

## **Tom and Jane Chalmers**

*Grew up in Dundee, Scotland, prior to his family emigrating to Rhodesia in 1955. Worked in the Royal Rhodesian Air Force as well as the Rhodesian Air Force. Left Rhodesia for South Africa 1978 and worked with trades unions. Later moved to the UK (1980s/90s?) and developed work in environmental management.*

**Note: The words of Annie Berry are written in Arial bold type**

The words of Tom Chalmers are written in Arial type

The words of Jane Chalmers are written in Times type

**This is Annie Berry interviewing Tom and Jane Chalmers on Tuesday the 26<sup>th</sup> of May 2009. Thank you very much for having me round. Perhaps we could begin by talking about how you came to be in Rhodesia?**

Well basically my father had been in the post office during the war. He was out in Africa and he came back in 1945. Things were very depressed then. He was in the post office, so at least he had a job, but the whole country was in a mess and it was taking its time to build up. My mother was a lot more ambitious than my father so she had contacts out there, as did my dad allegedly, and they decided to come out. I was sixteen at the time and we left in 1955.

**And where had they been living?**

We were living in Dundee in Scotland.

**So there was this sense that you were leaving a fairly depressed Scotland?**

Oh for sure, oh God, it was awful, yes.

**And what did they feel they were emigrating out to?**

Well, a better life, that's what everyone was looking for. I think you'll find at that particular period in time, there was quite a mass immigration from the UK. It wasn't very well publicised, but qualified people, like Jane's father for instance, were certainly finding it was far easier to get a far better lifestyle abroad than it would be in the UK. And my father had travelled a bit around Africa, mainly north, but nevertheless they decided Rhodesia sounded like a good idea.

**Do you know why they picked Rhodesia?**

Not particularly. I think there had been quite a bit of publicity about Rhodesia at that particular time. It was thriving, it was looking for immigrants, it was far easier to get into there than anywhere else. Kenya was still very, as the Scots

would say, “snotty-nosed.” You had to be somebody to get into Kenya whereas in my father’s case, he didn’t have a lot of skills: he was a postie and he could drive; and he managed to get himself a job. He went out first, for about six months, and got a job in a clerical capacity with the Roads department. They were building a road from Salisbury up towards Mtoko, one of the areas in the country, so he went out first and then my brother and I flew out. We left Glasgow airport and took four days to fly out to Africa on our own. He was seventeen and a half, I was sixteen, and my mother and my sister went out by boat to Cape Town, so that was the start of it.

We arrived in Salisbury and my father (00:03:17) was living ten miles outside town in a ‘pole and dagga.’ Basically in the early days in Africa, and even now...the pole and dagga actually originated here in Europe and certainly in the UK if you go down to Peterborough, you’ll see that wattle and daub homes were taken out to Africa. Basically what happened is you got loads of wooden poles and just put mud on the damn things, let the mud dry and then put a thatched roof on. That was basically what they called the ‘pole;’ and ‘dagga’ is mud in African. He was living out there and we all moved out to that part of the world, ten miles outside of Salisbury. Initially when I left school at fifteen, I had worked for a butcher in Dundee, as did my brother. Not with the same company, but we both worked as butchers, so we got a job in a butcher’s shop in Salisbury. But then I didn’t get on with the boss and he didn’t get on with me, because at sixteen I was a stropky bugger, and he was asking me to work times which didn’t suit me. So I left and looked for another job and I got a job with Sir Alfred McAlpines who were building African housing just on the outskirts of Salisbury, in an African township called Highfields; they were contracted to build 2,000 houses out there. So I joined them, it must have been in ’57 and I worked with them for 18 months, 2 years there. Then we moved up to do a similar contract in Northern Rhodesia. You’ve got to remember, at that stage, the British had encouraged us to have what they called the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland so basically it was looked upon as one country.

**So you could move fairly freely between them?**

Oh yes, so we moved up to Ndola and we started doing the same thing, building African housing on the outskirts of Ndola. Again, I stayed there for about 18 months to 2 years.

**Can I just take you back a bit...you moved to Rhodesia after you finished school? What sort of values had your schooling instilled in you and did you have much awareness, for example, of the wider empire?**

Nothing. We knew about geography obviously; and we knew about the big red marks all over the world. Empire was very much a big thing and people were very proud of it and I think justly so, because they brought a lot of health and education to other parts of the world. Basically, I was leaving school at fifteen in those days, when teachers had just come from the war and half of them were shell-shocked. Really, the education was pretty basic at that stage and there were no aspirations. I went to a Catholic school and of course there

was still a lot of discrimination in Britain, Catholic and Protestant. My sister was a bit brighter. She could have gone on to a higher-level school and possibly on to University, had she wanted to, but she wasn't really interested. But when my brother and I left, basically you left school to become a tradesman and that was it. You didn't need any education to lay bricks and cut up beef. So that was it, they didn't give you any thought of "there is the goal," you know, goal setting and all that. Looking forward was just not in the curriculum in those days.

**(00:07:02) You found what was available?**

You went out and you found work. There was work, there's no question of that; but it was all very menial stuff, especially if you didn't have an education. You would be an apprentice bricklayer, or plasterer, or something like that.

**And how did you find it arriving in Salisbury?**

Well it was a totally different world: It was wide streets, sun shining and basically everyone driving cars. Cars in Dundee were just about non-existent. You went to school by bus and tramcars were still going and that kind of stuff. My father obviously had a car because he was living ten miles outside of the town. There was a lot more aspiration. Basically, to be fair, if you were white, there was a lot more potential, especially for young people. Because I could read and write, I got a job as a storeman, that's what I was doing with McAlpines. So as I said, I worked in Salisbury on a building project for African housing, and moved up to Northern Rhodesia, Ndola, and didn't see anything up there. Then McAlpine had a contract to build a dam and a canal down in the low veldt of Rhodesia, which was outside of Fort Victoria. Basically it was building Kyle dam, which is quite a large dam. Further down from there towards Messina, between Fort Victoria and Messina, you've got about 190 miles and it's what they call low veldt. Bearing in mind that Rhodesia, and most of central Africa, is about five and a half thousand feet high, anything under that is called low veldt, 'veldt' being an Afrikaans word for country. You're looking at about two and a half to three thousand feet above sea level, which, because of that, is exceptionally warm in comparison. When you're in Salisbury and places like that, at that altitude, you don't have as much heat.

So we went down there. It was a very hot area, very primitive. We were building this canal which was going to be a 35 mile canal to take water to a sugar estate down there, which was a monstrous thing, by UK standards, of about 50,000 acres of sugar cane under irrigation. They were able to get three crops a year because it was so prolific. With cane, you don't have to plant it, you just cut it and it grows again. So they had these huge Rolls Royce pumps that were pumping water around to irrigate this thing and I worked down there. But of course, again, I was now getting to the stage where I was twenty when I went down there, realising that there wasn't much of a life outside of African housing and working in the bush.

A friend of mine had joined the Air Force two years before me and he kept in touch with me and I thought, well, let's get back to Salisbury because that was

where it was all at, and I applied to join the Air Force in 1960. I got through the selection process and I joined in October 1960. I joined as an aircraft instrument technician, which is basically looking at the instruments: The altimeters, air speed indicators, automatic pilot and stuff like that. One of the first big experiences was the Congo emergency because of the disruption with the Belgian Congo, when Patrice Lumumba and people like that basically just threw the whites out, and murdered and raped nuns and all that kind of thing. Now Jane was up there at the time with her (00:11:26) family and she just saw the convoys of cars coming through. I was sent up with our Vampires, based in Ndola airport and just patrolling the border to make sure that nobody went through on our side of the border that we didn't want to; and of course helping the white refugees coming down.

### **Was this in your role as aircraft technician?**

Yes, we were the Royal Rhodesian Air Force at the time so as I said, we were there to guard our border but also to keep an eye on what was going on with the other side. I was actually up there when Dag Hammarskjöld crashed, just outside Ndola. His plane went down just about two miles from Ndola airport where we were. He was the United Nations General Secretary and all that and of course, United Nations then had two or three of their troops coming down to guard things. And they pulled the aircraft into an aircraft hangar in the park area and I saw it, there were bullet holes in the dam thing. But whatever caused it to go down, they say that it went down because of the altimeter reading. There were two towns, one was Ndola, which was in Federation territory; and the other one was Ndoli, which was in the Congo. They were different altitudes so as he was coming in to land, he came down too low and he went into a forest and of course it killed him. So of course that was quite a bad experience seeing all that going on, and that was the first trip I did with the Air Force.

### **In what way was it a bad experience?**

Well, all these people coming through and the stories you were hearing, you know, Catholic nuns getting pulled out the car and raped and...

### **So you mean the fact that you were experiencing these people leaving the Congo?**

Well it wasn't the leaving, it was the way they were being...

It was what was going on while they were leaving.

### **They were fleeing?**

Sure, fleeing without anything, I mean they were lucky to have their cars to be honest with you.

Oh, there were some real atrocities there in the Congo in that period.

They sent Irish troops out there from the United Nations troops, but they sent up such small numbers that they really couldn't control anything. So that had a tremendous impact on the Rhodesian psyche because people thought...

It's going to happen there if it can happen here.

(00:14:00) It happened to us. Then of course things then quietened down and in 1963, the Federation broke up. The three territories went their separate ways but prior to that, in the early part of 1963, I went up to Cyprus.

No, no you went to Cyprus after we got married didn't you?

Yes, '63.

Yes, in '63, we were married in April and six weeks later, they sent you to Cyprus.

Basically, we were still the Royal Rhodesian Air Force at that stage, but we were part of Commonwealth Command. Now you've got to bear in mind that when I was down in the low veldt working for Triangle, one of the guys I worked with had been with the SAS across in Malaya when Britain was trying to keep Malaya as a colony. The SAS was actually formed during the Second World War by Rhodesians. It was basically the Rhodesian unit, because they could work in those kinds of conditions. Stirling actually had worked in Africa and knew these guys and that's who he recruited. So as I said, knowing this guy had been with the SAS across in Malaya, the tradition of being in service in the Empire was very much the thing. You've got to remember that in the Second World War, Rhodesia brought in conscription to stop people leaving because there was so many of them volunteering that...

We were going to end up with no men.

They said, "we can't run the country if you all bloody go." And they'd still be doing that. And of course, again, we went up to Cyprus because there's a big military air base in Akrotiri it's called, just outside Limassol. One of our last detachments was to take our Canberras up to Cyprus to do bombing exercises with the RAF. That in itself was quite a good story because of course when you have a big airbase like that, we had 1,000 people in our Air Force and there were 4,000 RAF people in Akrotiri, in one base. So as far as we were concerned, we were just a small wheel.

Basically, what happens is you have this huge airport and (00:16:38) the one squadron will stand here, and the next squadron will stand there. Of course our Canberras were here and they had some fighter aircraft called Gloucester Javelins on the next hard standing. Just to divert a little bit, when UDI was declared, who did they send down to guard Lusaka, but the same Gloucester Javelins? So of course they all knew our pilots and again, making it into a real farce, because they were flying in international air space, every time the RAF Gloucester Javelins took off they had to get in touch with Salisbury tower because they would then warn any civvie aircraft what was going on. So they'd say, "Salisbury tower, this is RAF Gloucester squadron taking off. We

will be flying here, there and everywhere.” “Thank you,” and we’d send our guys up and of course they’d fly side by side: “Hi Tom, how the hell are you? That bloody night in the mess, wasn’t that bloody hilarious, you buggers can drink.” It was great because everybody knew one another and actually at the end of it, when they were taken back from Lusaka where they were based, all the Air Force guys met together at the Victoria Falls hotel and Ian Smith went up and had a drink with the guys and had a really good evening, the RAF guys and our guys.

So there we were, now, with bomber command up there and of course Aden was still a big issue in the early sixties and we used to send our aircraft up again, to help the RAF with trying to keep Aden as a colony. That used to be a great detachment because it used to happen about November/December and Aden was a free port so of course all the guys used to volunteer to go up to Aden because they could buy stuff cheap and fly it back for Christmas presents etc. I was working on the Dakota squadron by then, which was 3 Squadron. We had seven squadrons at that stage, it was a very small unit. So again, here we had experience in the war; in the Second World War they’d had experience in Malaya; they had experience in Aden; and basically we were kith and kin, that’s how we saw the situation.

**And this business with the Gloucester Javelins, this was just around the time of UDI was it?**

It was just after UDI.

**That’s the irony.**

Yes, it was about eighteen months after we’d been up serving with these guys in Akrotiri.

We all used to think that if the British government ever decided to get really nasty and try and declare war on us, we didn’t think they would have done anything.

The troops would have told them to get lost. The chief of staff would have said “you must be joking.”

Because there was so much camaraderie between the two.

(00:19:42) They’d all worked together these guys, even Ian Smith, he’s a war hero for God’s sake; he got shot down twice in the Second World War fighting for Britain.

**Do you think that is something that was felt particularly strongly by Air Force people, since you did have that history of serving abroad?**

Very, very much so, the Army people as well but obviously they were earlier. But we kept in touch with the RAF right through to about ’64, serving with them at Aden and in Cyprus and stuff like that.

I think that same feeling, maybe not the knowledge of the Air Force, but that same sort of general feeling was there for most people.

With the armed forces, yes, because they all knew the history of what had gone on before; it was that kind of situation. Of course what happened then is that Africa started to change. You did your thing on Kenya and this is one of the things that irks us because basically the white population in Kenya was 30/40 thousand, was it about that figure? The British troops that were sent out, the majority were well off farmers, they were all rather upper class.

Well you had to have money to be allowed to emigrate to Kenya.

They were all upper class and when we were leaving in '55/'56, everyone was saying to us "are you not afraid of the Mau Mau?" because that was going on. And the Brits sent 10,000 British troops out there – I've got stats out there for you – and basically, they locked up 100,000 Africans. They killed God knows how many and they were lucky because they were fighting against Africans with spears. We were fighting against Africans with AK47s and we couldn't see the sense of why they did that in Kenya for a small number of white people, only to give it away; and then condemn us for trying to do the same thing in Rhodesia and with ten times more whites.

### **So this was a feeling that came later?**

Well yes, once UDI was declared. We were looking back on that and thinking.

They wouldn't give us our own things.

They had had talks, and of course what didn't help was we always saw Wilson as extremely left wing, and he just wasn't interested in that at all. One of the things that you've got to bear in mind when you look at these situations is that a lot of pressure came from America, actually, the Atlantic Alliance. Basically, it's America coming into the war when the Japanese attacked them. They didn't have to go into Germany, they weren't interested in that but what they said is "right, if we help (00:22:47) you by sending you goods (aircraft etc), we want you to give freedom to all your colonies because at the moment, you've tied that up and we can't trade with them. If we're going to help you now, you've got to open that up." That's why the empire fell apart, nothing to do with us being good hearted and all the rest of it, the pressure was from the Americans to get rid of it as fast as we could. I think it was '47 that India had to go.

It was all to do with money.

It was all to do with money.

### **And trade.**

So we're now in a situation where Smith and the guys had been talking with these people and trying to get some agreement, and it was just a case of one

man – one vote. Now, we'd looked at Africa and basically what we saw was one man – one vote – one time. Once these guys get in, they don't get out. You can see that with Mugabe and that was the same with basically everyone else. Doctor Hastings Banda took over in Nyasaland and he stayed there until he was about 90 odd and died.

Yes, every time you used to hear that there was somebody likely to be a successor to Banda, because he was old when he became the president, the next thing you'd hear this guy had died in a car accident or something. That's what they're like over there.

And he was a qualified doctor; he'd been educated in...

Well he was reasonable, I mean the little country was peaceful.

Oh yes

### **So what were your thoughts on that independence and the creation of Zambia?**

Well we were all fed up really. The British government had double-crossed us.

Yes, well we couldn't see any option to be honest with you. Basically, we'd been a good servant to the British Empire and suddenly we're getting kicked in the bloody teeth and told that "you can't do this" and "you can't do that." The Brits had never put a penny into Rhodesia, there was no subsidy, there were no armed forces guarding us or anything like that. They'd been self governing since Rhodes took it over back in the 1800s. So really, we kept saying, "well why are you interfering with us? Alright, we're part of the Empire but the Empire's bloody breaking up, we're not breaking up." And that (00:25:04) was basically our attitude, that you're trying to impose your will on us and you don't have the right to.

### **And I'm interested that you mentioned Kenya as well. Did you feel sympathy for the people that were left there on independence?**

The white Kenyans? Yes, to some extent we did because obviously, again, I think you've got to bear in mind that we're only talking about 26 people who were killed by the Mau Mau. It was a minority number but then it was quite scary. If it hadn't been for the 10,000 British troops, it could have been an awful lot more.

I mean my mum and dad, my parents, moved from Northern Rhodesia up to Tanzania, just as it got its independence and they combined Tanganyika and Zanzibar to make Tanzania. Tanzania was a very poor country, beautiful scenery and all that but very poor and undeveloped. They used to do their shopping in Nairobi and they used to fly there. So people had quite a nice life after all the Mau Mau troubles in Kenya, as it became. The white people in Kenya seemed to have quite a nice life. Mum had friends there and they had quite a good life. We've been on holiday there, we went to Mombasa a few years ago and they all seemed to live peacefully with the Africans, which is not happening in Zimbabwe.



Can I ask you a question? You've obviously done a bit of studying about this situation. What was your perception of the African in the thirties and forties? How far advanced were they?

**I don't know...**

What I'm trying to put across to you is that the perception is that they were ready for independence; they were ready for national government. This is a photograph of the first aircraft to land in Ndola in Northern Rhodesia where we were talking about earlier, in 1927. Now if you look at the African people, they were dressed in skins.

**It's an enormous aircraft isn't it?**

Well yes, he was flying over Africa; he had to be pretty big. You see, this is it, they were a tribal people and they had been tribal for thousands of years and basically their whole concept of their way of life was that they had a tribal chief; and the tribal chief was the boss. He could do what he liked; there was no democracy. People like Shaka Zulu, I don't know if you've read anything about him, but if he fancied you as his wife and you had a husband, he would just kill the husband and that would be the end of it. So they were brought up expecting, once you get to power, you have supreme power. That (00:28:38) was their culture and this is what people don't seem to understand. That's why you have what we would call despots.

This is why we have Mugabe.

But that's how their culture was and that goes back thousands of years. They were a very, very primitive people. I think that it was a mistake, but we didn't give women the vote in this country until about 1918 or something like that

'23 or something wasn't it?

Now why was that? Because white men didn't think you were ready for it. With the greatest respect, educated women, professional women couldn't have the vote. Now all of a sudden, we're being told that these people deserve the vote because they're the majority. Now the chances are in 1918, as is always the case, women live longer than men; women were the majority in 1918, but they didn't have the vote. I'm just using history to make a point but they weren't ready for independence at that stage because they still had their tribal attitude. You've seen it in Africa, you've seen in Mugabe for 28 years. Where's all the demonstrators out in the street because of this despot? Smith was vilified, "Smith was this" and "Smith was that," but he never killed anyone.

**Just to play devil's advocate as it were, what was your perception of the structures or hierarchies, the petty apartheid that existed in Rhodesia? That would perhaps have prevented people from being able to progress or become educated or work their way up?**

No.

We didn't have legislated apartheid like South Africa.

**But people have called it petty apartheid.**

There was nothing to stop them getting educated.

Let me give you an example. I left the Air Force in 1970, I was still doing call-ups on a periodical basis but I did a couple of jobs, we came back to the UK for a year, and I finished up in about 1976 as the General Secretary of the banks' Trade Union. One of my first fights was to get equal pay for women because Rhodesia had Roman Dutch law which meant women were inferior. The black clerk was earning more than a white woman on the same grade. That is where we were. We weren't going round and saying, "you're black, you're worth nothing." He was actually earning more than a white woman of (00:31:51) equal qualification and we had to fight to try and get that changed. So basically, the education was there. You had a very small white population, basically generating the structure and the funding, so obviously the tribal areas perhaps didn't get as good an education as the towns. But the town African was getting educated to the extent that we had African doctors in the hospitals; we had African guys doing all sorts of things at professional level.

When Tom first left the Air Force, he joined Prudential Insurance Company. One of the black salesmen there paid more in income tax than Tom was earning when we first joined.

He was earning £30,000 a year in 1970.

It was possible for them to get on and they didn't have to be anybody's brother or anything like that.

He was in the same building as us, his office was next door to me, Gordon and I were big friends and we still are friends if he's still alive, poor sod. He was a million dollar salesman with Prudential and at that particular time, Jane's parents were trying to get us back to the UK and they were saying "oh look at these things that are going on. You're locking up your Africans at night" and this, that. The next thing, Gordon, being a friend of mine, said "look, I'm going across to the UK, my Aunt works in London as a nurse, where are your in-laws?" We said "in Newbury in Berkshire" he said, "well on my way through to America, I will go and visit them". And there he is, with these suits I couldn't afford to bloody buy, pitched up at the door! "Mrs Bullen, I'm a friend of Tom and Jane's. I just thought I would come in and see you and let you see how they treat me across there." And as Jane said, he was earning £30,000 a year and when I left the Air Force I was earning (Jane – About £250.00 a month) yes, about £3,000 a year.

He was, a great guy and a very good friend of mine and through him I met people like Bishop Muzorewa and all that kind of thing because we used to go to his home and he used to come to our home. This is the kind of thing that

happened. Technically by law, there were no restrictions on Africans. To be perfectly frank, I don't know about living conditions because there were suburbs that were allocated for mixed, multiracial suburbs. I doubt if they would have been able to move into white areas, I'll be perfectly honest with you on that one. There were areas where people could live, whether you were black, white or coloured (coloured was a mixed race group) and these houses, as I say, his house was better than ours, in the early days at least, and he could afford it. So you had that kind of mix, though there were certain restrictions

Yes, they couldn't go into all the hotels. I mean there were some really nice hotels that they were quite welcome to go to.

(00:34:53) There were multi-racial hotels.

But they knew themselves whether they were welcome there or not and usually it was money and behaviour. You know, they had to know how to behave, our standard of eating and drinking, that sort of thing.

Getting back to this, there were still people living like this in the sixties. Now if you just had an open place, you'd have a guy walking in who'd never seen a bath in his life and he was dressed in skins...literally, there were still people living like that. I don't suppose you know much about the African history but basically during that period, they had what they called the Pearce Commission, the British government sent out this guy Pearce and he went around various African people talking to them and for the first time, the Europeans found the 'ostrich people,' did you ever hear about them? They had a genetic deformity and their feet were like this.<sup>1</sup> They'd never seen a white man before and a white man had never seen them and this was in '64, they were living in the Zambezi valley, you'd probably be able to get pictures of them.

Yes, there are pictures of them around.

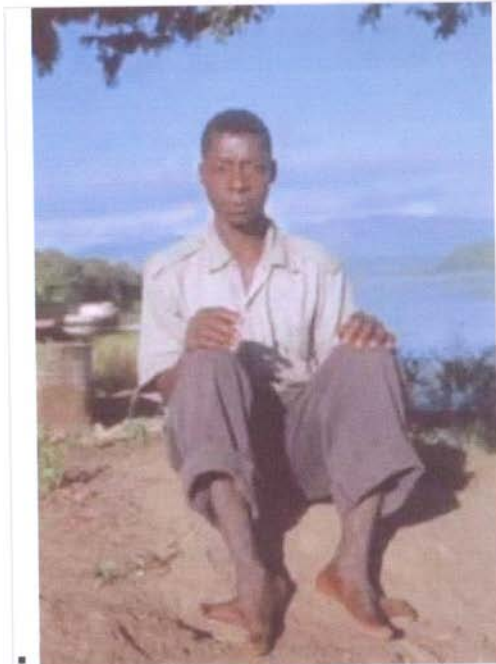
They became quite an interesting phenomenon because they lived in a very tight-knit area in the Zambezi Valley. It was through interbreeding, they formed this deformity where they had this fixation with the toes which made them look like an ostrich foot, and that's why they call them the ostrich people. So you had that level, as opposed to my mate Gordon Machinuka, who was wealthy as hell sort of thing. That mixture was going on at the same time and while I was with the trade union movement we'd have conferences in hotels that were allowing mixed races to go in. I remember going to one of our big hotels, The Ambassador Hotel. One of the big heroes of the black movement was Ndabaningi Sithole and there was him, and Joshua Nkomo. Mugabe wasn't even thought of. He was trying to get the trade unions on his side so he held a meeting for the trade unions in this hotel, it must have been about '73. I went along and I was the only white person there and he was saying,

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<sup>1</sup> See accompanying photograph on p.12 of the Ostrich people of Zimbabwe, contributed by Tom Chalmers.

“we’ve got to stand united, we’ve got the ZANU and we’ve got the ZAPU and we’ve got to stand united.” And I said, “you’ve got the Rhodesian Front” and of course they all laughed and thought this was great. I didn’t feel threatened or anything like that, we were all mixing together, we’d all been trade unionists. As a matter of fact, I knew Robert Mugabe’s brother because he was the General Secretary of the hairdressers union and they were very hard up. I gave them a typewriter to get on with things.

*Accompanying articles &  
Photographs for  
Tom Chalmers transcript.*



OSTRICH PEOPLE OF ZIMBABWE

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## **So this was later in the seventies?**

(00:37:58) This was after I had left.

'76/'77.

This was after I left the Air Force. When I left the Air Force I joined Prudential for a year, where I worked with Gordon. Then my brother and I started a little building business, which didn't do very well. We came back to the UK in '74.

Yes, we spent '74 here.

We were then staying down in Newbury in Berkshire for a year. We went back to Rhodesia in '75 and my sister had been with Barclays Bank since she left school and she said, "we're looking for an assistant general secretary." So I went in and became the assistant general secretary of ROSBOs, it was called, the Rhodesian Society of Bank Officials. I then became the general secretary and I used to attend meetings with the trade union conference and so on. So that's a bit of a background, and coming up to '78 we were asked, as the general council of the trade union movement, to go and meet with Ian Smith. He had just had talks with Kissinger down in Pretoria and Kissinger had said to him, "guys, we've got a lot of sympathy for you." Bear in mind that you still had black women getting thrown into jail for not getting up and giving white people their seats on the bus in America. I mean the southern states of America were more racist than we were.

And they still are.

And when we came back in the seventies, we couldn't believe how racist the UK was. We came across on holiday in the sixties, '65...

That was our first holiday.

And in '65, they had signs up saying "no blacks and dogs allowed." And in London, we went to look for accommodation...

And these Nigerians came in looking for accommodation, big people, wearing their robes. And the girls were terrified; they just didn't have any accommodation for them.

They wouldn't let them in their houses. They all carry on as if, "ah well, this was a different place and this was magic." Racism was rife throughout the whole world until the seventies, it still is. So when he was telling us what was going on with Kissinger, basically, I saw the writing on the wall. I thought obviously that Kissinger was saying to him, "look, we've got satellites than can track you guys, we know where you've been, we can see your tracks through the grass" and all that kind of thing "you're not going to win."

I'd been working with the South African society bank officials from Johannesburg and they were looking for an assistant down there as well, so

we decided to leave in '78. (00:40:56) We sold up, sold our house, which by then was quite a large house in Salisbury with a big swimming pool and all the stuff that goes with it. We sold the house and put it into the bank because Ian Smith had put a blanket on money coming out of Rhodesia. You were only allowed to leave with \$250, which in those days was about £125. So we had to go down to Johannesburg and start from scratch and all the money from that house, we put back into the building society. So I went down worked for the South African bank officials. Now they really did have apartheid, but by the same token, they also had equal pay.

Again, you've got to remember that any organisation that had a trade union, they're not going to allow a black guy to come in on less money because obviously the place would become full of black guys. So they were saying, if you want to employ black people, not a problem, as long as he gets the same pay as us. South Africa had the very first strike in the Empire in 1921, for better conditions and so on. It was a very strong union and it still is. So I got involved with the trade union congress down there, mixed with a lot of black guys and went in to Soweto. A lot of the senior bank clerks were able to get bank loans, in the suburbs in Soweto, which would make this place (our place here in Britain) look like a slum. They had beautiful houses and we had meetings out there in houses with an African friend of mine, Adi Macoba, and things like that. So there was a lot of socialising going on, especially within the trade union congress of South Africa, because each time we had a meeting we'd have black and coloured representatives there.

### **Had you been to South Africa prior to that time?**

On holidays, yes.

### **And you did perceive it to be quite different?**

Oh we were absolutely disgusted, we couldn't believe it.

You could feel a difference in the atmosphere.

It was so stupid because the first experience we had was on the border with Rhodesia. There's a town called Messina, just on the South African border, and you'd go in there and you'd walk into a shop and you'd be standing here; and the black guys had to go in here; but the same person was serving them. This is how stupid it was! And when we took our kids to the Zoo in Johannesburg...

You had to go in separate gates.

We went in separate gates.

And you ended up in the same parts.

And then of course, you met as you came out. So the whole thing was absolutely ridiculous, it was just a silly situation.

**(00:43:44) At that point, had South Africa withdrawn their support for Rhodesia as well?**

Well yes, I don't know if you've ever read any of Smith's books on that, but basically they started to blackmail us and they cut off oil and stuff like that. The real turning point came when Mozambique went down the tube. But one of the things which is always missed in this whole scenario is the Chinese influence. China has got no raw materials: They've got people by the billion, but they've got no raw materials at all. As whites dismantled the colonies in Africa, they saw Africa as a honey pot and they started to build a railway called the TanZam railway from Dar es Salaam down into Zambia. They were looking to get the copper because of course there was a huge copper refinery and copper mines in Zambia. They had thousands of workers because it was mainly manual. They brought all the workers with them, they didn't employ anyone locally and they just all came in dressed in these little blue uniforms with a little satchel case that you would take to school, that was all they had with them. They built this and we could see the writing on the wall: These guys are coming here; they're after the raw materials.

Now of course, again, one of the key areas of concern for Rhodesia was the fact that there are only two countries in the world that have chromium and one of them is Rhodesia. When sanctions were introduced, the Americans were so concerned that they brought out the Byrd Amendment to make sure that they could still buy our chrome. Now that China was coming down Africa, they could see that, "hey, where else can we buy it from? We either buy it from Russia or from Rhodesia." So we were concerned of the Chinese people moving down the country, and when you look in retrospect now, they own the countries, even as far as South Africa. They now own Africa and they're everywhere in their shops. I was there this year in March/April – we go down once a year – and of the trade unions in South Africa, the largest were the clothing workers' unions, which has now been decimated because they can't compete. You buy T-shirts from Asda coming from China for £1.00, which is 12 Rand, but there's just no way they can do that. So of course they're all starting to complain about how much the Chinese have taken the raw materials and they're now selling them clothes, shoes, anything.

They've got no jobs and they've got no money to buy these things with.

So they're getting put out of work. But we saw all of these things happening: The whole international movement changed from China and Russia being ostracised, and you suddenly saw the situation change to one where they were starting to become more democratic and so on, but still looking for inroads into Africa. And of course in the initial stages when the skirmishes first started, probably in about '65 to '68, something like that, the African guys had powder muskets, which were (00:47:27) left over from Rhodes. They were antiques, and we used to bring these muskets back to the Air Force and some of the guys have still got them today.

Yes, they use them as decorations.

But all of a sudden, you suddenly saw them coming in – because of course with ZANU and ZAPU, one was backed by the Russians, the other was backed by the Chinese – and they were both with AK47. Now it was a different kettle of fish and then it became a real nasty war.

**So you feel it was this support from the outside that changed it?**

Oh yes, they were all trained there. They'd taken down Africans, they were actually going to schools and kidnapping African kids and this isn't sort of propaganda.

They would take four hundred in one night. Our maid we had in Salisbury, she'd lost a son like that.

She just didn't know where he was. They came into schools and just took the kids away, took them overseas, trained them up and sent them back.

**It must have been really devastating for the families.**

It was. But of course that's why all of a sudden we were saying, "how are you going to get by on this one?" And again, that's why we left. We thought, "there's no way that we can do it" and of course pressure was being exerted on South Africa to stop supplying them. In Mozambique the Portuguese suddenly just pulled out and left; and of course that was our main port, from Mozambique bringing stuff across. When they left, that then became a base for the terrorists basically on two sides of us.

**Did you see a link between this external, perhaps, communist influence; as well as African Nationalists?**

Oh yes, because it was one of those situations where the African Nationalists were scratching one another's backs. The African Nationalist leaders had either been over to Russia or they'd liaise with Russians in the country – because there were Russian advisors actually in the country at the time – and of course, they were getting training there. And Russian guys would go to the one party, Russian trained; and the Chinese would go to the other side. Mugabe was on the Chinese side, so of course once they fought together, until they got rid of the whites, then there were internal disputes as to who's going to take over.

**And did you perceive a difference between the different factions, between ZANU and ZAPU or the UANC?**

(00:50:17) The biggest perception really was in tribalism. Mashonas, which were the majority people, 80% of the population, went to the Chinese. The other crowd were from Matabeleland; they were the Zulus. I don't know if you know the history but basically they were Zulu offshoots. So it was very much a tribal situation where the Matabele went with the Russians and the Shona went with the Chinese. But at the end of the day, they were both black, they both had AK47s and they were going to shoot you, it was as easy as that.



And again, totally ruthless. Of course they then started with the terror; movements of sorts, going to the farms, killing people. They moved into a mission in Umtali...

It was dreadful, but the strange thing was, you were perfectly fine in the towns, you never felt any worries at all. We had police working all the time in the town: There'd be car inspections and in shops people had to open their handbags to show that there was nothing in there and all that sort of thing. Every now and again there'd be a bit of a bomb scare and everybody was herded out the shop, all lining the pavement to watch what was going on.

Nothing ever happened.

Generally you were fine.

**And was it this tactic of infiltrating rural areas then that was the main danger?**

Oh yes, the farmers, they were the life-blood of the country because they were the ones...

All right, we had chrome, we've got some natural resources in Rhodesia, but one of the biggest was farming, tobacco and beef.

The big argument was, "the whites have got the best land and a quarter of a million whites have taken over half of the country," which were both true. It wasn't the best land; it was the high veldt where the land is very rough. It's very thick, so you need mechanised farming stuff. You need tractors and you need ploughs and stuff like that. You've got to remember that in 1947, there were 1.3 million Africans in Zimbabwe. By 1965 there were 6 million. One of the main reasons is, up until the whites arrived there, they could only grow millet, which was a local food. Maize was actually brought in from America and that exploded the population. That was one of the main things that happened and of course, again, it was because the white farmer had the tractor, had the plough, had the fertiliser. We used to measure our crops in bags per hectare (a hectare is about two and a half acres, it's an Afrikaans thing).

They used to talk about fifty bags to the acre.

That's right, they used to actually be able to grow enough maize to fill fifty bags, where an African family could grow two. So of course, the stupidity was (00:53:35) that when they started taking over the farms, they would destroy all the equipment.

This is Mugabe's lot.

They destroyed all the equipment, they didn't use the tractors and what have you, and they broke it up into small patches. They did this in Tanganyika as well, and it doesn't work because basically if you're working an acre of

ground, you're going to grow two bags of maize, which won't keep you for a year. It's only fertilisers and all the rest of it that makes it work. This is why the whole infrastructure had collapsed, because Jane and I keep saying it would have made more sense for them to actually have kept the farms, kept the equipment, put some African with some background in. Because we had African guys that had been trained as farmers and we let them do the same thing, but they didn't. They just wanted to get rid of that, all of it, so they destroyed what was feeding them.

We've seen newsreels and it just made no sense because they not only destroy the house, which someone could have lived in, but they destroy the schools and all the other buildings on the farm, all the equipment and the livestock. It just made no sense and it must break the hearts of the farmers.

But it's not just that. Again, you're talking about a minority because basically the people that did that weren't the average black farmer. They were political guys from Mugabe's party.

His soldiers.

They weren't even soldiers, they were just guys from the party, who went out there and they could do what they damn well liked. The sad part was that in '86 when Mugabe took over, he was very pro-white: "I'm delighted you guys have got such a wonderful country" and all this "and I want it to continue." It was only when he started losing elections that he blamed the white people for agitating against him; and it was only in the late '80s, early '90s that he actually started moving into the farms. Up until then – we went back on the way home in '86 – the country was quiet. We went back there because we had money in the bank there, from having sold this house etc. There was enough money left for three airfares and one holiday.

We were lucky compared to some people.

But we went up to Kariba from Salisbury and we went through a place called Sinoia. They had so much maize; they had these huge silos, which were full. They had so much maize they had to cover them, aircraft hangar size, with tarpaulins.

It was too much to go in the silos, there were mountains of it.

(00:56:28) It was too much to go in and he just sold it off. We went all the way up to Kariba, there were no problems at all, the whole country was quiet and peaceful. It was only after then, when he started losing power from the voters, "it's all you white guys' fault." And to pacify the African, he said "right, you take what they've got. Vote for me and I'll let you just go in there, the police won't affect you." The average Zimbabwean is a peaceful guy, they're nice guys: We go to South Africa and we see them down there in their hoards. I speak a bit of African language, Shona, with them and...

They've got no job, they've got nothing in Zimbabwe. That's why they go down to South Africa.

**And at the time, in Rhodesia, what would you feel was a good African or a good Rhodesian?**

Well, it's very hard to say because obviously there's good and bad in all communities but...

Generally the Africans were nice people, truly. Individually, you don't want masses of them getting excited because they get excited for whatever reason. But the ones you worked with in the office or your domestics or you come across them in the shops, hospitals and hotels...

You never felt threatened.

They'd burgle you but there was never any violence with it and if you were silly enough to leave your bedroom windows open, your handbag would disappear.

They used to fish things out, they used to put a long pole in.

Because we all had burglar bars up at the windows but generally you were safe as houses with them.

We had 3,000 Africans down in Triangle. We had to bring them down by truck from Zambia because very few Africans lived in the low veldt. So we'd finished the contract, building up the houses and we said to all these guys "do you want to come on a trip with us and go down to Southern Rhodesia to build?" "Yes." So they came down with huge truckloads of these guys to build. There were probably 30 white guys there with these 3,000 Afs: Never once felt threatened. They were working, they were getting paid and they weren't getting ill-treated.

Alright, we didn't pay them a fortune but if we'd had to pay them a fortune, we wouldn't have employed them.

They were getting a living wage.

There were agreed living wages and they got that. I mean, with the domestic, she got her salary, she got rations of a certain amount of food, (00:59:22) she had accommodation, electricity and a bath and all the rest of it. They had free education I think if they could walk to school and if they went to boarding school, which a lot of them did, they did have to pay for that, but only a nominal amount. But generally they liked to send their children to school, that was very...

Oh they were very conscious about education.

They would send their children to school, they did understand how important it was to have education.

They realised how important it was.

**Can you tell me a bit more about your time in the Air Force as well?**

Sure.

**So you were in the Royal Rhodesian Air Force?**

It was the Royal Rhodesian Air Force I started with in 1960. It changed to the Rhodesian Air Force almost the day after the break up of the federation.

**Or was it a little bit later when it changed?**

It may have actually gone right through to '60.

I think it was at UDI probably when it became the Rhodesian Air Force. Petter-Bowyer would know that.

**Yes, I think I've read that it was a bit later, in the seventies.**

It could well have been

In fact it might have even been later because we still considered ourselves as part of the commonwealth, so we might have still called it the Royal Rhodesian Air Force. It became Rhodesian Air Force and then I think it was Rhodesia/Zimbabwe Air Force for a while.

Yes, it was. Well to be honest with you, there's not an awful lot to tell. As I say, I joined in '60, I had these two experiences: I went up to Ndola and I went to Cyprus and served with the RAF up there. I was on No. 7 Squadron, the Transport Squadron, when we used to fly our guys up and down to Aden. I had a great life, I loved the Air Force.

**And so this was very much serving the federation, as it were?**

Up until the break up, yes.

**(01:01:18) And there was this feeling that you were part of the commonwealth?**

Oh very much so, yes.

**And working for them.**

Yes, if they'd have said to us "listen we want you to go and bloody bomb someone" or "we've got to this and that," we were involved. As I say, the guys were going up to Aden, trying to keep that as a British colony. So basically, if there'd been a war, we'd have been in it. We'd have been the first to defend Britain; they were so loyal, it was incredible. Far more than the Scots; we wouldn't have bloody cared a damn!

### **And what did you think of UDI?**

Well, to be honest, we were very concerned. Again, if I well remember, it was the labour government that was in power at this stage and we had visions of what had happened in Kenya – obviously the Mau Mau times – but also that the Congo could happen to us. And there was no way that we were going to put up with that. All of a sudden, there's quarter of a million people, what the hell are they going to do about it? Where are we going to go? What are we going to do? We felt that we knew a lot more about the Africans and what the Africans' aspirations and needs were. We were working towards trying to improve that, as I said, with equal pay for them and jobs, training them and putting them in school was costing us a lot of money in taxes, all poured into the African community. And we just didn't feel they were up to it and quite honestly in retrospect, they're not up to it. Now if you look at what happened, they're a damn sight worse off now. I think if they had a vote there, they'd ask us all to come back. So in terms of the Air Force, basically, that was me. I worked on various projects. I was on No. 5 Squadron when they had the Green Leader. Did you hear about this story?

Well basically, we found out that there was a terrorist base on the outskirts of Lusaka Airport and I was on 5 Squadron, which was our Canberra squadron, a bomber squadron.

Were you still working or was that on call-up?

No, I was on call-up; it must have been in the seventies.

It must have been about '75.

'74 or '75.

### **So you were in the Reserves? When did your full time service finish?**

(01:03:38) I had a ten-year contract so I came out in '70. From '60 to '70 I was full-time and then I was part-time until about '78.

When we left in '78.

### **So was this through conscription at that point, or as a Reservist?**

Basically we were reserve staff

Well, he was a Reserve, and you didn't have any choice in being called-up.

You didn't have any choice; you had to do maybe a month a year or something like that.

### **And were you doing that quite frequently?**

Oh yes, up until we left.

### **It was about a month a year?**

Something like that, it varied.

But you could get called up anytime.

If there was a bit of a panic, they'd call you in.

Tom was more a technician, he wasn't really out in the field.

### **And were you automatically ready to go for Air Force work?**

Oh yes, you went back and had training because I was a trained technician. But that particular call up, they'd found this terrorist camp on the outskirts of Lusaka, so we sent a squadron of about five aircraft up and we got in touch with the airport in Lusaka and said, "This is Green Leader, close your (01:04:57) airport down, we will be flying over you and we're going to be bombing these guys on the other side of the airport." There's a tape of that. You should get it from the Rhodesian society; it's quite interesting.

I've got it on the record.

Have you?

Yes, the John Edmond one.

There's a Viscount coming down from Nairobi or somewhere, saying, "Lusaka Tower, can I make my approach?" The guy says "don't come near us, you can't land." The guy says, "who's in charge there?" and he answers, "I think its Green Leader!"

But they went and bombed these guys. They probably killed close to a thousand of them; it was a big raid and it's one of the things that had to be done, that was it. These guys were all fitted with AK47's etc and they were ready to come and kill us.

### **So who was this voice answering on the radio?**

It was one of the Air Force leaders, piloting an aeroplane.

One of our guys, Chris Dixon, was in charge of the aircraft that were flying from the Rhodesian Air Force and he was the one that contacted the tower and said "tower, close the airport down, we're going to be flying over, we don't want to disrupt any other aircraft. Just divert them until such time as we've finished our operation when we'll contact you on our way out." They knew better and they said "yes fine, we'll close the airport." So of course, they were diverting all the other flights all over the place.

One of the other big raids, which I wasn't involved with, was down in Mozambique where – because we had black troops, this is what people don't

appreciate, probably about 40% of our forces were black troops, loyal to the government and loyal to whatever – they managed to spot this big camp down and they decided to take it out. They got four or five of the FRELIMO lorries that they'd stolen – the Army guys that had taken these and loaded it up with our troops – and they went driving into this camp. They were all on the parade ground and they went in there and they just wore them down: "sod you, take me out." That was war; that was what it was all about. It's not nice, but they were coming and doing all sorts of nasty things, so...

**This was one, when you were on call up?**

Yes.

**So would that have been after '70?**

That one was still in the late or mid '70s

(01:07:52) **So it was after UDI, when FREMLIMO were in?**

Yes, I think Mozambique went in about...

**It was '74 I think.**

It was '74, because it was while we were over here. We were here for the whole of '74.

But I wasn't in front line or anything like that. My job was basically fixing aircraft when they came back to base.

**Is it correct that all of the technicians were white?**

Yes, we had...

Do you want to listen to this?

Basically all the technicians were white, we had black guys, guards, guarding the place...

John Edmond's *Green Leader Theme* played. The words are as follows:

\*\*\*\*\*

These are the thoughts that run through the sky warrior's mind.  
He is a man a very special kind:

Our wings are fortress to our land  
Today a special mission's planned  
Dear land, today I'll serve thee well  
My motherland has gone through hell

No one in the world to heed her

Tomorrow the world will know Green Leader

Fight anywhere and everywhere  
Speed and courage and a prayer  
Seek and strike, strike from above  
Do it for the ones you love

And as our sections now deploy  
A minute to run, seek and destroy  
Swift to support men and machines  
Aspire to achieve our dreams

Green Leader: Lusaka tower, this is Green Leader.

Lusaka tower: Station calling tower?

Green Leader: Lusaka tower this is Green Leader. This is a message for the station commander at Mumbwa from the Rhodesian Air Force. We are attacking the terrorist base at Westlands Farm at this time. This attack is against Rhodesian dissidents and not against Zambia. Rhodesia has no quarrel, repeat, no quarrel with Zambia or her security forces. We therefore ask you not to intervene or oppose our attack. However, we are orbiting your airfield at this time and are under orders to shoot down any Zambian Air Force aircraft, which does not comply with this request and attempts to take off. Did you copy all that?

Lusaka tower: Copied.

Green Leader: Roger, thanks. Cheers.

This is what God would have willed  
Kill, or see the children killed  
My little country cries for peace  
No one will hear her case at least

No one in the world to heed her  
Tomorrow the world will know Green Leader  
\*\*\*\*\*

Well, that was war, we went there and we bombed the hell into these guys. I don't know how many they killed but that was a very famous incident in the war.

**That's incredible that it was made into this song.**

Well this particular guy, he was in the Army.

John Edmond, he'd sing...

He was very patriotic; he's still going now.

He still goes round entertaining ex-Rhodesians and ex-Army.

You could probably pick that up off the Internet.



**I'm struck by how it was very...**

(01:12:39) Dramatised?

**Well no, the song is very lulling and soft but what he's speaking about is really very serious.**

Yes, it was a very big attack, there's no question about that. And in the forces, unfortunately, you become almost immune to the killings. You have to be, otherwise you wouldn't do it.

**That's what struck me in the lyrics there, 'search and destroy,' just singing that, it's quite powerful.**

It's a peculiar situation because actually, you become immersed in it. It started off very slowly, there were odd bits and pieces here and there, and then it escalated.

And actually the poor old Africans had a rough time because when it was really bad, the terrorists would be in there wanting shelter, food and all the rest of it. The police and the Army would be able to track them down and know they'd been in the village; and the Africans either helped the terrorists or they helped the police, and either way they're wrong. Usually with ours, they might have got locked up or they might have got shot; but with the terrorists they got awful torturing.

One of the guys that I worked with, a black guy, was our cleaner in the instrument section and we got quite friendly with him. We used to go up to a mission station he lived in just north of Salisbury, it must have been about '76/'77.

Yes, it was just before we left there.

He came to me and he said "Mr Chalmers, there's terrorists on the mission, what should I do?" I said "Shem, do nothing, keep your mouth shut. Because if they find you talking about it, you're dead and your family's dead." He said "yes, but they've got mortars." I said, "I don't care what they've got, you keep out of it because they'll soon find out who told." It was quite funny because we went down to South Africa and we came back and we were driving past the prison (he was working at the prison) and we saw him. "Oh Mr Chalmers, thank you for that. When ZANU took over, they realised that I had known about these guys and I hadn't told anyone, and I was a big hero." I said, "well that's what I want, I didn't want you getting killed just because of that."

That was the trouble there, they really suffered, the ones out in the bush. Everybody knew, but we couldn't allow the terrorists to keep (01:15:23) coming in and they'd have possibly got into the towns and made life really bad.

But when I went down to South Africa, I had to go back to Rhodesia about six months later and again, purely coincidentally, I was going down Jameson Avenue (one of the main streets in the town) and I saw my friend, the African

guy from Prudential, Gordon Machinuka. "Tom, how are you? You bugger, how are you keeping?" I said "fine, and you Gordon?" "Yes, we're settling in down here, what are you doing tonight?" I said "why?" He said "Muzorewa's taken over as Prime Minister and he's holding a big party at Meikles. Come with me." I said "Gordon, I can't go, he's the bloody Prime Minister." "You're my friend, you've met bloody Bishop Muzorewa, he knows you, come with me." So that night, off we went to Meikles which was the big hotel. It still is. And there was this big party and everyone was there. They even had some of these young terrs that had been trained in Russia; tall young guys all dressed in these really immaculate suits and what have you, speaking bloody fluent English and God knows, well educated.

### **Were these people who were acting as auxiliaries?**

They had been trained as terrorists, they were freedom fighters but now they were in government and they came along. And this is the stupidity: Everyone thinks that Mugabe took over from Smith, but he took over from Muzorewa. I've never got to the bottom of how they got rid of Muzorewa because obviously he didn't have terrorist backing when it went to an election. People in Britain don't appreciate how difficult...

Somebody was saying to us, he was just told "you're out, Mugabe's in." No, that was Mbeki that was saying that.

Yes, that was Mbeki. Basically, you're in a situation where when they have a vote, they send out the heavies and they'll just beat the crap into you if you don't vote for them.

And the trouble is too, the African people are very simple and easily intimidated.

They're used to witchcraft and stuff like that.

And it doesn't matter how secret your vote is. If that chap over there says, "I know who you voted for", you believe him. So you will vote what he wants.

They do, they do believe in witchcraft still. People have died for getting a stick pointed at them by a witch doctor. (01:17:50)

### **Did you know of its use at all during the war?**

Oh yes, all the time, intimidation. It's everywhere. The poor Af didn't stand a dog's chance.

### **But being used perhaps by the Rhodesians against the terrorists?**

Not really, not to the same extent.

I don't think they would believe you.

What was that famous story they used to tell about witchcraft?

When it was being used on me?

Yes.

I had a maid working for me and she'd been trouble all along really but I quite liked her. Anyway, Tom either at the Air Force or he was away on business and early in the morning, I was woken up by shouting and carrying on, going on outside the bedroom door in the passage. I thought, "what on earth's going on?" This is about six o'clock in the morning! I opened the door and there's her boyfriend, standing in the passage in a pair of underpants. They lived in a room on the property, they didn't live in the house, and I said "Miriam, what the hell's going on here?" "Oh he's fighting me" and all the rest of it. I said "right" because for one thing, they weren't really supposed to have their husbands/wives/boyfriends living with them, but I always used to turn a blind eye and most people did. But I wasn't having this, I said "he's off, you get rid of him, he's not to stay here any more." So a day or two later, I was doing something in the bedroom and I felt this little thing underfoot. Tom said it was a duiker horn (a duiker is a very baby buck), and it was filled with sand and grass and wrapped up in something and I knew it was some form of witchcraft when I saw it. Then I realised what it was and it was from her to try and make me nicer to her boyfriend. I think she got fired after that because she had been quite a bit of trouble; I think we probably fired her after that. It was trying to threaten me basically. So Tom then told this to the African that he was telling you about, they lived out of town, and saying how she'd been trying witchcraft on me and Shem says to him "Ah, these people are stupid" and he's one of them "don't they (01:20:42) know witchcraft doesn't work on white people?" It works on them, but it doesn't work on white people.

That was their culture, they had these witch doctors and people like that, that could either cure them or kill them.

Maybe it was a bit more at that time because one of the women at work, she was a right cow. We had three or four African filing clerks and messengers, that sort of thing, and she used to give all of them a hard time, she was a right bugger. In fact, she thought she ruled the roost and unfortunately for her, our bosses didn't think that. But anyway, she was obviously like this with her houseboy because she came in one day and he'd done something to one of their meals or something and she'd really got a fright over that. That was just about the same time as Miriam did that one to me so maybe it was a bit more prevalent at the time, trying it on you.

The trouble is, when you talk to people like myself and guys in the forces, you probably think "oh they're so callous" and that bloody incident, we were laughing about it, but they killed hundreds, probably thousands of blacks. But when you're in a war situation...when you talk to RAF guys that went and bombed Dresden and people like that, which were a civilised country...

It's the same sort of thing.

And they don't turn round and say "Oh God, all the people I killed," you can't. We firebombed them and...

That happened. But probably months before, the terrorists had shot down an Air Rhodesia plane full of...

**Yes, the Viscount.**

That's right, and shot the people and killed the people that had survived, who would have probably been rescued by the forces had the news got out. That was terrible.

It was ruthless to ruthless, that's what it was; there was no compassion on either side.

That was what was so dreadful about the Elim mission massacre. You see they were all nurses and doctors and preachers, they didn't have arms; and children, all of them.

**But there's something about needing that feeling of what you're fighting for, isn't there?**

This was the Rhodesian patriotism. Britain originally, would go and fight anywhere, as I said, from bloody Malaya to Aden to whatever. So another war didn't mean a thing to them, it was a new country. (01:23:24)

But we were fighting for our country.

One of the things that annoys us, and it's quite funny, you have a different age from us, we were brought up with films about Geronimo and the Indians and they were all baddies and they were all this and all that. There's a new one that's come out, with Brad Pitt or something...

Matt Damon.

The famous Geronimo is now being portrayed as a hero because he was a hero and the annoying part is, we were in America in October and we were staying at a place just outside of San Francisco, Lincoln County.

Sacramento.

And the Americans have now got a conscience about what they did to the...

Indians.

...Native Americans. And what they've done is, they've allowed them to get into bed with the mafia. They build these casinos on Indian land and they've given this Indian nation the land and allowed them to build this casino. There were all sixty of these people left, that was all that was left of the Indian nation. Now with the Australians, there are less aborigines there now than there were when they first arrived.

And all these people were shouting and screaming at us in Rhodesia because we were so cruel to the blacks and we weren't.

They killed so many of them...

South Africa was far worse with their apartheid than we were in Rhodesia.

But they were a lot bigger and stronger, so they thought they'd chip us away first. But just in the last...while we were actually in South Africa, the Australians, because there are so few aborigines, have now given them a homeland, which basically, in Afrikaans, would have been Bantustan. Ayers Rock is now a homeland for aboriginal people, even though it's just bloody desert. Now as I say, if that was in South Africa, they'd have said, apartheid, separate development, you're giving them that. But now that's been raised at the United Nations and the Australians have said, "any Europeans that moved in with an aboriginal race should give some of the land back to the aboriginal people." America, Canada and New Zealand said "you must be bloody joking, we're not going to do that." But that's swept aside because they're more powerful. There were only a quarter of a million of us and that was it, but this is it, that was the culture of the time, it's easy to be critical about what happened but that was the culture and that's all there is to it.

**(01:26:08) You played some of that music and I guess that music was one form of media that was bolstering that identity?**

Sure, it was fortuitism.

Yes, especially that guy, John Edmond, he wrote hundreds of songs.

He was the troopie singer.

And he still goes around now, he's the same age as us, entertaining ex-Rhodesian Army and Air Force groups.

**What other forms of media were forming your outlook? Did you follow much news and radio?**

Yes, we did, but our newspapers especially were very heavily censored.

Yes.

Only about what was actually happening in the country because they couldn't allow the terrorists or everybody to know what was going on. But we lived a fairly normal life, alright, not as up to date as here and because once the sanctions really took a hold and Rhodesia declared UDI, they were producing all sorts of things so we never really wanted for basic essentials. Every now and again, electric appliances or something would get imported and there'd be a mad rush to the shops; but there were always bacon and butter and...

And clothes, they had a very good clothing industry, which was killed by all the charities in the UK.

And as far as entertainment goes, we had a television and radio. As I say, to an extent, it would have been...

### **Censored?**

Censored, but we had theatre and people used to come out from England.

We saw Lionel Blair, we saw Peter Maxwell, you probably wouldn't know Peter Maxell, but we also had the black comedian, Charlie Williams, come out.

He was the one that used to come and threaten to live next door to you. He was a black Yorkshireman. We had a lot of that sort of thing.

### **And did you talk amongst your selves much as well? (01:28:36)**

Oh God, yes, all the time.

It was the topic of conversation, yes.

Actually the main topic of conversation was how are you going to get money out?

### **So did you sense that a lot of the population were leaving? Or there were just less people coming in?**

Oh that dried up completely, there was a haemorrhage, there's no question about that.

Oh definitely. Everybody, or most people that we knew, were leaving and were thinking of leaving or wishing they could leave. Literally, your main topic of conversation was how you were going to get some money out.

I doubt if there's more than 30 or 40 thousand whites left now in Zimbabwe.

### **When you were doing your call ups, did you find that disruptive to home life?**

No.

No, we weren't too bad.

### **Because would you always be returning to base?**

I'd come home in the evenings.

Well sometimes, but we'd lived for ten years in the Air Force so there would be times quite often, when he was in a regular, when he'd be away for a weekend or a few days or whatever, and we got used to that. And then when he was working for the trade union, he was all around the country so there'd be odd days when he wasn't at home. So, yes, the kids and I were used to that sort of thing. And as I say, the country was

fairly quiet really in spite of the war going on in the bush so I never felt worried or frightened in the house on my own. Also I had two dogs.

### **What was your perspective of other security services?**

Well, our SAS guys and the Selous Scouts were absolutely incredible. Selous was one of the early pioneers and they called his group the Selous Scouts, they named the group after him.

Didn't they work on horses?

They worked on horseback but they were totally mixed. (01:30:37)

Yes, totally mixed, black and white.

They'd go out in small units, four and five and you'd be three whites and two blacks or vice versa. I had one experience of them, when one day I was on duty in the evening and working on 3, the Transport Squadron. I got a phone call to say there's a vehicle down here wants to come and collect people off the next aircraft that are coming in. So I went down and here's this Mozambique truck and these guys all in camouflage on board and...

You just had to assume they were Rhodesians.

You had to assume, yes. And we drove up and waited for the aircraft to come and of course it opened up and they were all black faced; the whites were all black and the blacks didn't need to do it. They used to go out on what they called sticks of about four or five and would be again, totally mixed, wouldn't wash or anything because they could smell whites. If you used to bath, the smell of the soap would actually...the terrorists would be able to pick it up. They were devastating, they were absolutely incredible. Small units like that, they could go and take out five or ten times their number.

And if they didn't take them out, they used to know where they were to tell the others...

...like Green Leader, to go and bomb them. Then of course they had the SAS, which again were traditional for Rhodesians, they were also fantastic guys.

And the RLI was the Rhodesian Army.

The RLI was a white unit and then you had RAR. Probably 40/50% of the troops were black, maybe even more. They were very loyal.

And we had very good police, black police, too.

But you see the whole of Southern African...this new president of South Africa, Mr Zuma, he is a right crook. Sadly, that country is going similarly, crime is endemic. This is a local newspaper [shows Anne the paper] from

Cape Town; we've just come back. There's just no work. They take the country over, they've spent 80 billion rand on armament. They've got submarines, they've got frigates, they've got stuff that they've brought in; but it's all corruption. This guy was up to his eyeballs in this corruption, buying these aircraft and what have you, because he was getting kickbacks. Meanwhile, they were all promised housing etc. and it's not happening. When we were in Cape Town, they were actually blocking one of the main arteries. It's interesting because again, it's showing what's happened is not just a Zimbabwe situation. The situation is the same down there with all these promises...Mandela's come out of prison, the world is going to be beautiful...it's not, it's in an awful state. And Smith was condemned something awful because he made a silly statement. But in fact, it's still got to be proved (01:33:50) as to whether it was right or wrong: He said "they won't be ready for democracy in a thousand years". Alright, well let's wait and see.

The trouble is that, and I know it's racist to most people, but to my mind, it's taken us 2000 years to reach where we are from recorded history. And why should you expect them, who weren't as advanced as we were 2000 years ago...

Yes, but this is their fathers and grandfathers...

Why should we expect them to be able to run a country after barely 100 years?

And why should we expect them to change 4000 years of culture where the tribal headman was the headman and he controlled everything.

That is why Mugabe succeeds. Why he's still there, because they see him as a strong man.

Even though he's only 5'3".

Even though he's destroying his country, the South African black MP's and that, they admire him. All the other African leaders admire him because he's strong and told Britain to get lost. And what good does it do him?

His country's going to the dogs but that's it. Sadly, I can't really give you very much more information about the Air Force.

### **Was there much hierarchy within the force, say between generations or people from different areas or nationalities?**

Well, in all forces there has to be a hierarchical structure. I finished up as a senior Sergeant but again, you had some of the guys that had been in there since basically the end of the war, who were the people at the top. To be honest, basically, the whole of the Air Force were white: Pilots, technicians and what have you. The guards around the Air Force perimeter, they were all black guys but they still wore our uniform and it was military, you had to keep your protocol, saluting your officers and all the rest of it. Not as bad as the RAF, not by a long shot, we could get on well with our officers.



It was smaller which has got a lot to do with it. Also, in Rhodesia and most places, you don't have the class business that you have in England; when you're not educated or your father went to the wrong school or whatever. That didn't happen in Rhodesia, we were all the same. It didn't matter where you'd gone to school, if you'd been to private school or you hadn't, it didn't really matter, everybody was on the same level.

**And what about leaving Rhodesia as well? What did you feel about people that were leaving when you were still there? (01:36:51)**

I didn't blame them, I mean a lot of people did, a lot of people used to say "oh the chicken run" you know, the first ones on the chicken run and I used to think, "we'll probably go before too long." I never said it but I used to think that people have to do what's right for them.

At the end of the day, you have to do what's best for you and your family.

**Was there anything in particular that triggered your decision to leave?**

Basically that meeting I had with Ian Smith, that was very crucial to us.

Not only that, there was, I suppose it was more rumours, I don't know, but it kept coming out that the schools were going to be integrated and that sort of thing and I just thought I don't really want that for my kids. Mainly because my children went to school, they'd come home and I'd help them with their homework. I used to read stories and all the rest of it. Your average African at that stage, the children would go to school but they'd come home, mother can't read and write, father can't read and write, so the children's standard can't be as good as ours, and I don't want them to be dragged down. I mean my kids weren't geniuses anyway, certainly my daughter wasn't. I really didn't want them mixing, but that was St Georges.

But having said that, when we went back in '86, we went up to one of the 'better' suburbs in Salisbury because my brother lived in that area. Not that we went to visit him, but we went there, and we went to a swimming pool and took Ashley. And of course there was a private school there and you had black and white kids, all speaking English, all talking the same accents, you couldn't tell the difference.

And you turned your back on them and you didn't know whether they were black or white.

And one of the funny stories was, the black guy that worked with me in the trade union, he was a senior Barclays Bank official. He'd left Barclays and he'd done very well business wise and he was now living in the white suburb with a swimming pool and all the rest of it. We went to visit him and his son was much of an age with my daughter at the time and their gardener was there cleaning the swimming pool. The two kids were getting on well together, the black and white kid, my daughter and him, and he turned to the African that was cleaning the swimming pool and he spoke to him in Shona. He then turned to my daughter and said, "can you speak Shona?" so she said "no." So he says "I can speak it quite well." His family had been brought up,

their father obviously tried to bring them up English speaking, with a dual language. (01:39:39)

Yes, we just thought it sounded so funny, him saying, “I can speak it quite well.” I thought, “of course you can,”

But you see, you had that class distinction.

But the African children particularly who went to the fee paying schools, they were alright. But ours were at government school and I just had visions of them being overwhelmed by the number of blacks. I was possibly wrong, but all these rumours were flying around and I thought it would be better to go.

**Did you see that decision to go to South Africa as something temporary or permanent?**

No, it was permanent.

Yes.

**And so how did you come to leave South Africa eventually?**

A very similar thing.

**And what was it like coming to Britain?**

I hated it here. When we went from Rhodesia to South Africa, I just sort of thought, well I knew in my heart we were doing the right thing, the best thing. I said to Tom, “we’re not leaving Rhodesia, because Rhodesia’s not there any more. It’s Zimbabwe and I’ve never lived in Zimbabwe.” Of course the lifestyle in South Africa was very similar although the Africans there were never as nice, they are all a bit hostile, with a chip on their shoulder. I had loads of maids before I found one that I liked and then I kept her for quite a long time. So moving down to South Africa wasn’t as traumatic as it might have been. Some of my friends did find it very hard but we moved into a lovely house and Tom had quite a nice job and once Ashley was a bit older, I put her into a nursery and I got a nice job. We had a good life there.

And then we decided to come back here because we thought South Africa was going the way it’s gone. Our son was about to...we wanted him to go to University and we thought he’s got to finish at high school here to get into University. So we made up our minds to leave. I hated the first two years, and I was born here. I just hated it for the first couple of years, I really was very unhappy but I really knew we were doing the right thing. The sort of lifestyle was almost alien compared to what we had in South Africa and it is completely different.

**What did you think people thought of you; did you have a perception of that? (01:42:33)**

They weren't interested, English people. Not interested, really not. There were one or two girls in the office who might occasionally ask you something but that was it, they really weren't interested.

**This sense that, like you said, you had sort of lost the country, is something very powerful. Rhodesia wasn't there any more and then coming here people didn't know anything about it either. I can imagine that must feel very strange.**

It really didn't take me by surprise. When we were over here in 1974, we spent the year in England. My brother at that time was across in Hong Kong, in the Hong Kong Police. He was in the police here and he decided to leave the police here and go across to Hong Kong and they'd been over there for about two years. While we were here in '74, they came back from holiday and he was really fed up because his best friend – who'd been best man at his wedding, I think they'd been best man at each others weddings, they'd joined the police together, they were really good friends – they were just two couples, neither of them had any children, they got together and this guy wasn't in the least bit interested in hearing about Hong Kong.

“Have you seen my new carpet?”

“Have you seen my new carpet? We went there on holiday, we've got this, we're doing that...” nothing! Andy couldn't get an interest at all. And we were really interested in what they'd got to say about it because it's so different from anywhere else, but not their friends. So it didn't surprise me when people here weren't interested.

When we went down to South Africa, I became the assistant general secretary of the banks' union down there and there was a very famous case down there in '82. The police had stopped a young coloured chap, a chap of mixed race, and given him a bit of a slap around; he was doing something that he shouldn't have been doing. Anyway, someone ripped his shirt or something, and he was wearing an ANC T-shirt. Barclays fired him...<sup>2</sup>

**They were banned at the time?**

Oh yes, it was a banned party. So they brought this out you see...so I was one of the main areas of inquest, so of course they came to us and said, “what are you going to do about it?” And I said, “well from the union's point of view, we're not going to put up with it because they can't dictate to people who they vote for and who they don't for.” So of course we...not just us, but of course there was a groundswell of different types of people, and Barclays in the UK etc, that forced them to change their policy and to reinstate him and bring him back into the fray. And we were to tell them, they can't come stepping on our bloody toes, the workers have got to be allowed to have...So I was a liberal down there you see...I suddenly became from being...

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<sup>2</sup> See accompanying copies of articles on the Barclays incident on pp. 37-39, contributed by Tom Chalmers.

**(01:46:03) I was just going to say, that's fascinating, so you were supporting an ANC...?**

I was never a racist.

No, he's not a racist, I'm more racist than him.

**So as a union, you were against this banning of supporting political parties?**

Oh yes, but they had to ask me because our general secretary couldn't say that because he was Afrikaans you see. So they had to approach me and let me be the spokesperson because I couldn't care a damn. And because of that, then of course, they had a major conference down in South Africa, you know, they could see the writing on the wall. They had this big conference in South Africa in '86 called "Negotiating a way of life" and they had all sorts of people, all these guys from the University and Cyril Ramaphosa who could have been the next president but he's now so rich, he doesn't bloody want to be the president.<sup>3</sup> He was the main spokesman from the black union and I was asked to be the spokesperson for the white unions, not the white unions, the established unions; it wasn't just white, we had coloureds in our unions and so on. But because of that and because I was involved with the TUCSA (Trade Union Conference of South Africa), TUCSA were asked to go and meet with Pik Botha up in Pretoria, who was the minister for foreign affairs.<sup>4</sup> And he was telling me the same story that Smith had told me eight years before. We talked of the African leaders and what was happening in South Africa...

And we thought, "it's time to go," especially at that time. We could have stayed but we were in our forties and we thought we've got to get pensions organised. Even if we'd stayed there another five or even ten years, we knew eventually we would be back here and we thought we'd rather come now while the kids can get back to school, Stuart to University and that sort of thing, and we had time to get ourselves a pension together.

**Establish yourselves somewhere permanent?**

Yes. So much as I hated it to start with, I think once I started work it helped. But I hadn't wanted to go to work straight away because Ashley was only nine and I didn't want to be leaving her. I thought she was a bit young in a strange country to leave her. It was hard, but Tom's got a sister-in-law who still lives in Rhodesia, Zimbabwe.

She won't move, her son and her grand-kids are here and everything else but she won't move.

We know of other people that live there and I can't understand how they can be there now because it can't be the same country as it used to be (01:48:48). It sounds so

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<sup>3</sup> See accompanying copy of programme for the 'Negotiation' conference Tom Chalmers spoke at on pp. 40-41, contributed by him.

<sup>4</sup> See accompanying photograph of the conference on p. 42, contributed by Tom Chalmers.

difficult to live in; it's not the same place at all. It was beautiful, it was wonderful, a wonderful life.

# Barclays politics ban upsets bank union

Daily News Reporter

BARCLAYS could face tough action by the 26-000-strong South African Society of Bank Officials unless the bank reverses its ruling banning employees from taking part in political activities.

The wide meaning given to "active participation in politics" by Barclays' general manager (personnel), Mr I. S. Rudman, is being viewed by the Tucsa-affiliated union as a move infringing on the civil liberties of its members.

Mr Tom Chalmers, assistant general secretary of Society of Bank Officials, said: "We would take a tough line against management if the view of the bank means any infringement of the civil liberties of our members."

"There are already enough restrictions on people in South Africa. We would fight any move by employers to restrict the political aspirations of people," he said.

Barclays' politics ban on its 22 500 employees was contained in a circular to managers throughout the country.

This notice — dated September 6 — came two days before the Durban Briardene branch asked a top

black consciousness leader to resign after he had been convicted for displaying a banned T-shirt.

Mr Bradley Potgieter, (20) chairman of the Durban branch of the Azanian People's Organisation, had worked as a savings clerk at the bank.

Asked to clarify what was meant by "political activities", Mr Rudman said the terms should be seen in its widest context.

Mr Chalmers said in response to the bank's decision: "The bank cannot be allowed to stand on your toes."

He said the fear that bank premises could be used to advocate political ideologies was understandable.

"But as we understand the matter, the emphasis should perhaps be on the political image of the bank employee. If a person is not a high-profile spokesman or leader of a party, then he cannot be held to have a political image," said Mr Chalmers.

"This is our union's interpretation and we would be very upset if there is any other interpretation."

He said he was aware that this sensitive issue

could possibly have adverse international effects.

"We are aware of tremendous overseas political pressure for disinvestment in South Africa."

Azapo, also threatening action against the bank's controversial ruling, said in a statement that it viewed the matter "with great concern".

"In effect Barclays is interfering with the political lives of its employees who are also members of various communities."

The national black consciousness organisation, largely responsible for halting the South African tour of overseas soccer stars recently, is now considering various methods of action with its lawyers.

"We will be talking to various other black organisations throughout the country: Barclays does not own their employees, they merely pay for their services during a

Mr Mike Govindsamy, secretary of the Democratic Lawyers' Association, an affiliate of the International Commission of Jurists, and a member of the world Association of Democratic Lawyers, said that unless the bank withdrew the ban the organisation would call on the international community to reconsider investments with the bank.

The acting secretary general of the National Federation of Workers, Mr M. Maphalala, called on the bank to review the decision.

Meanwhile, the senior general manager of Nedbank, Mr Ari van Vliet, said today Nedbank did not interfere with people's views. "We don't control their politics."

Dr H. Fabian, personnel manager of Standard Bank, said: "We do not discourage or dissuade anyone from taking an active part in public life. All we ask is that they also seek our advice."



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# Barclays slaps ban on politics

Daily News Reporter

**BARCLAYS BANK** has banned all its 22 000 employees from taking part in political activities.

The bank's decision to sack employees involved in politics is an apparent sequel to the dismissal of a Durban black consciousness leader convicted recently of displaying a banned T-shirt.

During inquiries into his dismissal The Daily News came into possession of a circular from Barclays National Bank head office in Johannesburg (staff advice no 43/1982) dated September 6 and addressed to all branch managers throughout the country.

The directive from the personnel general manager, Mr I. S. Rudman, says: "As the bank's customers come from all walks of life, race, creed and political affiliation it is essential that to obtain and retain business the bank maintains an impartial political image.

"For this reason the bank is unable to employ or continue to employ persons who are unable to maintain a similarly impartial political image or who participate in political activities.

"We shall be glad," the notice said, "if managers will make the foregoing known to all members of the staff and impress on them that active participation in politics could result in the bank being obliged to terminate their

"The staff manual is being amended accordingly, and as in the past, all new recruits should read the foreword to the manual on joining the bank."

Mr Bradley Potgieter, chairman of the Azanian People's Organisation's branch in Durban, who worked for Barclays Bank in Briardene, Durban, had to leave the bank "because of the adverse publicity his conviction had brought to the company", according to a reported statement made by a head office spokesman.

But Mr Potgieter said that when he was convicted he explained to the bank he had appealed against his conviction on August 23.

He was also granted a transfer which he had requested. But on September 8 Mr Potgieter was asked to leave.

The Progressive Federal Party MP for Houghton, Mrs Helen Suzman, described the notice as "an astounding statement which amounts to a denial of the rights of employees to carry out

public company should impose such restrictions on its employees, especially as the prohibition was so widely phrased.

"I would have thought that the bank would have wished to encourage civic consciousness among its workers, but this notice is tantamount to asking them to opt out of civic responsibilities," Mrs Suzman said.

The leader of the New Republic Party, Mr Vause Raw, said that so long as the bank did not limit the right of employees to hold their own political views and support their political parties then people should accept the notice as "business policy".

He said Barclays Bank had always discouraged any public political activities by its employees. The new notice seemed to put this attitude more strongly, Mr Raw said.

The president of the Durban Chamber of Commerce, Mr Jeremy Whysall, described the bank's move as

"detrimental and puerile".

"You would have thought that the bank, as a leading force in our society, would welcome involvement in the country's affairs by its employees.

"To withdraw from the whole scene seems to be a short-sighted policy," he said.

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21 SEP 1982

*M. Wicks*

# Bank changes its memo

PHANNESBURG — Barclays  
38 as withdrawn its controver-  
sial "no politics" circular to staff  
and will replace it with a new one.

The new directive will clarify  
the bank's attitude to activities of  
bank employees outside work.

In a statement yesterday, the  
managing director of Barclays  
National Bank Ltd, Mr A.R.M. Ald-  
worth, said the bank had never  
stopped its officials joining recog-  
nised political parties.

Mr Aldworth stressed that the

foreword to the staff manual, to  
which the attention of all employ-  
ees was drawn on their engage-  
ment, had long encouraged offi-  
cials to "participate in community  
life. At the same time we rely on  
them not to undertake voluntary  
work of a controversial nature or  
work which would interfere with  
their bank duties".

Officials in doubt about their ac-  
tivities are advised to discuss the  
matter with their superiors.

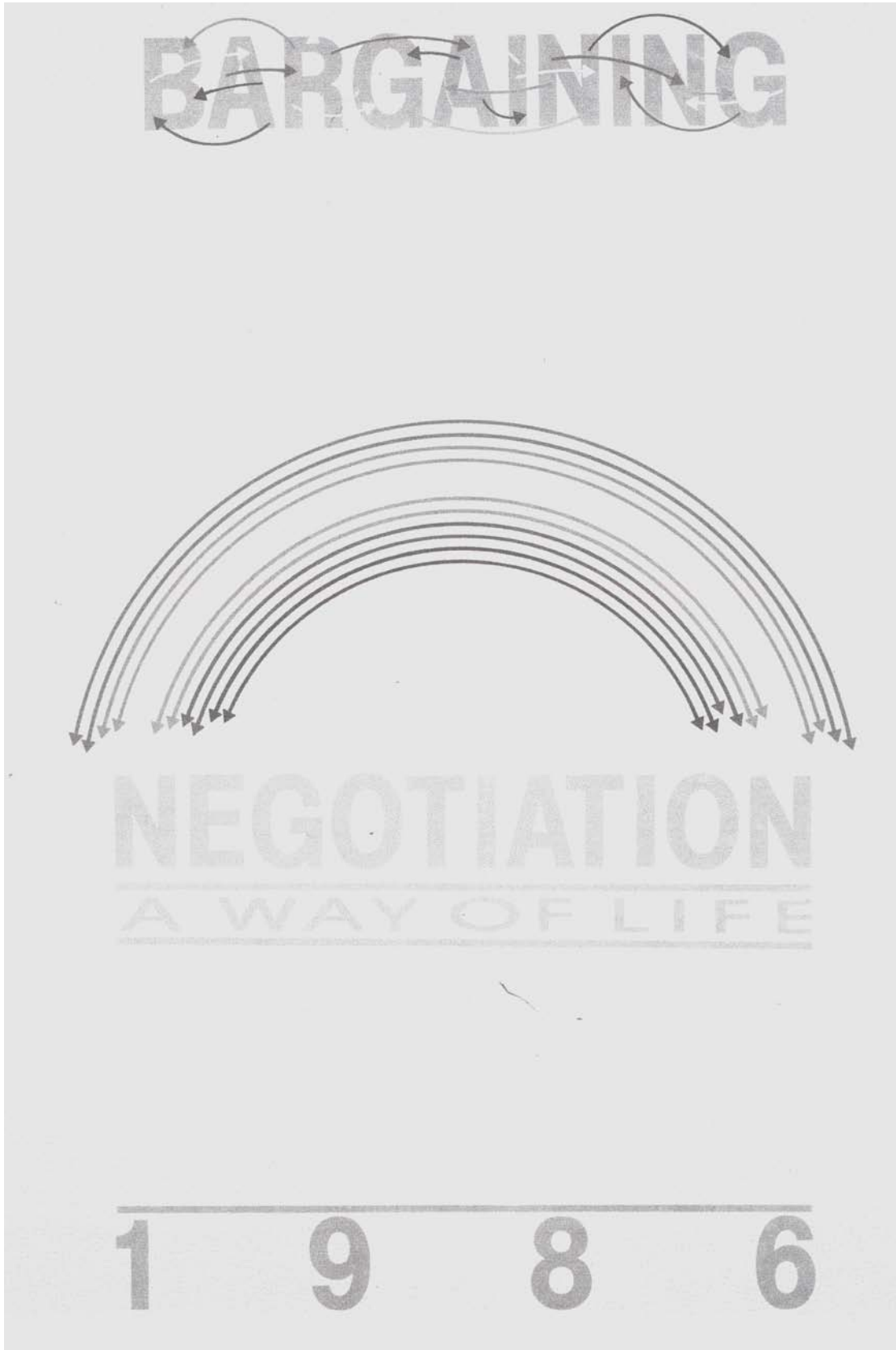
A statement reflecting the

bank's attitude was being incor-  
porated into its staff communica-  
tions.

This, said a spokesman, meant  
the management circular suggest-  
ing staff engaging in controversial  
political activities might be dis-  
missed had been withdrawn.

He said the circular had been  
headed, in part, "active participa-  
tion in politics" and that people  
had possibly been misled by the  
wording, missing the word "ac-  
tive". — Sapa.

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# EFFECTIVE NEGOTIATION, THE PROMISE OF A BETTER FUTURE FOR ALL.

## SPEAKERS

MR MIKE BEAUMONT

SENIOR CONSULTANT AT FSA

MR BERNARD CHALMERS

FSA DIRECTOR OF THE INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS  
AND MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

MR TOM CHALMERS

ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARY OF SASBO  
SENIOR LECTURER AT THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF  
BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION AND CHAIRMAN OF  
THE URBAN TRAINING PROJECT

MR LOOT DOWES-DEKKER

DIRECTOR OF THE PORT ELIZABETH CHAMBER OF  
COMMERCE

MR TONY GILSON

CHAIRMAN OF THE MANPOWER COMMITTEE,  
FEDERATED CHAMBER OF INDUSTRIES

MR BOBBY GODSELL

PROFESSOR IN THE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS  
LEADERSHIP, UNISA, (ECONOMICS)

PROF JAN HUPKES

FORMER DEAN OF THE WITS BUSINESS SCHOOL  
AND CURRENTLY SENIOR ASSOCIATE OF FSA

DR GIDEON JACOBS

DIRECTOR OF THE SA INSTITUTE OF RACE  
RELATIONS

MR JOHN KANE-BERMAN

PROFESSOR IN THE DEPARTMENT OF MERCANTILE  
LAW, UNISA

PROF PETER LE ROUX

SENIOR CONSULTANT AT FSA

MR MIKE MATULOVICH

CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND MANAGING DIRECTOR OF  
AFRICAN BANK LIMITED

MR MOSES MAUBANE

EDITOR OF THE SUNDAY TIMES AND DIRECTOR  
OF SAAN

MR TERTIUS MYBURGH

AMERICAN AMBASSADOR

THE HON HERMAN W NICKEL

PROFESSOR IN THE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS  
LEADERSHIP, UNISA, (INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS)

PROF JOHAN PIRON

EDITOR OF CITY PRESS

MR PERCY QOBOZA

GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE NATIONAL UNION  
OF MINeworkERS

MR CYRIL RAMAPHOSA

MANAGING DIRECTOR OF FSA

MR OLOF VAN SCHALKWIJK

DIRECTOR OF THE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS  
LEADERSHIP, UNISA

PROF NIC WIEHAHN

DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF PREMIER GROUP  
HOLDINGS LIMITED

MR PETER WRIGHTON

PAGE 35



On page 35 TUCSA Photo of me a conference in 1983 with Bank delegates. Chap on the left of me is a friend of mine Abie Williamson. Photo of Abie and me on holiday in Cape Town in 2004

PAGE 35

But it was quite funny because while I was with the union, they sent me down to be a trainer on a training course; this was the Technikon as it was, our equivalent of a polytechnic. So I was sent down to do a course in industrial training and when I came back to the UK, I became a member of the Institute of Training and Development who then merged with the Institute of Personnel Management. So having left school at the age of fifteen, I then became a chartered member of the Chartered Institute of Personnel Development, *pa mahara*, that means “for nothing” [i.e. free]. So they did me some favours after all you see.

### **This was in South Africa?**

Yes, it was when I was with the Union. You see we made a training video and what have you, because they'd never done any training before. And the one thing I've always been able to do is talk, which is what you're finding.

### **I think that's just fascinating that you were the 'liberal' Rhodesian in South Africa at that time.**

Well I think most of us were, we found it very strange when we first went down there, the stupidity of it, and this was what was so silly.

They were really weird, the South Africans. In Rhodesia I never felt we were really cruel to our Africans. Alright, you get some maybe that were beaten, but that's human nature.

You get that here.

Of course you do, but generally we looked after them. If I had a domestic, she would get paid, she would get her rations and it included everything, baths and salt and all the rest of it. But if they were sick, our local doctor would see them for next to nothing. When they had their babies, we used to have to go and pay a gynaecologist. They'd go to the hospitals and have the baby, and when they paid the doctor £5.00, they can take the baby home.

That's all it cost them.

That was all it cost but they could be in there for a week if need be.

And if they didn't pay, they'd still get the baby because it was costing them to keep it.

But generally, I always felt we looked after them and you hear other Africans, blacks talk about it, they don't like that paternalistic attitude but unfortunately it's true. Especially back then.

(01:51:55) In those days.

Maybe the next generation with a bit better education...but at the moment, they're not getting the education, Mugabe's lot, they're all starving and...

Schools are closing.

They're having a terrible time.

But the South Africans, you were saying how they treated them.

Now the South Africans are really quite weird because they had this awful apartheid, when it was white South Africans, and my son-in-law's father was typical. He was a self-employed builder, Afrikaans, "Only good kaffir is a dead kaffir." But his wife has a maid, she's still got her, he had an African driver that worked for him for about thirty years and Philemon could do anything, could borrow the trucks at weekends and...

They drove 300 miles up to see his family.

And they went to his kid's funeral and all that sort of thing and he'd probably have a beer with Philemon. And yet, at the same time, the old man, "the only good kaffir is a dead one." They're really strange like that, there's a lot of them like that.

### **It was a contradiction.**

It was a total contradiction, yes, which we, I know it sounds awful to say, but probably because of empire, we never had that kind of contradiction because you speak to people that lived in India and places like that, they never despised the Indians. They would say, well they were uneducated and they were unclean and whatever but empire taught us not to treat people with disrespect. We saw ourselves as the children of empire as it were and it might sound corny today but as I say, that was it up until the fifties.

You never hated them.

Oh no, God no, I've still got friends out there.

I'm not one to make friends with them the same but I couldn't say I ever hated them. Alright, the odd one might drive you up the bloody wall but then other people do as well.

(01:54:11) But I'm chairman of a small charity here, CPRE, I don't know if you've ever come across them? Campaign for the Protection of Rural England, the Queen is the patron.

### **Oh yes.**

I look after Rutland and I phoned up the office one day and said "can I speak to the accounts department?" and of course they put me through: "Herbert here." I said "is that Herbert or Erbert?" "Herbert." I said, "where are you from Herbert?" "I'm from Zimbabwe." I said "wakadi eway, kan jan"<sup>5</sup>...

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<sup>5</sup> 'Wakadi eway' is Shona for 'how are you?' and kan jan is Matabele for 'how are you?'

“away!”<sup>6</sup> And we met up and him and I were the best of mates, we got invited, on the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the charity, down to the palace of St James and Herbert was there with his wife. She’s a lecturer at Nottingham University, teaching languages. The amount of black Zimbabweans that are in this country would frighten you. And this is the sad part, it’s the highly educated ones have left, because they themselves don’t see a future for them in that country.

We had a really good education system over there. It was really what England used to be like in the fifties. It was a very good education.

But when we were there in, it must have been in April I suppose, there were so many Zimbabweans in South Africa looking for work as well. One of the areas of Zimbabwe was called Eastern Highlands, beautiful mountains and pine trees and all the rest of it, all planted. And I saw this African down there, I said “where are you from?” “Zimbabwe.” So we started chatting in Shona and he said “I am from Umtali, from Inyanga,” and that used to be our favourite place to go on holidays, camping and stuff because you had these streams and trees. I said, “oh you’re so lucky, that’s such a beautiful place.” “Not now,” he says: “They’ve taken down all the trees, they’ve done nothing, it’s just like a desert.” And that’s why they’re down there because they can’t earn a living and most of them, the Afrikaans people will employ them rather than their own people because they don’t have the same hatred for whites.

Our son and his wife moved back there a couple of years ago now and what you have to live in, in Johannesburg, is what they call a complex. It’s about a hundred houses and they’ve got an eight-foot wall around them and a security guard. But there’s a gardener who looks after the grounds there, he’s a Rhodesian/Zimbabwean schoolteacher.

He can earn more down there as a gardener.

He can’t get a job in Zimbabwe, so he’s down there as a gardener and it’s not unusual.

It’s very sad, but when you look to the north, it doesn’t give you a lot of hope. When you see places like Nigeria and Ghana and all these places that have been independent since the fifties and they’re in such a mess. (01:57:08)

I was saying earlier, even Kenya people seemed to live quite a reasonable life there. We were there on holiday in Mombasa and a lady was on a sun lounger...so we’re sitting on these sun loungers outside the hotel and this lady, we got talking to her and her husband is something in the High Commission office back in Nairobi. So we got talking naturally and she was saying her husband had contact with Americans or something. The Americans wanted to give Kenya so many dollars, millions, to build either a school or a hospital. So the Kenyans would say, “thanks very much, we’ll have that money but we actually want to build a conference centre.” So the Americans would say “you’re not getting it, you’ve got a conference centre,” so the Americans said “you’re not having it.” It was for a school or a hospital...

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<sup>6</sup> This response is Shona for ‘you,’ which is how one would say ‘my God!’

And you're not going to get it. But we saw a documentary here about two years ago where some British reporter had gone across and the EU had given to the Kenyan government to buy land just on the outskirts of Nairobi to build an African township. They took the money and they just used it as a dump and you saw the kids there scratching for food. And while the guy was there, there was a big conference on poverty and of course all the MP's are driving up in their Armani suits...

Causing roadblocks with all their BMWs.

...BMWs and Mercedes Benz. And this reporter just couldn't believe it, he said, "they're here to talk about poverty, look at them." We should talk, look at ours, they're just as big thieves as anyone else.

They're not quite as big.

Not as big.

That's what that woman from the Sunday papers said about all this that's been coming out lately about our MPs. She said, "yes it's bad but it's small beer compared to Africans," and she's right.

It's a sad situation and we probably sound quite racist at times, but we don't mean to. And we don't really care whether you felt that or not because basically that's how we found it. As I say, getting back to the Air Force, I wasn't really involved in any sort of front line stuff. Basically, my job was to make sure that when the aircraft landed, if it had a problem, you fixed it. But they were very innovative; we obviously started getting all sorts of sanctions.

**Yes, you had to adapt aircraft didn't you?**

Oh my God, didn't they just...

**(01:59:50) Were you involved in that side of things?**

Some of it, yes, they had the Hunters for instance, the Hawker Hunter, and an issue started there where we used to send them back to the UK for repairs. Of course they stopped doing it, so we had to be able to build a rig. They asked me to build a rig to test, so we could do the testing there in the country and then change filters and stuff for it, which I did. We also had to make adaptations. One of the guys, they ran out of what they called starter cartridges, the Canberra used to have this huge cartridge about that size and about that diameter, full of cortex that used to be lit and "Boom!!" to start the engine turning. So of course the RAF said, "right, that's it, you're not getting any more." So a couple of the technicians, it wasn't our department, it was some of the other technicians, they actually had these huge air bottles – I don't know if you've seen them at airports – but they have these big bottles full of high compressed air and they made an adaptor to put on the front of the engine of the aircraft. Then everybody just opened up these bottles and the

air just rushes through and it started the engine. It was so economical because it kept the engine clean as well. There was so much of that going on, they were so innovative in so many things, it was incredible. They just kept the damn things flying when everyone thought, well, they've run out of spares.

### **Did you sense that things were running out?**

Oh yes.

### **As a technician?**

Yes, but again, we adapted and bought French helicopters, for instance the Alouette Helicopter. They were busy with these helicopters and again, the French had to go along with the Brits and they stopped selling spares to us. We used to have to get bearings for parts of the aircraft and it cost us about £80.00 a bearing to get them sent from France, and one of the guys who wanted to work on his own car, he went down to our Botha spares department in town, one of the big shops, and he found the same bearing for about £5.00! So we just bought that car bearing and it fitted. So they were very innovative, they would do all sorts of things and adapt it to make it work. It was a good life, I've got no regrets about where we lived. A few hairy moments probably, but even all the deaths, that was war, that's all there was to it. They would have killed us, we would have killed them.

### **Looking back now, do you feel that it was worth it?**

I think to some extent it was. I don't think it would have been any better had we actually just said "right, one man – one vote, give it to them." I don't think that would have done anything at all. What's that saying? If it doesn't kill you, it strengthens you, sort of thing. I think it strengthens your resolve. I started off very uneducated, I went through that and I realised you could do any bloody thing. I finished up, I've been to Buckingham Palace for work that I did (02:03:06) on the environment<sup>7</sup>...became one of the leading experts on environment in this country, went and travelled all over Russia and the Far East, India and what have you, lecturing on the bloody thing. I lecture down at Nottingham University on environment, and it all came about through that hardening.<sup>8</sup> It's like the steel getting hardened in the fire. You suddenly realise, "cripes, I can do all sorts of things: You want me to fix an aeroplane that's never been done before? I'll do that."

We had a silly situation while we were up at Ndola, that time when Dag Hammarskjöld got injured, where one of the starter motors on one of our Dakotas didn't work. A line of us just got hold of the propeller and ran, pulled the thing until it started, which was highly dangerous. It would never have happened anywhere else but we did it and that was all there is to it.

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<sup>7</sup> See accompanying copy of invitation to Buckingham Palace and the CPRE 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reception, attended by the Queen on p. 48, contributed by Tom Chalmers.

<sup>8</sup> See accompanying copies of letters from the University of Nottingham, indicating Tom Chalmers' involvement in their MSc courses on pp. 49-50, contributed by him.





*The Lord Chamberlain is  
commanded by Her Majesty to invite*

---

*Mr. and Mrs. T. A. Chalmers*  
*to a Garden Party at Buckingham Palace*  
*on Thursday 21st July 1994 from 4 to 6 pm*

*Morning Dress, Uniform or Lounge Suit*

---



Campaign to Protect  
Rural England

Sir Max Hastings  
President of CPRE

requests the pleasure of the company of

*Mr & Mrs Tom Chalmers*

---

to its 80th Anniversary Reception

in the presence of Her Majesty The Queen

at

St James's Palace

on

Thursday 2nd November 2006

6.00pm – 8.00pm

Entrance through Marlborough Road Door.

Admission from 5.45pm

Please assemble by 6.15pm

**PLEASE NOTE THIS IS NOT YOUR ADMISSION CARD TO THE PALACE**

No smoking – No cameras – Mobile telephones must be switched off

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The 1994 invite to the palace was for the work that I did in industry on the environment.

The 2006 was as a chair of CPRE to celebrate its 80<sup>th</sup> year,



0115 951 3760  
Philip.shipway@nottingham.ac.uk



The University of  
**Nottingham**

24 November 2006

Mr Thomas Chalmers  
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Head of School:

**Professor T H Hyde** BSc MSc PhD DSc  
FREng CEng FIMechE FIM

Dear Tom,

### **MSc in Surface Design and Engineering**

Thank you for your input to our Environmental Management module as part of our MSc course, Surface Design and Engineering at the University of Nottingham.

We are in a process of repositioning our MSc training and we have decided to suspend the running of this course for the time being. As such, we will not be requiring your input on this module in the near future. This is a source of some disappointment to us but we appreciate the commitment that you have shown to us, which has enabled us to deliver excellent teaching to our students.

With very best wishes.

Philip Shipway

I delivered seven lectures over that period, my input was  
“Environmental issues in the supply chain”

03 AUG 1998



July 30, 1998

Mr T Chalmers  
BEAM  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, New Enterprise House  
St Helens Street  
Derby  
DE1 3GY

Dear Mr Chalmers

**IGDS Module in Environmental Management  
June 1998 at Nottingham**

As convenor I would like to thank you for your efforts in preparing and presenting your lecture on Environmental Issues in the Supply Chain to the students on the module. In the initial feedback from the students we had indications that they had appreciated the work done by all of the lecturers involved. Obviously we would have wished for a large number of students, but circumstances involved in the setting up of the whole MSc course made it difficult to achieve the target number of ten in 1997-98. Major efforts are now being made to recruit the target numbers for 1998-99 and we would hope that they will be in place by the next time this module runs in July 1999.

One final request concerns questions for an examination paper on the above module which the students will take in September. The paper will be made up of two sections, the first will consist of a series of multiple choice questions and the second essay style questions. Could you provide two or three multiple choice questions, for example:

- "Which of the following statements is **not true**:
- A. When considering the bioincompatibility of a new coating for an existing implant it is not necessary to consider the length of time the implant will be in vivo, but just the implant's location.
  - B. In general terms a bioincompatible surface is related to the ability of the surface to remain biologically inert such that toxic, allergic and carcinogenic reactions do not occur.
  - C. A resorbable surface is ultimately replaced by regenerating tissues, eliminating the original interface altogether.
  - D. A controlled reactive surface is designed to control surface reactions such that tissue repair is incorporated within the reactive inorganic layers forming an implant surface."

It is possible to have more than one correct answer to a given question. If you could also indicate the correct answer(s) then I do not anticipate any need to trouble you with the marking of the scripts.

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Graduate  
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Scheme

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 THE  
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 Sheffield Hallam University  
Materials Research Institute  
City Campus, Pond Street  
Sheffield  
Tel: 0114 253 3500  
Fax 0114 253 3501

And you suddenly realise, there's no limits to what you can do. As I said, when I started the first Environmental Club for Industry in the UK – because when I came back, as I was an engineer and as I had been with the trade unions, I got a job with the Engineering Employers Federation and I got involved in European funding and stuff that you're probably working with now – I got about five million out of the bastards. I've flown all over world with it, it was absolutely great. But you finish up, you go across to Germany and places like that and as I say, Russia, Hungary, Poland. I actually was teaching, do you remember Solidarność (Solidarity) the trade union? I trained them in negotiating skills both here and across in Poland and started from nothing.

### **So it's made you very adaptable to an extent?**

Exactly. You just say to yourself, well, I think if you were brought up in Britain in the fifties, not so much now, but I don't know if you remember...I think it was John Cleese and the Two Ronnies, "I know my place." It's a training thing that we use nowadays. I look up to him because he's a higher class than me and I look down on him because he's a peasant. That was how it was, that was what your philosophy was. If I hadn't left the UK, I'd have been a butcher's manager, a manager of a shop, and that would have been it. Now I've been all over the world and I've mixed with the Queen, I've shook hands with the Queen.<sup>9</sup> When they opened up the Berlin Wall and it came down, they wanted to have a big international conference. John Gummer was the Minister of the Environment and he invited twenty people across with him to Germany and I was one of the twenty, one of the top guys.<sup>10</sup>

I went across to India on a 'jolly' and while I was across there, I got interviewed in Calcutta and "Mr Chalmers is here visiting the country looking for trade etc." I was really up on environment so of course the next thing was that India Steel had been to the British Embassy in Calcutta talking about these new systems that are coming in on environment. So when I went down and spoke to the Embassy, they said, "would you mind going and talking to the guys in India Steel?" I went in there and did an impromptu bloody lecture to about twenty of their directors. The next thing, they're saying, "would you be prepared to write an article for our compendium?" So they had this big booklet that they sent out and then I did an article for the one on environment.<sup>11</sup> The next thing we get invited to seminars all over the place, the Indo-British partnership, this Confederation of the Indian Industry, I was (02:07:00) working with them; and the next thing, I'm getting down to...I think that was Ghandi's reception? No, the Confederation of Indian Industry came across to the UK and they had a big do for them at Lancaster House and then we went to the House of Commons and the House of Lords, Ghandi's reception on his death. That just followed on from that because you suddenly

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<sup>9</sup> Also see accompanying photograph on p. 56 of Tom Chalmers with Ian Smith in Cape Town, taken in 2008 at the celebration of his birthday, contributed by him.

<sup>10</sup> See accompanying copy of letter inviting Tom Chalmers to accompany the Minister of the Environment to Berlin on p. 53, contributed by him.

<sup>11</sup> See accompanying copies of letter inviting Tom Chalmers to write article for the Steel Authority of India, plus an article written for an Indian newspaper on pp. 54-55, contributed by him.

realise the sky's the bloody limit, you can do what you like and it did me a lot of good.

**Thank you so much for talking to me, you've shown me such a lot as well.**

Well it's not been very helpful in terms of the Air Force but...

End of interview

Tom Chalmers also contributed the following article by June Bam-Hutchinson, IPUP Research Associate, on race relations in the UK at the time of UDI, noting that prior to 1965 it must have been much worse:

Race, Faith, and UK Policy: A Brief History

Whilst the 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act controlled immigrants coming into the UK as 'a response to problems in housing, jobs and crime', the first Race Relations Act 1965 three years later under Labour outlawed racism in public places, and made it unlawful to refuse access to anyone on racial grounds to public places such as hotels, restaurants, pubs, cinemas or public transport. Refusing to rent accommodation to people because of their race was also no longer allowed and stirred up racial hatred – 'intitement' – became a criminal offence.

Interestingly this was limited to hotels and restaurants, and failed to outlaw racism in the workplace or in housing. This first law also made racial discrimination a civil rather than criminal offence. The 1965 Race Relations Act has been described as a limited piece of legislation pushed through by a Labour government in the face of fierce opposition from the Conservatives. This first race equality law was perhaps more about 'relations' rather than 'racism', but the Race Relations Act of 1965 with the first Race Relations Board marked the start of Equality and Diversity legislation in the UK under Labour.



Tom Chalmers Esq  
East Midlands Engineers  
Employers Association  
Barleythorpe  
Oakham  
Rutland  
Leicestershire  
LE15 7ED

2 MARSHAM STREET  
LONDON SW1P 3EB  
0171-276 3000

My ref:

Your ref:

} November 1996

I have pleasure in inviting you to take part in the British-German seminar on business and the environment in Central and Eastern Europe to be held in Berlin on 2 to 4 December.

The crucial role of the private sector in achieving environmental improvement in Central and Eastern Europe was highlighted by the Conference of European Environment Ministers held in Sofia in 1995. The purpose of the seminar will be to reinforce that message and to present the expertise and experience of UK and German business to an influential audience from Central and Eastern European business and government. I shall be holding a briefing for participants at the Department of Environment on 25 November and I very much hope that you will be able to join us.


I enclose a copy of the programme for the seminar. Further information on the briefing and the seminar and a registration form will be sent to you separately by Adrian Bayley who is handling the organisation of the UK business team. I understand that he has already been in contact with you about your participation and the arrangements.

I look forward to seeing you on 25 November and in Berlin.

  
JOHN GUMMER

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<b>स्टील अथॉरिटी ऑफ इण्डिया लि.</b> (भारत सरकार का उपक्रम) <b>पर्यावरण प्रबंध प्रभाग</b> 6. गणेश चन्द्र एवेन्यू, (पांचवी मंजिल) कलकत्ता-700013		<b>STEEL AUTHORITY OF INDIA LTD.</b> (A Govt. of India Enterprise) <b>ENVIRONMENT MANAGEMENT DIVISION</b> 6, Ganesh Chandra Avenue, (5th Floor) Calcutta - 700 013
दूरभाष / PHONE : 27 4330	फैक्स / FAX : (033) 27-1640	टेलिक्स / TELEX : 021-4975-ENVR
संदर्भ सं. REF. NO	SAIL/EMD/ENV/Compendium/1631	दिनांक DATE 19-08-95

To  
Mr Tom AM Chalmers  
Training Executive  
East Midlands Association, Barleythorpe  
Leicestershire

Sub : Invitation of articles for Technical Compendium

Dear Sir,

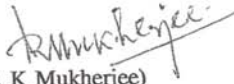
Steel Authority of India Limited, the premier Public Sector Steel Making Organisation in India, will observe ENVIRONMENT MONTH from 19th November to 18th December, 1995 at all its Steel Plants and Mines.

To mark this occasion, Environment Management Division of SAIL, a Corporate body, managing its environmental affair, will be releasing a special "Technical Compendium" on "Environmental Management and Pollution Control". Some of the suggested topics are enclosed.

We would very much appreciate if you kindly send us a technical paper (in English) to this office latest by 22nd September '95.

Thanking you,

Yours faithfully,

  
(A K Mukherjee)  
Executive Director

PAGE 41



# EEF of UK scouts for Indian partners

Ambar Singh Roy  
CALCUTTA, Aug. 18

**T**HE Engineering Employers' Federation (EEF) of UK, together with the Director General (External Economic Relations) of the European Commission, is scouting for Indian partners for joint ventures in the engineering sector.

The idea is to develop a steady supply from India which would conform to a uniform quality standard.

According to Mr. Tom Chalmers, Training Executive & Project Co-ordinator of East Midlands Association - which, along with other organisations, comprises of EEF - the objective is to identify the "broadest" possible joint ventures in the sector.

From plastic components to heavy engineering items to sophisticated electronics, EEF wants to evaluate all possibilities.

EEF has over 4,800 companies as its members whose turnover accounts for 11 per cent of UK's gross domestic product.

Its members include small plastics manufacturing companies to lighting companies as also corporate giants such as Rolls Royce and Caterpillar Tractors. In India, PKG Exports of Calcutta will help EEF in its present programme.

"Our fact-finding mission has been sponsored by the EC and the EEF for identifying joint ventures and expanding trade between

companies in India and the European Community", Mr. Chalmers told *Business Line*. The mission is a sequel to the recent 'Concorde Delegation' to India sponsored by UK's Department of Trade & Industry.

Stating that the present situation in India is similar to that in the UK a few years ago - when industry had a number of suppliers - Mr. Chalmers said companies have realised that the more the number of suppliers the more would be the variation of the product.

It was important to ensure that the supply base was reduced so that variation could be minimised. Besides, the lesser the variation, the lesser the rejections.

"For transnational projects, companies need to conform to international quality standards", he observed.

In the TOM concept, he stated, it is imperative not to have variations in the product. In addition to quality standards in the UK, companies had to conform to ISO 14001 or BS 7750, which signified an acceptable environmental standard.

"Indian companies who survive over the years will be those who conform to quality standards and total quality management. For this, companies should have a flatter management hierarchy where the entire staff is involved in the quality process."

In fact, environmental legislation would ensure that Indian companies adhered to acceptable requirements.

The need in the EC to scout for suppliers in

India follows a series of developments, most important being the necessity for European companies to reduce operational costs and, simultaneously, increase output and profitability.

According to Mr. Chalmers, European companies were also looking forward to using India as a launching pad for exports to the entire Pacific region.

The EEF team will be in Calcutta for six months. But why Calcutta? "In our opinion, which partially owes itself to the feedback from the Concorde Delegation, West Bengal has the highest growth potential in India. The western and northern regions are already saturated."

EEF formed over 100 years ago essentially as an employers' organisation, initially confined to its activities to industrial relations. It negotiated disputes and wage-related matters so as to ensure better lobbying rights for employers.

But a century later, it now has 14 offices in UK and is in constant touch with the Government in matters of industrial development.

The present programme, which is estimated to cost 1,50,000 Pound Sterling, has been jointly funded by EC and the members of EEF.

Asked about the timing and efficacy of the EEF programme envisaging joint ventures in India, Mr. Chalmers quipped: "The timing of our visit is opportune. My only regret is that we did not come here two years ago."

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Me with Ian Smith in Cape Town in 2008 celebrating his birthday.

*G. W. Kent*