

A SECURE STRATEGY?

RP: Islamist terrorism is still recognised as the major terror threat to the UK, but some have argued that the Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) and the National Security Strategy (NSS) have failed to properly establish a clear counter terrorism strategy. How would you respond?

PNJ: I think we already have a very clear counter terrorism strategy. The counter terrorism strategy is essentially the four Ps of Contest (Pursue, Protect, Prepare and Prevent). Contest, after all, goes to the direct pursuit of terrorism and the protection of society, individuals and assets against terrorist attack. It is the ability, should the attack get through, quickly to take charge and to overcome and restore normality. The fourth bit (Prevent) is where we have greatest disagreement with our predecessors. This is the area of how we approach and how we analyse the whole question of the relationship between terrorism, extremism and radicalization, and what the causal relationships are between these. If you put those four things together, you have an overall strategy with component parts designed to deal with the fact of terrorism right through to your ability deal with it, as well as the causes and the factors that might underlie it.

RP: In the SDSR, the government identified the existing Prevent strategy as lacking in focus. What do you see as the main problems with Prevent?

PNJ: We thought the Prevent strategy had become confused with what came to be known as “social cohesion” – and that, in fact, what we were doing under the Prevent heading was tainting activities under social cohesion. What we have done is to alter that language, and in any case alter that concept. We don’t think social cohesion is composed of the sort of multicultural approach where people get money for their temple or their individual activity. What we want to do – I think it is very clearly spelt out now in the government’s programme – is introduce an integrated approach where everybody is a participating and equal citizen; that the society we are trying to build is built on shared values; that individuals citizens are invited and encouraged to be full participants; and

that the climate in which extremism, separatism and alternative ways of life find less fertile ground.

So the integration strategy becomes a very important part of the overall approach. Within that we will certainly deal with individuals who are radicalised or have espoused extremist views, and there are various interventions that we could take with them. We have also to ensure our universities and prisons don’t become places where extremism is incubated. And we will continue to pursue and enforce the law against people who cross the line into terrorism.

RP: SDSR suggested that one reform to the Prevent strategy would be to separate the community-based counter-extremism from the work of the OSCT. What will this mean in practice, and will it affect the OSCT’s role?

PNJ: OSCT will remain absolutely at the core of the counter terrorist effort as it has functions under all of the four Contest headers. I think one thing will emerge when we produce our Prevent strategy in the next couple of months, and you will see the different emphasis that I am outlining. OSCT will continue to have an important role to play at the intervention end with given individuals.

RP: The previous government was heavily criticised for its reactive approach to terrorist threats. What is the government doing to properly engage with the security industry and ensure emerging screening technologies, for example, are supported and implemented pre-emptively rather than reactively?

PNJ: If you look at the green paper we just produced and certain of the things I have been doing with Peter Luff [Minister for Defence Equipment, Support, and Technology] by way of going to events sponsored by AIDIS – you will see we have a number of messages. One is that, as you rightly say, technology is absolutely essential to our ability to our ability to keep ahead. The terrorist is fairly sophisticated, both in terms of their ability to use the Internet and in their ability to understand the technology that we have and try to evade it. We have to be one step ahead.

One of the things that we need to do – and you



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will see it in things like the INSTINCT demonstrator (and there have now been three) – is develop this partnership between government and industry in moving forward technology. Here the game is not to wait for government to produce a requirement; let us instead think about what the problem is and therefore go together to see what the possible solutions are. This is a way of doing three things: it fosters innovation, it fosters competition between different solutions and it benefits national security. It is also a very good basis for the growth of the UK security-based industry, for export growth and for national wealth. So I see it as a very important part of the security agenda in this country, but it is also an important part of increasing our national wealth and our export capability. And cyber security is in much the same place.

**UK Security Minister
Baroness Neveille-Jones**



I want to emphasise that we really are active in this area, and you will see more evidence of that. We have at least 3,000 people coming to the Home Office Scientific Development Branch (HOSDB) exhibition in March – we have been extremely active in inviting people and we are pushing the UK-based security industry as a source of exports. We are also doing far more than has ever been done in the past to link the defence and security agenda; this is a continuum, and they aren't really separate things.

RP: There has been criticism of the merger of security into the aerospace and defence industries under the umbrella of the ADS Group (the UK's Aerospace, Defence, Security and Space trade organisation which was formed in 2009 following the merger of the DMA, APPSS and SBAC). Many within the industry claim that security is being overshadowed by defence and aerospace. Do you think this is the case, and is it likely to continue?

PNJ: I don't think it will continue to be. I think that security by comparison to defence is comparatively immature – based on the size of the companies and also the fragmentation of the purchaser. One of the things we will do over time – though we can't do everything over night – is to become a more intelligent purchaser. I think what we are seeing in the security industry is some consolidation, a growth in the maturity of what companies actually do and where they regard the main line of their business being.

It does, however, remain in its component parts, and I suspect it will never become quite like the defence industry with these giant companies. This is because the nature of the technology moves on so fast that it best flourishes in slightly different sized units, and because innovation is extremely important. So in the security sector the small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) with its closeness to the laboratory and the academic world is actually an important part of the capacity to maintain innovation. So we will see greater similarities develop over time between the two parts, and I think companies will increasingly realise that security is a real company income generator.

RP: Some critics have argued that the review of counter terrorism legislation, unveiled in January, has weakened the UK's ability to counter terrorism, in an effort to appease civil liberties campaigners. Do you think this is fair?

PNJ: I don't. I am the security minister, and I am comfortable with what we have done. I took the view in opposition that security and civil liberties are not a zero-sum game; that it is possible to get an effective security regime that does protect the national interest and the people of this country, and at the same time not to have such a gross intrusion into the traditional civil liberties and the rule of law. We have not felt able to entirely dismantle some of the protection that needs to be put in place when we are unable to secure a prosecution. But, as you will have seen, we have done a great deal to ensure simultaneously that we are able to protect the public while being less

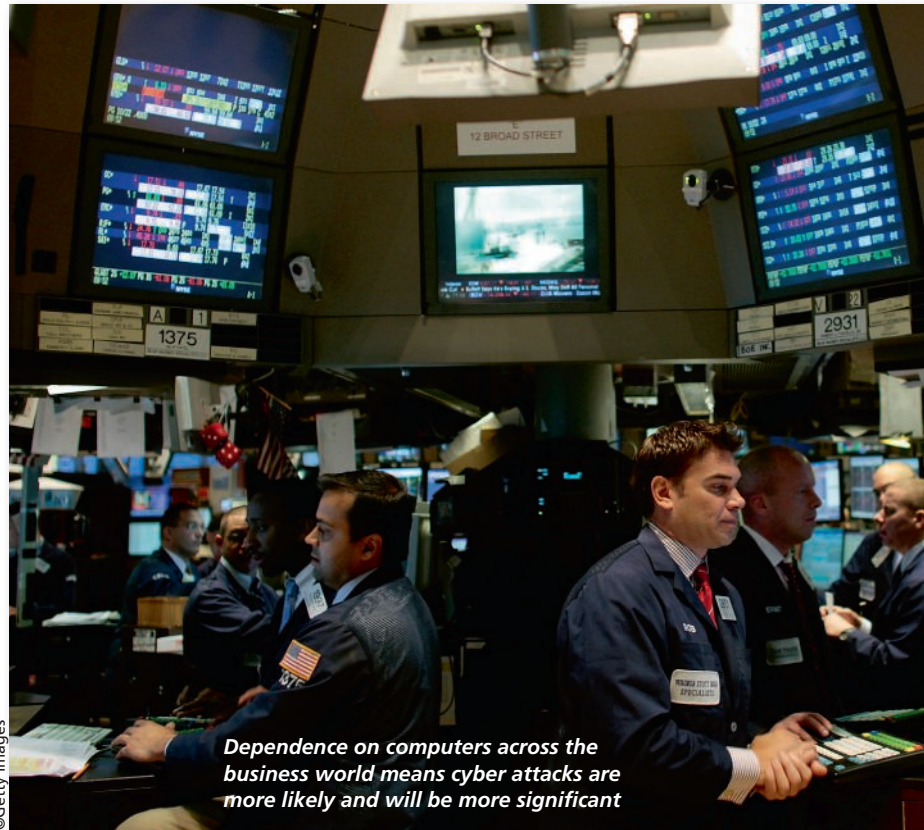
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intrusive into the rights to trial and the rights to a fair hearing of those who are suspects. This is a difficult area, and I hope when the legislation comes forward we will have a mature debate.

RP: The review examined the need for a 28-day detention period for terrorism suspects, and recommended a reduction to 14 days. The period was raised in 2006 at the urging of counter terrorism police officers who claimed they needed this time to examine digital evidence. Has this necessity changed?

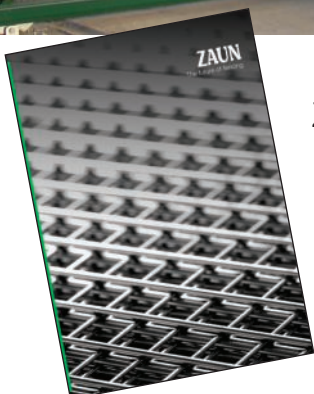
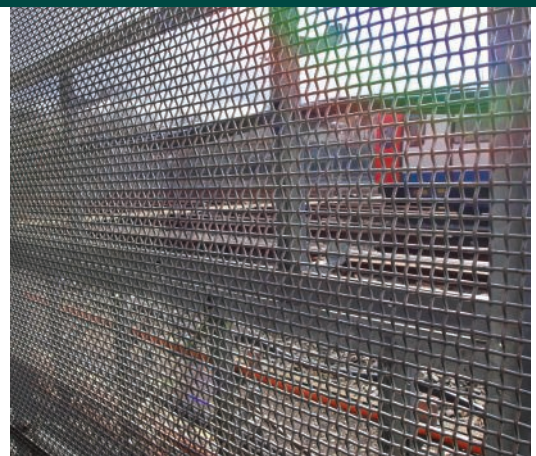
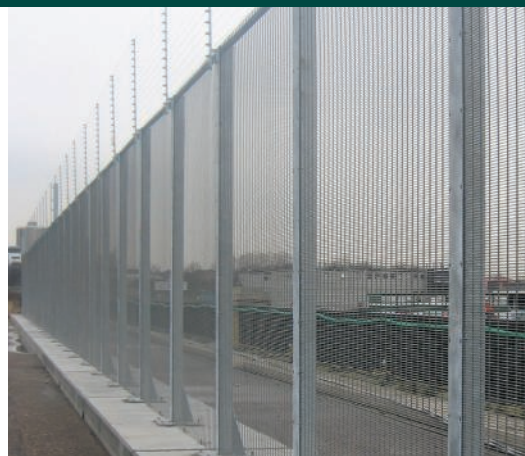
PNJ: I think what police have made absolutely clear is that they will work within the framework that Parliament lays down. And, as we have seen, since 2007 they have been able to work within a 14-day period. Remember that, in allowing it to lapse to 14 days, the government has said it might be necessary to have a longer period in extreme circumstance and, assuming Parliament agrees, we will build in a contingency to allow that to happen. So I would say the government is mindful of a changing situation and the need to respond to that quickly, while looking carefully at what has actually been needed. You must look at counter terrorism as a package, and I would say it is a pretty balanced package that maintains the

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level of security we need, but is less intrusive.

RP: The resurgent threat of Irish republican terrorism from IRA splinter groups appears serious. Do you think that the government has taken its eye off the ball as some commentators and some MPs have suggested?

PNJ: We have never not taken security in Northern Ireland seriously, and it is source of great regret that the Good Friday Agreement has not created a situation in which people are not tempted to try this trick again. It would not be right to say we have taken our eye off the ball, however. What we do need to be certain of is that we keep our eye on this ball. The government has made it clear that this is a priority, and it is up there in the National Security Strategy (NSS) as a tier 1 issue.

RP: How can these splinter groups best be addressed? Will there be an equivalent of the Prevent strategy to combat republican extremism?

PNJ: This is an area where I don't want to go into detail, but we are taking their activities and the threat they represent very seriously.

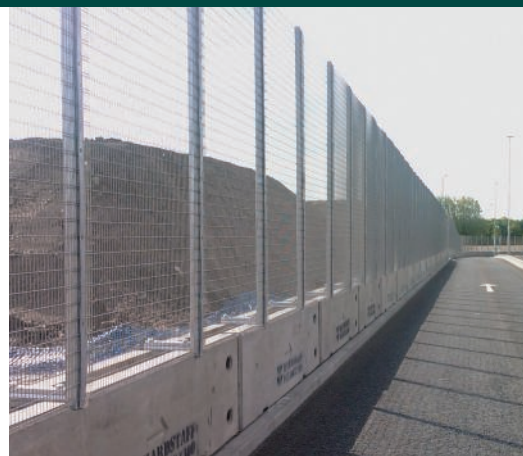
RP: Cyber security was another area highlighted as a top priority in the SDSR, and the Foreign

Secretary revealed in February that several cyber attacks have been made on the UK government and defence industry, one of which slipped past security. How are these threats being met?

PNJ: Our dependence on cyber is growing, and I think the greater the dependence the more likely and more significant the attacks can be. The message from the Foreign Secretary was that this is a global issue and we need to get some global co-operation; we can't do it on our own.

My own view is that, when you analyse where the attacks are going and what people are seeking out of it, the bulk of the activity is directed at intellectual property and wealth creation. We regard the safety, security and vulnerability of cyber systems in the private sector – which control national infrastructure and provide the sinews of our ability to operate in cyber space – as being quite as much a part of national security interests as well being at the root of wealth creation. So my answer to your question is: it is rising in importance. We are in a good place, but we need to maintain ourselves in a good place, and indeed increase our capabilities. We want to be able to advertise the UK as safe and secure, but also as a good place to do modern business.

sh back the boundaries.



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