case I'm going to ask Pauline whether or not the Conservatives are going to come out with something that says the EU has a useful function. But I won't do that.

12:12:49:20 **Lord Paddy Ashdown**

Dame Pauline, would you like to address this question that David Hannay has very interestingly raised and which I –

12:12:54:21 **Dame Pauline Neville-Jones**

I certainly will briefly because I don't want to be misunderstood. I certainly

would not wish to be understood as saying –

12:13:42:07 **Dame Pauline Neville-Jones**

I wouldn't want to be understood as suggesting that I think that the armed forces should only ever be used in defence of their territorial homeland. And as a member of the Security Council you're quite right, there's a much wider in effect duty that we've undertaken in the international community and we should certainly honour it. I think it's a question really of, what I was trying to

12:14:04:16 get at I suppose is the question of proportion and risk. And I think one has to bear in mind in a democracy that when you get into a fighting situation as distinct from a peace keeping operation, which might have risk attached to it, it's not saying they're all going to be smooth, but never the less where you're actually up against it and there's a serious risk of losing, then I think you've

12:14:30:17 got to think rather hard about whether that's a sensible way of proceeding. In addition to which a peace keeping or an intervention operation that you actually fail in leaves you worse off than when you began. So I think that this is a very difficult area.

12:14:49:00 **Lord Paddy Ashdown**

I mean I think interventionism a la Iraq really looks to me a bit like our modern version of 19th century gun boat diplomacy and we just have to realise it is necessary to do this but there might be a different way of doing it and a different mechanism.

12:15:04:14 **Dame Pauline Neville-Jones**

I think we should try and find ways other than this of achieving our objectives I'll put it that way.

12:15:12:00 **Lord Paddy Ashdown**

On which note Dame Pauline, thank you very much indeed. Most grateful to

you and to my colleagues as well and that concludes this morning. Thank you.