Andrew Field

Went out to Rhodesia aged three, with his family, in 1956. Left school and joined the BSAP in 1971. Joined CID in 1973.

This is Doctor Sue Onslow,interviewing Mr Andrew Field, formerly Detective Inspector of the BSAP, on Monday 5th January 2009 in Raynes Park. Andrew, thank you very much indeed for agreeing to talk to me. I wonder if you could begin by saying how did you come to be in Southern Rhodesia in the 1960s and 1970s?

My parents took me out to Southern Rhodesia back in 1956. My father had served in the Air Force in Rhodesia during the Second World War and he was a teacher by profession and took up a position with the Southern Rhodesia Native Education Department. I was dragged out to a little town called Gweru or Gwelo in those days where he taught for a short period at Thornhill and we then moved onto Umtali where I had my upbringing.

How old were you when you went to Rhodesia?

Three years

Were there any other brothers and sisters that were dragged out with you?

Yes I've got two brothers: one two years older than me and another five years older than me.

So what's your earliest recollection of Rhodesia?

I will always remember the trip that we took from Gwelo to Umtali in a Ford Prefect, a black Ford Prefect. In those days there were strip roads on the main transfer routes and I always have recollections of huge snakes across the road being pointed out to me. It's a very small thing, but that is a recollection of mine, the strip roads in themselves. I don't remember very much of Gwelo during those days and we lived in a Pisé house which was basically a mud constructed house in one of the suburbs, Yeovil, of Umtali when we first arrived, it had a thatched roof. Now I remember that quite vividly, I don't know whether they're still standing those houses but those are my very earliest memories.

Did your mother work when you were a child?

She did eventually work. She looked after the boys until I was probably about, I guess 10/11ish and then she worked for a fairly well known stationery shop, Kingstons in Umtali.

Where did you go to school?

I first started at Chancellor Junior School where I was for two years and then moved across to the Umtali Junior School which was relatively new. We were re-zoned after a move to Alexander Road in Bordervale suburb.

(00:03:18) **So that wasn't a government school, that was a public school?**

No, those are all government schools. Both of them were government schools and then after Umtali Junior I went to Umtali Boys High School which was a really tremendous school for youngsters at the time.

Was there quite a difference between the government schools and the private schools in Southern Rhodesia at that time?

Difficult for me to comment. You know, the majority of white youngsters went to the public schools. By public school in Rhodesia, that meant a government school. There were a few private schools run by the church. I think they performed equally on both academic and sporting basis.

Was there a pecking order? If you had been to a government school, did you tend to feel superior to those who'd been to…?

No not at all, not at all

I'm just wondering. Inevitable hierarchy that children give to their scholastic…?

No, I think we enjoyed competing with the private schools, particularly on the rugby field, cricket field, and in athletics. I don't think there was a cliquey sort of community when it came to your school origin although Umtali boys do tend to stick together right up until now. We seem to have the same sort of ethos and thinking about a lot of things.

In what way?

Well, if you employ an Umtali boy, you know you're going to get a good worker. You know he's going to have a good work ethic, that kind of thing. We consider that somebody who is an ex-Umtali boy is fairly safe to employ, fairly safe to go into business with. We have this kind of esprit de corps if you like, but a school boy one.

Would the same extend to Africans from the Umtali area?

There is a kind of brotherly type thinking when you deal with a black person from Umtali, you are part of that sort of brotherhood. It is a strange thing but it wasn't predominant back then during the liberation struggle.

Did your family keep links with the UK or did they sever their ties?

They basically severed their ties. My father obviously - he had his parents there; they died off, and he never went back for funerals. He really did regard himself as being a little bit of a rebel along with the Rhodesian rebels so to (00:06:19) speak. His ties were basically broken apart from correspondence with relatives.

So it wasn't a case of going back "home" every two or three years or anything like that?

I recall we had a three month holiday in Britain when I was probably about twelve or thirteen where my father had taken the customary three month leave from the Education Department and we'd come back here and I actually moved to a school down in Canterbury for that term. I didn't feel that I belonged.

In what way? Could you put your finger on it?

I was a little Rhodesian really and they were all little Pommies.

Could you put your finger on <u>how</u> you were different?

We weren't accustomed to things like the school timetable, how they worked the schooling. We worked our schooling from half seven in the morning to one, then we went home for lunch and back to school for sports and other extra-mural activities. In England basically they went to school at about nine and they didn't go home until four o'clock. It was a long day, they were fed there on the premises and all the extra-mural activities that I remember could have been in the morning or the afternoon, football playing, whatever it was. We were over in the summer so cricket was more appropriate but it was just very different to what we were used to.

Were you teased?

Yes, I think there was a lot of teasing, I was a stranger, certainly I had adopted a bit of an accent by then.

Could you speak any Rhodesian languages like Shona…?

My father taught at the Umtali teacher trainer college and he was the art master at that college. My friends during that period were all blacks and I was brought up by a Shona speaker and if I wanted to get on with those youngsters, which I did, then I had to learn a fair degree of Shona. Other white youngsters within that educational community were also fluent Shona speakers but now, I hardly speak a word of it.

But did your parents socialise with Shonas?

Not really. I think you could possibly have regarded them to be a little bit more liberal than your bog standard Rhodesian and yes, they would have socialised to a certain degree within that teaching community. Things like they used to

have Scottish dance days, they used to have sports meetings, well then everyone was there together and it was all part of that community. But real socialisation with black people, well it didn't really take place that much.

(00:09:44) **Andrew, when did you leave school?**

I left school in '71. I completed my 'O' levels, I was studying my 'M' levels, I really didn't feel the need to pursue my 'M' levels and I really wanted to get out there and join the police. It was just before the second phase of the war had started and so there wasn't a mad desire to go and fight 'gooks' at this stage, I really wanted to get into policing and…

Had you wanted to join the police from an early age?

No not really. I was very much influenced by the late Dave Munford who was a classmate of mine and a friend within my circle of friends. He had joined after 'O' levels, gone into the cadet corps and came back with these glorious stories of how wonderful it was. I was taken by it but I never regretted that decision; I never, ever regretted it. My mother and father were in some ways horrified that I was going to break away from their perception of where I should go academically because I was quite a bright boy, if I say so myself; they had great ideas of me going to Varsity and doing whatever, so it went right against the grain of what they intended for me. My middle brother is a haematologist in Wales. He is really academically inclined and the eldest brother also went to Varsity, University of Cape Town so I think they had this expectation that I would also do the Varsity but I didn't want to.

So how did they react when you told them you wanted to join the BSAP?

With shock, with some shock. There wasn't a great deal of discouragement, I've got to be honest. They just didn't really feel it was right for me and they were saying "Are you doing the right thing?" That was the extent of the negative persuasion, if you like, but not anything too serious to worry about and I think they felt, well maybe he'll do three years in the police and then we can talk about Varsity after that.

Had you travelled outside of Rhodesia apart from the three month stint in England?

Only to South Africa

What did your parents think of Rhodesian UDI? After all, that took place in '65 and there you are in 1971, it's become a republic, you're joining the police to uphold the state which was in defiance of the British crown.

Absolutely, I think my father basically felt that the rebellion was just. Even though he had his British ties, he believed what Smith and the government were doing at that time was the right thing. He supported UDI, he supported

the rebellion so to speak but I don't think there was any reservation about having said that.

(00:13:22) **Did he talk to you and your brothers as teenagers about this?**

Not really, we didn't really discuss politics within the home; it wasn't a big issue. My father was being dragged out as a police reservist to do his sixteen hour shifts as a special constable of the BSAP, that was a reserve organisation.

When did that start?

That was set up I believe in 1962 after the first serious riots and he often spoke of his long stints in the townships and seeing all the troubles and all the rest of it. We often heard references to people like Ndabaningi Sithole at the time, Joshua Nkomo during the early stages so we were aware that this was an issue between leaving it be, letting the Brits hand it over to the blacks who, in our perception, weren't ready for it or taking that UDI and taking it from there and hoping that along the route, things would come right and the politicians would engineer a final solution which they didn't actually.

Do you remember what your mother thought?

My mother was very apolitical. Her biggest concerns were the boys, the home, keeping going at work. She really enjoyed her job at Kingstons and we didn't hear very much politics from her at all. I can't remember her actually discussing issues at the time.

You said you joined the BSAP in 1971 and you would have gone and done your basic training. Did it still involve equitation at that stage?

Yes, that was an absolute delight of my depot training. I always refer to myself as an ex-cavalry officer

After your basic training where were you first sent?

My first station was a little suburban station called Avondale and I was under the control and command of a guy called Bill Linfield who's still in Zimbabwe and a wonderful person he was. He took those "wet behind the ears" policemen and really turned them into good suburban policemen in uniformed branch. But my great desire was actually to get into CID to be a detective, I wanted to get rid of that uniform as quickly as possible.

So this is what encouraged you to go into the BSAP? You wanted to be a detective?

Well yes, I think that the need to be a detective… we had neighbours, a chap by the name of John Vorster who also ended up in Special Branch with me but he was my eldest brother's age and he was in CID so one had to aspire to

that sort of level and there was a little bit of a cliquey issue with the CID you know, we were slightly above the uniform branch, so we thought,

They were 'the plods', were they?

(00:17:00) They were the plods and the bright sparks all went into CID.

How long was it before you achieved your ambition?

I transferred from Avondale to Mabelreign. I did a few months there and then I transferred to the most wonderful station which was Hatfield which was a peri-urban station. There was a lot of farming in that area; there was in Mabelreign as well but I always remember going to Boss Lilford's farm in Mabelreign. Ah, that's a story, and I was told "whatever you do, don't knock on the front door to see Boss Lilford". And I said "well I'm sorry but if he wants to see me, I will knock on his front door" and I went, I knocked on the front door with a constable by my side and Lilford came to the front door and he bogged all over me for knocking on the front door. I said "Well, if you haven't anything to report Mr Lilford, I'll be on my way" and I promptly jumped on the motorbike and off I went. Well when I got back from that farm patrol, I got the most serious bollocking from my member in charge for not going to the back door and I thought, well, very, very strange but the man was an arrogant person, he really was.

Everything I had heard about him confirms that.

Oh terrible, terrible person, anyway there we go.

After Hatfield then, was that when you, as they say, achieved nirvana and ended up in CID?

Yes, I started my probation in CID, that must have been in '73, I have actually got the date somewhere

OK, so that was after the beginning of the second phase of the war, December '72.

It very much was, yes

And were you aware that the war appeared to have taken a quantum leap in intensification?

Yes, yes I was because whilst I was still at Hatfield. I was sent on a six week posting to a place called Hoya in the Mukumbura/Mzarabani tribal areas where I was to run various ground coverage operations as a totally unskilled intelligence person. Basically it was a question of deploying constables, blacks into the rural areas in plain clothes and eliciting information from the locals. Well that was a kind of very shocking experience for me because three or four of those guys actually got slotted, abducted and murdered during that period.

How many were you responsible for? Six weeks isn't very…

(00:20:07) It was a very small team, very small team. We probably had about two sergeants and about ten constables. I was deployed with two other patrol officers. Hoya was basically just a set of school buildings which the Army had occupied and really, it was at that very early stage. It was shortly after Altena farm so that was the re-opening of the war and we were in a major transfer route from that camp in the Zambia/Mozambique area, the name escapes me but it was a major transfer route up towards the mission where all the abductions took place, the first mass abductions and I was involved in the follow up of that as well. So quite a shock for a twenty year old I think, seeing this. We were also involved in one of the nastiest ambushes of the time. It was an Easter Monday and I remember vividly that contact having been shot and fired upon and the fear and all the rest that went with it and then having to look after injured members of the territorial Army who had been badly injured and a couple of them were actually killed in that contact. I think the most stunning thing I remember about that was the helicopters coming in at around about midnight when the moonlight was sufficiently high enough to allow them to fly because the manufacturers of Alouettes said you can't fly these things at night. Well, the Rhodesian Air Force were doing it and two choppers came in to casevac the wounded. That was my introduction to the war and I was still actually a uniformed branch person so going to CID, I was fully aware that there was a war now in progress.

While you were still in uniformed branch, what did you think you were fighting against? Did you think you were fighting? Or did you think that this was contacts with external, deviant criminal elements?

Certainly I think my thinking at the time was that we were dealing with a bunch of criminals. We weren't actually dealing with a hugely organised terrorist organisation or guerrilla organisation or whatever terminology you want to use. I think that at that very early stage of the war, we were still thinking that it was sporadic, that it was similar to the incidents which had occurred during the early and late '60's which had been cleaned up so we expected to clean it up in the same way. I don't think we were aware that it was the next phase of a much larger and far better organised onslaught as I stood at that time, obviously I came to realise that a little later on.

So did you see it as a war?

Definitely not as a war at that stage

Or these were incursions, isolated…

This was insurgency. This was isolated insurgency bandits would be a good word to describe them at that stage of the game. They had motivation for one man-one rule, I mean we did associate that with it. We did associate Nationalism with it although that aspect of Nationalism wasn't being thrown down our throats; they were calling them communist terrorists.

When you say "they", who?

(00:24:45) Well, when I talk of "they", I'm talking about our leadership, the general political fraternity at that time. They kept on talking about communist terrorists, CT's and stuff like that. I think we all knew well enough that they were all Nationalists, they wanted black majority rule, this was the reason why Smith had declared his UDI, to prevent this black majority rule, those were the kind of things we were thinking about when I was at that stage of the game.

When you joined CID, which division did you join?

I first went into the Crimes of Violence section which basically dealt with murder, rape, serious sexual offences, very serious and violent assaults and stuff like that which was quite an education, being based in Salisbury then and being exposed to that. I did a couple of murder investigations, one of which I started as the initial uniformed branch patrol officer, the murder of a Mrs Lyon in Hatfield and within a week of that murder I'd actually transferred across to crimes of violence and a chap called Stevenson Baker was running that investigation, a DI and he took me onto the team because I had local knowledge so I was actually with him when we arrested the accused, a chap called Takawera who later hanged for his sins.

Joining the crimes of extreme violence, were those also political crimes of extreme violence? Did you differentiate?

No, they had a Sabotage Section as well. The Sabotage Section had grown from about 1962/'63 and had been sort of run by guys like Paddy Bradshaw and Dusty Bins. They had dealt with the more serious incidents occurring from all the incursions and anything which was regarded as a terrorist incident or a guerrilla incident was handled by the sabotage section. And remember of course there had been a spate of bombings and stuff in Harare, in Salisbury at the time, that had also been handled by them so Crimes of Violence Section had dealt with the mainly civilian police work at the time. After a few months I was uplifted and taken to Fraud Section, I did a small bit of time at CID Southerton which ran the Copper Control Section and…

Sorry, the copper control section?

Yes, copper theft was quite a major thing in Salisbury at the time. Overhead cables, telephone cables all sorts of things like that.

End of tape – break in interview

I then got transferred for my sins to the Fingerprint Bureau which whilst quite a cushy job to some, it was absolutely a pain in the butt to me. I had to sit and look at fingerprints through a magnifying glass for eight hours of the day and it just wasn't my scene.

How long did you stick that for?

(00:00:35) I think I was there for three months before I was offered a "punishment" posting down at Fort Victoria.

So you jumped at that?

I jumped at the posting station and I was transferred to Fort Victoria in 1974/'75 to CID Fort Victoria to begin with and it was almost at the same time that JOC Repulse... I probably arrived in Fort Vic a year before JOC Repulse was set up and then JOC Repulse did become a feature and a chap called Barry McKay was then one of the Special Branch seniors in place in Fort Victoria and he was looking for a fairly level headed gentleman who could conduct interrogations of captured guerrillas and he actually selected me to do that job. He trained me, he put me through a process of learning which was incredible beneficial, not only about the guerrillas and all the intelligence which had been built up about the guerrillas at the time but he insisted that I became very much an expert on African Nationalism. He needed me to understand the communist philosophy, he presented papers which had been written by SBHQ and he ensured that I studied these and I knew exactly what I was talking about because he was one of these incredible men who retained a huge amount of knowledge about events and affairs and used them very effectively during the course of an interrogation and he wanted me to match his abilities. I'm not quite sure whether I came up to that but I certainly had an incredible tuition from this guy Barry McKay.

So did he "write the book" for interrogating captured guerrillas for CID?

He probably wrote most of it, he did some really complex papers, some of which I still retain to this day on the war, how it had evolved, who was who in the Zoo, as I mentioned the communist philosophy, he was very big in my understanding that philosophy.

Did you have to study Maoism as well?

Maoism, Stalinism, the whole concept of communism. He had papers which he wanted me to understand, not to read, he wanted me to understand what this was all about.

Did he have a group of others like you?

No I was his sole candidate I'm afraid because, you see, I found in retrospect, looking back on this whole thing, the efforts of Special Branch were too fragmented because of provincialisation so I was the Vic Prov. man who was going to do all of the interrogations. There was another chap of my sort of similar seniority to me in the Manicaland area who was going to do all the interrogations and then of course there were already established folk doing it in the Hurricane or Mashonaland area.

So this sounds relatively arbitrary then? There was no standardisation of…?

(00:04:46) Very much so, I think there was a lot of cross…

Fertilisation?

Yes, I'm not sure if that's the word I want to use but there certainly was…if we were doing something for Fort Victoria, we were reporting on it, those reports would go to all the provinces and PSBO's would read those and they might possibly get some ideas about "ok, perhaps we'd better just enhance the way we do things". SBHQ ultimately began to issue formats for interrogation which I basically, in some respects, contributed towards.

Do you remember when this would have emerged?

I was starting to get stuff from SBHQ on what was required, interrogation wise, probably '75/'76. I know there had been older material on how to handle a captured terrorist and what's to happen and what's to be done, in fact I've probably got PDF's on here which we will have a look at. So Barry McKay basically was my tutor, he was a superintendent, I was still a Detective Section Officer then and he taught me everything I needed to know about interrogation and I believe very successfully too.

So these are guerrillas that were captured through contacts that were then brought in and you would question them?

Yes

And was there any degree of force used to illicit information?

Never, never you know it's a fallacy that we adopted violent means to extract information from guerrillas. I never once, ever, nor did my interpreter, ever have to beat a person to obtain intelligence. I believed we were quite smart in some respects, even if I say so myself, in that our incredible grounding in what they were all about, why they were there, who was who in the Zoo. I knew every single section commander in the whole of the Repulse area, their names, I knew the medical officer, I knew the bag carriers, I knew everyone, political officers of each and every section. I used to run round with what we call a four post binder which was basically an index of every single capture or every single group, ZANLA group within the Repulse area derived from captures so when a guy was captured in the battlefield, he might have been roughed up a little bit by his immediate captors for intelligence but inevitably they didn't get a lot out of the guys because you can imagine that guy had been in a contact, he's extremely frightened, he's now in custody, he doesn't know what's going to happen to him. He's had it drummed into him that is he's captured he will be murdered by the regime, do not tell anyone anything and most of them really stuck to that and if they got badly assaulted in the battlefield then I don't believe that any significant intelligence would have been gleaned from that. The guy would eventually, if he was injured, be taken to a military hospital or an area of a hospital which had been set aside for them. He'd be patched up or he would go directly into a Selous Scouts fort. Wherever he ended up I would get the call to say "get down there" and do an

(00:09:11) interrogation. Now an interrogation would take me, depending on the rank of the individual captured, anywhere between three and five days. It was very, very in-depth. First day of that interrogation was basically befriending a person who would kill you quite happily if he had his liberty and it was a concept which my good interpreter would never come to terms with. He couldn't understand why we would want to befriend a terrorist but we did and we got to know the individuals antecedence, where he was from, who his mother was, where his father was working and we would carry on, just on totally non military matters for the best part of a day and we would build up that guy's confidence. The second day was letting him know that we actually know more about what has happened on the battle field than he might think and we would be able to relate to him who the members of his immediate section were and this really thoroughly amazed them. They could never understand how we, the enemy, could know who the medical officer was, who the political officer was, who the security officer in the section was and the entire hierarchy of the various attachment that he came from or in fact the province, the sector as they called it in ZANLA terms. We knew everyone and this had been built up through solid intelligence. Now, that wasn't designed specifically to tell them how clever we were, it was really designed to try and now build up his confidence that we do actually know what's going on within the ranks of ZANLA. We know who's who, we know weapon numbers, we know all sorts of things, now it's time for you to tell us something new and we would venture into how he went for training, how he exited the country, who facilitated that, name by name. We wanted to know the Nationalists involved in his exit plan, how he got there, where he went, how he travelled. Everything we wanted to know about that person's movement within the last three or four years of his life from point A when he was recruited to be trained right through training. We wanted to know details of the camp, where the toilets were, where the kitchen was, where the defences were, what defences there were and so we carried on and on, a very laborious process but they yielded. They knew we knew a lot more than they had actually expected we would know and I think that, as I say, building of the confidence, building of a friendship but still keeping him unaware of what his eventual plight is going to be, yes, we didn't mollycoddle these people, we certainly kept them in a state of fear. Psychologically that might have been torture to some but not to me. They didn't know where they were going to end up and that insecurity was maintained, it was an absolute necessity that the guy wasn't secure because when we get down to the nitty-gritty's of wanting to know how he re-infiltrated the country, where he went to, what crimes he perpetrated, what he got involved in etc. etc. bearing in mind that on occasion and it wasn't all that frequent that it happened but on occasions we'd had his weapon tested for incidents at our ballistic section and by the time we got to day three or four, we actually knew that he'd been involved in this murder and we knew he'd been involved in that farm attack etc. etc. and when we got there, we had followed his route all the way back into the country, all the little base camps which he stopped at, where he drew his weapons from. A very, very long and involved process I can assure you but when we got back into the country again with the capture and we started asking about incidents, if we had the ballistics information on that fellow, which as I say, it wasn't all that frequent and we started relating stories about where he had been and what he had

(00:14:57) done and of course he was naturally going to deny involvement in murder and sabotage and stuff like that. Then the old threat of "listen, you can either tell us the whole truth and nothing but the truth or we can pursue you through the courts and prosecute you for murder because we've actually got this evidence" and so on and so forth. And that's where the policemen came back into it which is a very important point, I was discussing the other night the concept of whether we were fighting a war or fighting criminals and it was both. There was definitely a war going on and we needed an Army to pursue that but I think you also needed policing to achieve many of the objectives on the intelligence side of things and perhaps the Army weren't really capable of it at the end of the day because they didn't have the policing experience.

Were you then, in your view, at the front line of this evolving war?

I believe I was, yes. I believe very much so, listen, I wasn't in the trenches with gun in hand and helmet on my head I agree but if there was a need for me to travel down to say a base like Mabalauta where they had a captured terrorist with the SAS were operating external, off I went and it didn't matter how or what means I got there but I went. If there was an operation into Mozambique and there was a requirement for a Special Branch officer on the ground in Mozambique, it was I who went in alongside others. So yes, I certainly wasn't in the thick of it but I do believe that I was in the forefront of the operations.

What did you think you were fighting for?

Certainly we were fighting a war against a Nationalist organisation who wanted to liberate "their people". I take issue though with the fact that we were fighting communist terrorists. I've never understood why, well I do understand the reasons why but this constant referral to Mugabe and his clan, although they might have followed Marxist policies and all the rest of it and they certainly used the Marxist way of doing things to fight their liberation war. More so the Chinese communist way of being…they weren't strictly communist terrorists, they were nationalist terrorists and I think a lot of people would stand up and say we were fighting communism, we were fighting to uphold Christianity in Southern Africa etc. etc. I say "bunkum, absolute bunkum". We were actually fighting to retain a mode of government which was highly appropriate for we whites at the time and for a very good portion of the up and coming black community. And I often discuss the issue, "should we have not been doing a lot more for the indigenous black community a lot earlier than what we did?". And I think everyone that I speak to about that particular issue agrees with me, we didn't uplift black people, let's just tell you the police force, when did we introduce the rank of patrol officer for black people? I think it was in '78 or '79 it was that late so why didn't we do that? I mean we had…

Did you come up with an answer?

(00:19:20) No, no, it was all purely political I think the politicians just weren't ready for that level of change

Or do you think it was the politicians didn't think that Rhodesian white society was ready for it? That's a different way of looking at it.

It is and you might well be right in the way you've put that. Rhodesian politicians really didn't believe that whites could integrate with blacks as quickly as they could have. I really believe it could have happened a lot quicker.

But the politicians were drawn from a pretty narrow circle of white Rhodesian and yes, a few, just a very few black MP's as well

Yes

But they reflected the views of the social group for which they were drawn

Sure, sure they would have done that but I think they did come from a fairly narrow group. They were basically predominately farmer politicians and I've got nothing against farmers. I think some of the finest farmers in the world came and made their trade…

But this is interesting because given the concentration of the white population in the urban areas? So how is it that they were farm politicians representing these urban areas?

Obviously there were urban politicians but I think the leadership of the Rhodesian Front was predominately farmer orientated. A lot of them had come up through the ranks of the Rhodesian Tobacco Association which I worked with when it became Zimbabwe Tobacco Association so I'm not sure whether the politicians really had the vision that perhaps they should have had at the time.

Did you have many discussions about the politics of the day about whether to accelerate, if you like, black education, black empowerment, black job opportunities in the 1970's with your colleagues?

I think quite rarely, to be honest with you, I don't think it was a common discussion point although I do recollect issues of a really good sergeant and a really good sergeant major in the black ranks who should…who would easily outstrip the local detective patrol officer who was a white boy in terms of their investigating abilities and we often did have that discussion. My sergeant Major Goa would knock the pants off of PO Brown or whatever his name was on this investigation and he should be leading the pack. We acknowledged that that experience just wasn't being brought up through the ranks like it should have been. I also have to admit that it would have been a little bit of a bitter pill with our mindset at that stage for me to have to work to a black man so that race thing was fairly well ingrained and that's why…

(00:22:42) **So is that a racialist habit of mind rather than racist? I'm giving you a lifeline here**

We weren't racist as such. I don't believe we were, I mean my interpreter and I'm not going to mention his name on here because he's still in Zimbabwe and he's still alive and I just feel I need to afford him that protection but when we went on a jaunt in the bush, we shared the same bivouac, we ate together, we drank together, we joked together. There was "we" and "they" because I was a senior rank to him but we were very good together and I didn't dislike him because he was black and I don't think he disliked me because I was white. I think he envied not being allowed to climb up into the more senior ranks, we never discussed those issues. I got on well with people who'd been sent into the country to murder me. I could sit down with a captured terrorist and have him eating out of my hands within a day and they were often quite shocked that they didn't receive a very brutal beating from me, they really expected that I would torture them and put the thumbscrews on them and do all sorts of horrible things to them.

Just thinking about this use of violence though, you had to investigate, I'm sure some pretty appalling incidences of violence and intimidation of ZANLA groups on the local Rhodesian population?

Yes

To what extent did you try to analyse how and why they were behaving in such a way?

The terrorist psyche, I certainly think that…It's very difficult for me to put my finger on this but…and if I sound racist in this…It's the black man's psyche when a crowd come together, they have suddenly got an enormous amount of power in that they are carrying AK weapons, they have got bayonets and they are now in absolute power and when they come together in a larger crowd than normal of armed and powerful men, ugly things tend to happen to those that they perceive as a threat to them. Sell-outs, people that the likes of me and my colleagues recruited in the rural areas to provide information in exchange for money, they were our sources, they weren't always indentified and many of those who suffered the brunt of this most extreme and violent activity weren't even our sources which was the very sad thing. If the guy had been our source, an informer, and we had been indiscreet in the way we had been handling him then he got wacked by a group, tortured and murdered. We would feel pretty bad about that I'm sure but it never happened that way. Poor innocent folk who had nothing to do with us, had nothing to do with the security forces were pointed out as sell-outs, had their lips cut off, the most brutal crimes, I mean, it was horrendous. Now how did that come about, you ask? Difficult, is it this African psyche of huge power, in control, all of a sudden when they've been an oppressed people, subservient, all of their lives, now suddenly they are the Chiefs.

Did you ask yourself these questions at the time?

(00:27:05) In a way, yes but I'm thinking a little bit more in depth now than what we used to back then. I mean often we thought no, let me be blunt here, we would think, this is just an African thing, you know you don't see this.

So you didn't see it as an appalling language of political violence?

Not really, no, it was the position that these guys found themselves in and suddenly they are the new warlords of their particular area, to put it in a more modern day phraseology.

You didn't attribute it to drugs or drink or peer pressure or any of the other…?

There was a lot of that, I think there was a lot of dagga smoking amongst the groups. I mean those were young boys, they were fifteen/sixteen/seventeen year olds now, gun in hand, terrified, coming into the country, having to walk a route of probably sixty or seventy kilometres through enemy territory. Sure, grab a few reefers and have a smoke, calm yourself down and yes, there was an abundance of beer and liquor available from a contact man. So yes, any youth, white or black, would have started getting a little bit stroppy on that structure.

I'm just thinking about the white conscripts too, how they behaved and reacted?

Well some of them behaved badly I can assure you but I don't believe that they were deployed drunk but one never knows whether they deployed with a few inhalations of dagga at the time, particularly at the lower troopie level, I don't know but I also think that there was a certain degree of indoctrination of these youngsters when they were in those camps. They were taught to hate the white man, the white man was…

But this was violence against Africans?

Violence against Africans yes, but they were taught in those camps that the white man was wrong and he was there, he needed to be eliminated, moved on. The sad thing is that they practiced their crimes against people that had associated with the white man, so good old Chief Mabika in the Matsai TTL, he was my first serious murder of an incursion into the Repulse area. He was "a government man", he was working for the Internal Affairs Department, he was an enemy of the people and he got murdered and brutally so and many of his people from those areas. Schoolteachers, policemen off duty, they were enemies of the state or enemies of the people and they were murdered and sometimes so brutally and unbelievably. The result of petty domestic quarrels was often the cause of someone's demise. They would be fingered as sell-outs when in fact there had been a domestic dispute around the corner going back a few years. This was the time to level the playing field and to take revenge on your enemies in those areas and it was used as a line by the gooks to exercise some power. It was part of the massive effort to frighten, (00:31:12) terrify and intimidate the local population to support. So if it meant

a few lips came off and ears came off or people were burnt at the stake or bayoneted to death and I saw all of it, it was all part of the psyche at the time.

Did that ever make you question at the time, whether, shall we say, the political resistance of the Rhodesia Front leadership was contributing to this awful spiral of violence?

We never looked at it that way. We thought at the time that the Rhodesian Front government, for all its misgivings, and I always thought there were misgivings, was the legitimate government in power. The other side of the coin was an illegitimate organisation of Nationalists who were perpetrating serious criminal activity and an insurgency and low scale, low intensity war and that they were not justified in their cause.

Did you ever review that attitude in the 1970's?

Yes, yes I believe I did. I often thought about were these guys really legitimate in their cause. I never really came to a conclusive answer to suggest that they were and that perhaps we should throw up the white flag, surrender and move on, no, no definitely not. They were always, in my mind, an illegitimate organisation bent on overthrowing a legitimate government.

Did you think that there was a domestic legitimate African Nationalist movement? I know they're much derided but what about the eight African MPs? What about Bishop Abel Muzorewa and his UANC?

That basically, towards the end was the Rhodesian Front giving in to the concept that, yes, the black man has got to advance and he's got to play more of a role in it but going earlier where we had the black MPs in parliament, I can't remember names now, but that too was a little bit of window dressing perhaps. The qualified franchise system, in my mind, was fair and reasonable at the time. Yes, I would expect somebody who wants to vote to be able to get his 'O' levels, I would have expected him to have some property ownership but being perhaps a little bit ignorant of the struggle that some of them would have to achieve those 'O' levels and the struggle that they would have to have any form of land ownership under the Land Tenure Act, but maybe I was a little naïve, sure, but it didn't warrant a low intensity war in which the majority of victims were actually their own kind.

So how long did you stay in Vic Province as chief interrogator?

I was there for five years right up to the end of the war. I did a small stint as the officer commanding the Special Branch station at Fort Victoria because I was based at JOC Repulse with a guy called John Smith, the late John Smith, he was the Provincial Special Branch Officer and PCIO of the province but he chose to actually set up his office at JOC Repulse and I shared his office there. So I did four and a half to five years of just interrogating people.

(00:35:41) **By that point there was, shall we say, a standard practice established across Special Branch for interrogating of captured militants?**

It was a standard practice, I think by that time, by the end we had a fairly substantial aide memoir on what questions one had to ask. It was intended for the newer younger interrogator, the new guy coming into the game but in general I think they stuck to the old hands of guys like Peter Dewe who you've met, Peter Dewe, Winston Hart, Mike Eddon, they formed a National Interrogation Team. The intention was to take the war outside the country and whack the camps and then Mike Eddon set up a team which included Peter and Winston. Now what would happen there was a capture would come in, I would de-brief him, I would go through all the motions, get all the information on the camps and then Peter Dewe would suddenly pitch up at my doorstep with a guy called Scottie McCormack who was SAS intelligence officer and we would compare notes and if need be we would go back and have a chat to the guy about specifics. Dewe would have some indication of, in his mind, that they were going to attack "x" camp, they were beginning to prepare a plan for that attack and there would be certain questions that they would want to ask this guy because they now know that he went through such and such a camp based on my interrogation and I used to do all the diagrams and draw diagrams. On occasions we used to fly over the camp at high altitude with the gook and see if we could spot things, it was never very successful. Mostly we used aerial photography provided to us by JSPIS of the area. Sometimes we could orientate a more clever youngster who'd been captured towards aerial photography and he could start pointing out certain points on the map but that was basically the national interrogation team going around picking up snippets of information in advance of an intended attack on one of the larger camps.

This is creating a picture of an intelligence state of having, or from what you suggest, an extraordinary degree of information gathered from the ground about what was also going out in the nearer abroad, the periphery. So was it a question of a lack of processing? Was there so much information that it couldn't be assimilated? What to do with it?

I was touching on this the other night, Sue. In researching the history of the Special Branch and having had a chat to quite a few people, I have started formulating in my mind that there was a very fundamental problem. It wasn't so much that there wasn't sufficient intelligence because I can assure you I knew every single contact man in each of the tribal trust lands in those rural areas. I knew their background, we had traces on these people from their political statements from the past. All of this information had either been filtered through the ground coverage system so we knew all of these people and yes, we had sources deployed all over these areas. Sure it got more difficult in the rural areas as the incursions enveloped them but we had the most incredible amount of intelligence. We knew who was who, we knew infiltration routes and I often remember chatting with John Smith who was a very senior officer saying "why can the Army not actually mount ambush points along this particular corridor?" because every single person who comes

into this country bent on committing revolution, he's coming along that (00:40:40) corridor. It might be a ten kilometre wide corridor, it might be a large area, no-one could ever answer that question for me and I could take people to crossing points along the Save river. In the Save river it goes wide and narrow all over the place, crossing points where every single capture came across. Why couldn't they set up points along those routes?

So you never identified where the blockage was?

Well, we were certainly feeding all of our intelligence into the local JOC. They read all of my interrogation reports. I liaised very strongly with the RIC when they eventually got that up and running. We had the most marvellous officer at JOC Repulse, a guy called Arthur Eastwood. He was an academic in his own right but he'd chosen to run with the RIC and was serving with them and he kept the most marvellous mapping room and all of these infiltration routes were mapped in his mapping room. All the foreign camps were mapped in his mapping room, it was all there. The intelligence was there I can promise you, the problem I believe and this is what I'm saying is that I don't think that the Army were actually able to adapt the kind of intelligence that we had to their modus operandi. A lot of the Army officers were still thinking on very conventional warfare minds. They wanted a battalion of opposition, they want to put their battalion here and shoot at each other and everyone would be happy.

So had you made a study of other small wars and insurgencies such as Malaya, Kenya?

I've read up very, very thoroughly on it

At the time though, was this all part of the political culture for understanding how to address insurgency?

We were well briefed on the Malayan war. The general who wrote up on the counter insurgency operations there and then again against the Mau Mau, his works were widely known and read at the time and all fingers pointed towards a total unconventional response to any form of low intensity war. The day the Selous Scouts came along was the day that the intelligence community should have been a very happy crowd because they really adopted the concept that there is no conventional resistance to a guerrilla war. It has to be totally unconventional, it has to be very ruthless and that initiative by the military or the police or whomever had to also be part of the intelligence gathering process. What I believe is that the Army in many respects didn't fit into the intelligence cycle. They expected intelligence to fit into the military operation cycle; it doesn't work that way, not in a low intensity war. That intelligence cycle is a very well defined thing and it basically is the collection, collation, analysis, dissemination and reaction cycle. The Army never fitted into that reaction cycle very well, they couldn't come to terms, in my opinion, with the type of intelligence. Let's just take an example so that you're clear on this because I would know for example there were ten people feeding groups in say the Matsai TTL, if you put two and two together you infiltrated that area

and put gentlemen with binoculars onto little hillocks in the area and merely carried (00:45:28) out surveillance which is an intelligence role in itself. You would come up with teams of terrorists visiting those contact people inevitably and you would then be able to direct Fireforce into those areas. The Army didn't operate that way, certainly the Selous Scouts did, they were very, very good at it too.

But wait a minute, wasn't that what ground coverage was doing?

No, ground coverage, the SB ground coverage towards the end of the war started deploying people on top of bricks, as we used to call them, doing surveillance on known contact areas, known contact men and coming up with Fireforce deployments. But when you imagine that Rhodesian regiment companies were still being deployed into Tribal Trust Lands as were the RAR on many occasions, deployed into Tribal Trustlands to do patrols.

Ah, asserting a presence

Asserting a presence, following a grid, trying to pick up spoor. It still amazes me that that carried on that way. We should have got dirty a lot earlier and I mean we should have got really dirty. We should have been having young territorial troops in little sticks of two by two, four by four, you name it, who could infiltrate known surveillance points during the night and sit there and just observe and if they had done that we would have actually had far more Fireforce deployments. They would have had to expand the Fireforce initiative very considerably because now it was no longer a case of "lemons" because SB intelligence was all wrong and etc. etc. Now we're getting on to it, we're actually joining the intelligence cycle and we're actually creating situations which they could never do.

Do you think there was too much of a fixation on body bags, on the body count? It's been suggested that that was the psyche of the military to focus on a military solution to a political problem?

Yes and no. I say yes because yes, sure, the brigade major and the colonel at JOC Repulse kind of bloated their kill rate and it was very important to them but kill rate was never going to resolve the problem because we were still left with a whole lot of contact men. I mean contact men were just as dangerous as the guerrillas themselves, they were feeding, supplying, providing medical I mean I had the late Doctor Simon Mazarodze, he was a brilliant medical man and he was a well known adherent of the People's Movement but we know that he was moving medicines out into the rural areas to specific contact men and on a couple of occasions we know that they brought wounded people to his house in Macheke township of Fort Victoria. We tried to catch him on the one occasion but unfortunately we didn't have it quite right but the whole support infrastructure sat and watched us as we played soldiers and yet we should have actually been zapping that support infrastructure and there was sufficient evidence to do that. I'm not talking about killing them, I'm talking about arresting them, prosecuting them properly and processing them and breaking down that support structure.

(00:49:54) **Wouldn't you have created martyrs?**

Yes in a way, yes but we could have used that support structure even more effectively if we'd simply watched them. Armed guerrillas would have arrived at their places and would have been fed, we would have been able to round up the Fireforce deployment and entered into combat with them, sorted the issues out and moved on.

What did you think of Spirit Mediums? Were you involved in encouraging the surveillance of shrines and those who were known to be particularly important to the guerrilla movement?

I think in the South East, whilst they did play a role, their role was not as significant as it was during the early part of the war in Operation Hurricane. Things had got watered down in terms of using Spirit Mediums by the time the war had started in JOC Repulse. Yes they were certainly consulted and yes they were a prime source again of intelligence if we had only cared to sit and watch them. Bear in mind it's not that easy to sit on a hill and watch constantly, youngsters herd goats in those hills and you do get compromised from time to time so it's not that easy but I think it was the ultimate solution was to have much smaller…

Did you watch the Catholic missions?

Catholic missions were watched, not as well as they should be, certainly Moshoko Mission was one which comes to mind; they participated alongside us in giving provisions to contact men in exchange for information which would be fed back to us so they did play a double agent role. Others in the Gutu area I remember recruiting…

So it varied then from mission to mission?

It did vary, it also varied from religion to religion, the Catholics were very, very against any form of collaboration with the regime or they would not even think about sourcing for Special Branch at all and we visited those missions quite frequently. They felt that the terrorist cause was very justified and they would help the terrorists where they could.

What about the Lutherans or Baptists?

The Lutherans were also a little bit on the naughty side I'm afraid. The American missionaries were the ones where we had the most success and I think a lot of those come from the Baptist sort of south right wing in mentality so they were basically on our side before we started in many respects. So yes, religion did have a lot to do with it.

As far as the Rhodesian white population was concerned, how important was religion in sustaining their will to fight?

(00:53:33) It's a difficult one that, I'm not sure that I can give you an answer. I'm not really a very religious person.

Was Rhodesia a particularly religious society?

Well the politicians made out that we were defending Christian interests in Southern Africa but it was a little bit like England today defending itself against the Muslim onslaught.

So declared moral outrage but lip service?

Yes

Not deeply held faith

Listen, there were a lot of deeply religious people and I daresay Ian Smith was a fairly religious man in his own way. They attended services, we did funerals, we did weddings, it was all based on that…

I'm not hearing "every Sunday"

Yes, so I don't think there was any…there was a little bit of religious objection to joining the military and that came from a small sector of Jehovah's Witnesses and it was, it was a tiny sector, not even to be bothered about. The Catholics, they got in, they did their bit, I don't know what went on between call ups and visits to the church on Saturday mornings for confessions but…

How much do you think the war helped to create a sense of Rhodesian identity? A sense of Rhodesian patriotism?

I think it created… it was a huge catalyst of that creation, huge

What, more than UDI and sanctions?

I think so; once that war started we had the whole concept of esprit de corps now going nationwide. Certainly we had a war on our hands, we were defending ourselves against a communist onslaught…

Well you've just said you didn't agree with that?

Well I don't agree with that, I certainly don't

But you think the majority of the population…?

The majority of the people…

Do you think they bought into it?

I think they did. Yes, I think so

(00:55:54) **Did your parents buy into it?**

Yes I think the old boy thought that this was a communist onslaught in some respects. We were defending Southern Africa against the communist onslaught and remember…

What, so you thought the commies are coming? The Soviets are going to come pouring over the border?

No, I think the thing we've got to remember is that we had South Africans on our side and they definitely saw a communist behind every tree and a lot of what they were influencing the Rhodesia politicians and the military to think about was our defence of Southern Africa against the communist onslaught. Now we didn't for one minute think that there was going to be a Chinese terrorist behind every tree and I, for one, certainly never thought that was a truly communist onslaught. I know what it was, it was a Nationalist revolution, it was nothing near. Yes they were using communist methodologies of warfare particularly the Chinese methodology taking the country and moving into the towns. ZAPU tried to do it the other way round but not very successfully.

Did you know about Operation Zero Hour before?

Not really, no

I'm just wondering what level of intelligence you actually had on that?

Operation Zero Hour…because that was more Zambian based and we were quite partitioned in many respects, what was going on up in Zambia and what was going on in Mozambique, the guys operating on the northern border didn't know what I was doing on the southern border and we knew that there was that serious partition in modus operandi between ZIPRA and ZANLA.

So you didn't give much credit to ZIPRA?

So there wasn't mutual exchange of information between the two and it didn't matter, it didn't matter at the end because ZANLA was ZANLA and we were combating with ZANLA.

Which, during the '70's, did you think was the greater challenge, posed the greater threat ZANLA or ZIPRA?

Definitely ZANLA to us from a…

Well, given that that was your…

From a guerrilla warfare point of view, ZANLA I believe posed the greater threat by sheer weight of numbers and by their Chinese communist methodologies. They knew very well how to perpetrate a real war.

(00:58:52) **Was there any point in the seventies that you thought and your colleagues thought "the writing's on the wall here, we're not going to win. We have now to fight for good negotiating terms at the table"?**

Probably when we started talking about the UANC integration into government. We were beginning to realise that we could sustain the war but it was going to be difficult to win that war or create a solution which was going to be beneficial to us. When the South Africans started stabbing us in the back and we saw suddenly we didn't have as many helicopters in the Fireforces and the Pretoria metal press was no longer the source of our bullets, we knew the writing was on the wall then and that was obviously an enforced political solution on its way, we feel quite badly about South Africans.

One of my questions, as you know, is what did you think of South Africa and South Africans?

South Africans are a wonderful people, the Afrikaners, they are a wonderful people, there's no doubt about it, they're the most hospitable, lovely people but the South African politicians, they suddenly realised that the writing was actually on the wall for them and when they got into bed with Kissinger and Margaret Thatcher and Carrington and co. they were quite happy to stab their Rhodesian friends in the back. They withdrew…

I'm just thinking about basic demographics here because by 1979 there were approximately 230,000 members of the Rhodesian white population, that's four percent. Now in South Africa, it was about 1 – 5…

Twenty five percent in fact it was more

Yes so it could be said that the South Africans had far more of a "chance" than Rhodesia did

They had a very much greater chance, sure and they sustained that for several years after that...

So how is it you can say then that South Africa was sacrificing Rhodesia when actually that they were really up against it?

Well I just think that they abandoned us very very quickly and it was an expedient move politically to do so at the time. What pressures the Americans and the Brits put on the South Africans to achieve that, to force Smith basically to the surrender table in terms of his "never in a thousand years", I don't know.

It was a coordinated squeeze play

Yes

(01:02:16) **Having looked at the papers**

Sure, I'm sure it was but we felt terribly abandoned by our brethren in South Africa and we did regard them as brethren. I used to fly regularly to Pretoria to actually brief the generals on the war in Repulse, it was a very serious concern to them because it was right on their border and I flew to that airbase just outside Pretoria. It was often a long trip down, an hour on the ground and a long trip back.

Were you accompanied by politicians?

No

These were regular trips that you were making?

Yes regular trips, I used to do them about once a month. I used to travel on occasions with the brigade major, a guy called Garth Barret

Did you go down with CIO?

No, no it was just Special Branch, a member from the military at the JOC and it was just basically as I say, to brief the generals what was going on. We actually had a South African Army Major at JOC Repulse, he was like a liaison officer but I think he was doing his spy bit as well.

Well especially from '79 onwards when South Africa's total national strategy was signed with the Rhodesians

Yes

That's when it seems that Rhodesia really was brought within South Africa's defence perimeter and the military liaison and the assisted weaponry that was pumped further north was really quite marked.

Yes, there were all sorts of things going on at that time but…

What did you think of those Rhodesians, those white Rhodesians who left, who emigrated?

Nothing really I think we all had choices to make

Did you ever consider leaving?

No not really. I did consider joining the South African military

How hard?

That was probably right at the end, I'm glad I didn't

(01:04:35) **They were actively recruiting**

They were actively recruiting, yes but they actually recruited a lot of my colleagues. Some of my colleagues had in fact been deployed by the national intelligence service in South Africa right from the word go. They set them up as more recruits into the police, Henry Bacon is one you can research on the internet. He's a well known South African spy, a lot of my former colleagues joined 5-recce. A lot of them joined the national intelligence service, [Deletion] a lot of these guys…I think it's fairly well documented in the truth and reconciliation commission documents

Yes

Which I'm sure you have

Well I haven't got obviously a complete set but I do have a selection of them. So at independence you felt Zimbabwe is my home, this is where I stay?

Very uneasily, yes. We didn't know whether Mugabe would really be a man of his word.

Did you know about the plots to assassinate him?

Yes I did, I was actually at the airport in Fort Victoria when they blew him up on the bridge there. That's the only time I've seen Bob Mugabe looking pale

Well they came quite close

They came very close, very very close. Perhaps I wouldn't be sitting here now, it wasn't a well chosen location to attempt an assassination for the simple reason that there were two schoolboy cricket teams waiting in the airport for that same aircraft which was to fly them to Thornhill and then on to Salisbury and I know if we had whacked him good and proper during that attack his entourage of bodyguards, and they were armed quite heavily, would have caused mayhem in that airport building so…

Did you know about the one around the independence celebrations? It's written about in Heidi Holland's book

I didn't know about that beforehand or at the time. I've spoken to Danny Stannard about it at some length and I've read up a lot on it but I certainly didn't have any knowledge of that at the time.

I'm intrigued from the South African angle because it seems very much that the military were at odds with the department of foreign affairs

Yes

(01:08:03) **Well that was then, the consistent story in South Africa from 1980 right up to 1990/1992**

Yes I think that would have resulted in a bloodbath if that had been successful

Yes I think it would have done

And certainly whites would have been the prime target there

Looking back now, Andrew, would you say the war was worth it? Was it worth fighting for?

Difficult question to answer, it really is because we never achieved a victory, politically or militarily and…

But you didn't lose in the field?

We didn't lose in the field, I think right up until the end we were always winning battles but we never won that war. We never achieved our objective, is to put it a better way, because I think our objective was to sustain that nation to a point where politically black and whites could achieve a reasonable infiltration of the power base, the political power base, blacks in particular and we felt that there was a way of doing that even as military police types. Eventually we could have achieved that without a war, the Nationalists just wanted everything so much quicker and they wanted 100% of it, there was no room for the whites so that war did actually serve a purpose in pertaining.

There were whites who supported the Nationalists

Sure there were, sure there were. I mean Peter McKay who I speak to on quite a few occasions, he will relate all his stories in an area which I was unfamiliar with being Zambia and Botswana. Yes, there were, let's call them, more liberally minded whites who were very very anti Rhodesian Front and I perhaps can understand that. There should have been a lot more in the way of trying to negotiate a political settlement alongside the war excluding the Nationalists and I'm sure they could have achieved that, in fact I believe that they could have achieved a few "brownie points" with Joshua Nkomo and had brought in a more moderate and acceptable government using ZAPU and Joshua Nkomo as a conduit but it would never have happened with Mugabe and going back to an earlier question that's why I think Mugabe's crowd ZANLA, they were the bigger threat because they knew there was no compromise to bring about a power sharing arrangement in Rhodesia at the time.

This has been one of the arguments to explain Mugabe's ultimate victory in the late February elections was that the vast majority of the Shona speaking population appreciated for the war to stop, Mugabe had to win.

(01:11:44) Very much so, very much so. Even within the RAR barracks in Fort Victoria at the time, the wives, because we had intelligence feedback from there, the wives were telling their soldier husbands "you vote for Mugabe, we've had enough of this war. Only if you vote for Mugabe will that

war stop". So they knew, they knew that Mugabe was seriously a real threat, Nkomo I don't think he was although he was probably quite a serious threat because he had that Soviet backing and they had that mentality towards conventional warfare establishing that bridge head at Kariba and at Vic Falls and fighting a conventional campaign right towards the end of it. If they'd achieved their objectives I think we might have seen a different solution.

Do you know I've read that Joshua Nkomo thought that it was British intelligence who tipped off the Rhodesians who then blew up the bridge head which meant they couldn't launch Operation Zero Hour?

Yes

Which since the British were bugging the Lancaster House delegation accommodation I think was probably correct although I haven't got written evidence to corroborate it.

Sure, sure

Andrew thank you very much indeed for talking to me

End of interview