

ZIMBABWE

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Marcus L. Winter	1981-1984	Agricultural Officer, USAID, Harare
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FRANCIS TERRY MCNAMARA
Economic Officer
Salisbury (1957-1959)

Ambassador Francis T. McNamara was born in Troy, New York in 1927. He was in the U.S. Navy during World War II and was also stationed in Japan during the Korean War. He received a bachelor's degree from Russell Sage College and a master's degree from McGill University and from Syracuse University. Ambassador McNamara he entered the Foreign Service in 1956. His career included positions in Rhodesia, the Congo, Tanzania, Vietnam, Canada, Lebanon, and ambassadorships to Gabon and Cape Verde. Ambassador McNamara was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1993.

Q: What did you do when you got out of that? Did you go overseas right away?

MCNAMARA: I went overseas right away. I was assigned as an economic officer. They were desperately looking for people with economic backgrounds. I'd read economic history, and so, although I wasn't an economist by any stretch of the imagination, I'd had a good deal of economics. So I was assigned as economic officer to Salisbury, in the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, in Africa.

Q: This would have been in 1957.

MCNAMARA: Yes. We had the regular introductory course, the A-100 course, which was the junior Foreign Service indoctrination course. Then we did two or three months of language; virtually nobody had enough spoken language to pass the Foreign Service language requirement at the time. I certainly didn't. Most others were in the same boat. Oddly enough, a lot of my classmates had gone to universities overseas for a year or so. Most often in England or France. It seemed to be very popular at the time. In any case, my first assignment was to Africa.

Q: Was it just an assignment, or had you requested it?

MCNAMARA: No, no, I had no idea. Africa was the furthest thing from my mind. My visions of Africa were formed by missionaries coming to our church, telling us about their experience in mud and wattle huts, with spear-chuckers and so on. I had no idea of what Africa was about, and certainly no interest in going there.

I first came to know of my assignment at a little ceremony at which the assignments were announced. Someone from Foreign Service Personnel read a long list with great pomp. When he got to my name, he said, "Salisbury."

I thought he said, "Salzburg." I could hear Mozart playing in my inner ear, and I thought, "Oh, how marvelous!"

The guy next to me, Goody Cooke...

Q: I supervised him in Belgrade later on.

MCNAMARA: Did you. Well, Goody finally left the Foreign Service and became a vice president for international affairs at Syracuse University. As far as I know, that's where he still is.

Anyway, he poked me in the ribs and said, "No, you ass, it's in Africa. It's Salisbury."

Then I began to wonder, "How the hell am I going to tell my wife that we're going to Africa?" Our first child was a year old or less and she was pregnant with the second. This would be quite a shock for her. Anyway, I went home and broke the news to her. Initially, she cried. But she's a tough lady. After she recovered from the first shock, we started looking into the place and reading about it and talking to people. We then changed our minds and decided that this might not be such a bad place. Anyway, we were going to give it a shot. So we prepared ourselves, and the Foreign Service prepared us.

In those days, the old Foreign Service still maintained some genteel perks.

For instance, when we flew transatlantic, although I was only a third secretary and a vice consul, the whole family went first class. We got on an all-first-class BOAC (British

Overseas Airways Corporation) flight from New York. We even had bunks on the airplane. It was very comfortable. The old Boeing Stratocruiser was a marvelous airplane. It had two decks: there was a cocktail lounge on the lower deck, and then seats and bunks on the upper deck. We had a fine dinner with good wines. The cabin staff treated us royally. Bunks were made up after dinner and my wife and daughter went to bed. I descended to the cocktail lounge. There were lots of people down there, and everybody was in a merry mood at 30,000 feet above the Atlantic. In those days flights were long. Our flight was to be even longer as strong head winds forced us to turn back to Newfoundland. Nobody really cared. Most of the passengers had spent the evening in the cocktail lounge. After the landing in Newfoundland, I went up and stayed with the baby so my wife could share in the conviviality of the cocktail lounge. Our crossing was very merry, indeed.

We stopped in England for a few days, to do some sightseeing. My wife had never been out of the United States, so this was a great experience for her. At that time, few ordinary Americans had traveled outside the country aside from the GIs who had gone to foreign wars. Most Americans had no opportunity nor did they consider overseas traveling in the way we do now.

After the UK, we went on to Italy where we spent a few days in Rome seeing the sights both ancient and modern.

Our real adventure then began as we boarded a BOAC flight for Africa. This time we were on a new turbojet aircraft called the Britannia. The flight was from Rome to Salisbury. It was a long overnight flight for the aircraft in those days were not very fast.

Finally, after a full night, we arrived in Salisbury at about 11:00 AM. To our amazement, we saw a big, modern city, with tall buildings shining in the bright sunlight. It was absolutely beautiful. We were met by a large group from the consulate general. My boss, whose name was Curt Strong, was there with Dick Murphy, and his wife. Even the Federal Government's protocol officer was out to greet us and to wish us through customs and immigration. It was quite a turnout for a vice consul on his first tour. We floated on happy clouds as we left the airport. Our friendly reception was so much better than we expected and the city itself seemed to be something out of the Wizard of Oz rising out of the African veldt.

Salisbury was going through a boom. Housing was hard to find. Nonetheless, Dick Murphy had found a house for us, completely furnished, that we could move into for three or four months while the owner, a retired judge from South Africa named Leslie Blackwell, went on a trip around the world. This was perfect for us. We stayed in a hotel for only a week before moving into a dream house set on a grassy knoll. Our only responsibility was to care for the judge's dogs.

It was hard to find a house. There was no government housing provided, as there is now, for people in the Foreign Service in Africa. No one looked for a house for you, you had to

find your own place to live. We searched endlessly to find something within our allowances, which were not so generous for a junior officer in those days.

Ultimately, I heard at a cocktail party, of a little house being rented, and rushed in the middle of the night to see the owner. We were desperate! I awakened him and got him to agree to rent the house to me. He said he would on the condition that I take care of his cacti. He had a garden full of cacti; that's all there was in the garden. He insisted that I take on his gardener. We couldn't rent the house without taking this gent on with the cacti. At this point, I said, "Sure. No problem. Whatever you say." We took the old reprobate as our cacti gardener and got the house.

In this same period, my second daughter was born. At that time, there was no medical evacuation or special State Department provided medical facilities. My wife just went into the local hospital and had the baby. Luckily, she had no complications. She was healthy and the birth was normal. Now, so often, wives come back to the United States rather than have children overseas, especially in Africa. They insist on special facilities and are often medevaced.

Q: Terry, in the first place, what was the situation in Rhodesia and Nyasaland?

MCNAMARA: The situation when I arrived was that the British had formed the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. It was composed of three territories: Southern Rhodesia was a self-governing colony. Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland were both British protectorates administered from Westminster by a colonial administration.

Q: Which turned into what?

MCNAMARA: Southern Rhodesia became Rhodesia and then Zimbabwe; Northern Rhodesia became Zambia; and Nyasaland became Malawi. The Central African federation had been formed by the British with the hope that it would be multiracial. In theory, Africans were to be given equal rights. The official formula was one of equal rights for all civilized men. Conveniently, "Civilized men" was not carefully defined. What it meant in local terms, was: Men like us. Clearly, it was the kind of formulation that lent itself to easy abuse.

The Southern Rhodesian whites wanted Federation because they had run out of money. They wanted control of the rich copper mines of Northern Rhodesia. At the time Northern Rhodesia was one of the richest sources of copper in the world. It was a real money-spinner. Nyasaland, on the other hand, was broke. It was a poor but beautiful place. The British wanted to unload Nyasaland because of the chronic deficit which they had to subsidize. A deal, therefore, was made with the settler dominated government in Southern Rhodesia (a self-governing colony that had never been directly administered from Whitehall). Indeed, Southern Rhodesia had been settled by Cecil Rhodes, from South Africa, and set up as a private fief. By 1924, the colony was in deep financial difficulty and had to be taken over by the Crown...as a self-governing colony, governed by the local whites.

The federation was set up, with its own elected government. A white Northern Rhodesian was elected as the prime minister. His name was Sir Roy Walensky. The federation was internally self-governing. While the British had limited reserved powers, the Federation--within its constitutional sphere--was virtually independent. Indeed, Walensky--as Prime Minister--attended Commonwealth conferences normally reserved to the head of sovereign governments.

However, the British still controlled the administration of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. The colonial office controlled those two places, and there were defined powers in the federal constitution reserved to the territorial governments. Those reserved powers essentially dealt with the local administration of the indigenous population and of natural resources.

Q: I.e., the black Africans.

MCNAMARA: The black Africans, yes. Whitehall, the British government, had held on to some of this power as a protection for the black population. There were large divisions in opinion in Britain. Many in Britain felt that the British government was selling out its real responsibilities to the Africans by turning them over to the tender mercies of the colonists in Southern Rhodesia. So the government was not able to simply turnover full powers to a settler dominated government. But things appeared to be heading in that direction.

While I was there, African nationalist groups began to form. An African National Congress was formed in Southern Rhodesia, for instance. In Northern Rhodesia, UNIP was formed.

Q: What was UNIP?

MCNAMARA: United National Independence Party, the African nationalist party. Kenneth Kaunda was UNIP's first president, and became the president of Zambia after independence. He lost power only recently when they had the first real post-independence democratic election. I was also in Salisbury when Dr. Banda returned to Nyasaland (Malawi).

As these African nationalist groups began to assert themselves, they rejected the idea of federation with Southern Rhodesia. Ultimately, they forced the British government to end the federation and grant them independence as separate countries.

Q: Was this during your time?

MCNAMARA: No.

Q: We're looking at the situation when you were there.

MCNAMARA: The situation was still hopeful while I was there. In fact, even in Southern Rhodesia, there was a prime minister, Garfield Todd, a New Zealander, a missionary, who did make a genuine effort to create a multiracial state. But he was clearly out of tune with the bulk of settler opinion in Southern Rhodesia and was ultimately rejected.

When I first arrived in 1957, we were optimistic that a genuine multiracial state could evolve. We had a new consul general who was assigned while I was there, a man named Joe Palmer. He was convinced he was going to be the first ambassador to the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. This is an indication of the extent to which we deluded ourselves. We were taken in by the British who told us that, oh, yes, they knew how to bring about these constitutional changes. It would all take place in a gradual, liberal way. African reservations would be gotten over. The settlers wouldn't be allowed to dominate the federation.

During my second year in Salisbury reality began to sink in. It became obvious to me that this wasn't going to happen. As African nationalist groups began to form and to organize active opposition to settler control and to the federation itself, my doubts grew, especially as white intransigence grew in response to rising African demands. Multi racialism became increasingly undermined by a hardening of opinion on both sides of the racial divide. By the time of my departure in 1959, I was convinced that the British government wouldn't be able to turnover control to a white dominated federal government. My supervisors, however, had not reached this sad conclusion.

Q: At this time, we're talking about 1957, '58, '59, when you were out there, what did we see as American interests in that area?

MCNAMARA: There were two or three interests.

One, was access to the minerals. Indeed, there was substantial American investment in the mines of Northern and Southern Rhodesia.

We also had a more altruistic political interest. In those days, Americans were dedicated to an ending of colonialism in Africa. We encouraged a peaceful transition from European colonial rule to self-government. Our dim colonial past with its rich mythology led many Americans to a strong, sentimental anti-colonialism. This ideological commitment was a fundamental part of our policy towards Africa. Nonetheless, it was often tempered by pragmatic needs to placate European allies important to us in the cold war context. Frequently, our commitments to rapid decolonization was compromised but it was always there. It was always an underlying factor coloring even the most cynical decisions.

Q: In Salisbury, what were you doing?

MCNAMARA: Well, I started as the number-two economic officer. There was a very nice man named Curt Strong who was the number-one economic officer. I was his

assistant. And then, when the new consul general, Joe Palmer, came, Curt Strong became his deputy, and I became the head of the Economic and Commercial Sections.

Q: What were your main activities?

MCNAMARA: Mainly writing the economic reports on the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, because it was an economy of some strength and of considerable interest to the United States because of the minerals. We were very interested in the minerals coming from Rhodesia, and access to them, and the American companies that were involved in their exploitation.

Q: What was your impression of the American companies that were involved in this? Would you put them in the white settlers' camp completely, or were they trying to play a longer-term role?

MCNAMARA: Depended on the company. Rhodesian Selection Trust, which had a strong American element in it, was the more liberal of the two large mining companies in Northern Rhodesia. The other one was Anglo American, which was American only in name. In fact, it belonged to the Oppenheimer group from South Africa, with British and South African ties. Rhodesian Selection Trust was more liberal, probably because of the American participation in the company. This was not true of all Americans in Rhodesia. There were some Americans who had been in Rhodesia for many years, their attitudes were indistinguishable from the run-of-the-mill white Rhodesian.

Q: What about your contacts with these white Rhodesians? Did our policy stand out? Was it publicly expressed, and did you get into a lot of arguments? Or were we just sort of hoping?

MCNAMARA: We had frequent arguments despite warm personal relations. They thought that we were misguided, and naive. Moreover, there was deep resentment of our anti-colonialist stances in international fora.

Q: Was there any black representation? Did you have any contact with the up-and-coming blacks?

MCNAMARA: Yes, we got to know the leadership of the nascent black nationalist organizations. Contact was limited and strained; strained in the sense that it wasn't a natural give and take. We sought out these guys, trying to make contact with them, trying to assure them of our interest and encourage them. But because, I suppose, they were products of their own society, it was rare that one could have a normal, ordinary kind of personal relationship with them. There were only a few people, two or three blacks that I can remember, that I could say that I had a normal personal relationship with where you could talk about anything, not just about great political events, but about ordinary things. There were a few, but not many.

Q: Could you only go to certain places with blacks and that sort of thing?

MCNAMARA: Oh, yes, there was segregation; far less than in South Africa, but it still existed. While I was there, they opened up a multiracial hotel, for instance. But that was the first one. You could eat there with blacks in a hotel, but it was unusual and a little artificial.

Q: Was the consulate general subordinate to London?

MCNAMARA: Theoretically, but in fact not at all. The only relationship with London would have been in terms of lateral communication. Embassy London would report on what the colonial office and the Foreign and Commonwealth Relations Office would tell them about London's relations with the federal government. We told London what was going on in terms of British actions and policy in relation to the federation. But we were as autonomous of London control as the federal government was.

Q: Was there any concern at that time about Soviet penetration, Communist influence?

MCNAMARA: There was some.

Q: You didn't lie awake at night?

MCNAMARA: No, it was not preoccupying, in the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland.

Q: How were you seeing the...

MCNAMARA: The world? The colonial police pretty much dominated the scene. There weren't any known Soviet agents who weren't either in jail or closely watched.

Q: Where did you think the Belgian Congo was going to go? Later, you were right in the thick of that, but at the time you were in Rhodesia, what was the prognosis among our people there?

MCNAMARA: Well, as I recall, people thought that the Belgians were going to be very slow in moving towards independence. Their colonial theory was to bring the whole population along a stage at a time. They consciously tried not to create an elite. They were going to give everybody a primary school education, and everybody a secondary school education, and then ultimately go beyond that. It was an authoritarian, paternalistic attitude towards the Africans. They just didn't do what the French did at all, in consciously creating an elite. In fact, they did just the opposite. They tried not to create an elite. And so, at independence time, all you had was a handful of university graduates. The few who had gone beyond secondary school were mainly Catholic seminarians or ex-seminarians. Kasavubu was a perfect example of this group.

Q: Were you carrying on any sort of a watching brief on this?

MCNAMARA: No. We had a consulate general in Leopoldville. I visited Elisabethville once when I did a long tour through Northern Rhodesia. There's a part of Southeastern Zaire that sticks down into Zambia.

Q: It looks like a penis sticking up there.

MCNAMARA: Well, I was going from the Zambia copperbelt up into the northern province, which is the part above that penis that sticks down into the middle of Zambia, penetrating Zambia. No official Americans had been to the Northern or the Luapula Provinces in years. In any case, I went through what was then the Belgian Congo and stopped in Elisabethville overnight. This was in 1959, I guess, a year before Congo independence. There was much more mixing of the races in the Congo. One felt a certain tension. For instance, I saw a violent argument between a black and a white that seemed to be on the point of fisticuffs. You would never see that in Rhodesia; no black would dare get out of line to that degree in Rhodesia in those days, even in Northern Rhodesia. This apparently was not the case in the Congo. At the same time, nobody expected independence. The Belgians panicked and gave independence within months of riots in Leopoldville.

Q: You left Salisbury when?

MCNAMARA: In 1959.

EDWARD W. MULCAHY
Deputy Principal Officer
Salisbury (1959-1962)

Ambassador Edward W. Mulcahy received a degree from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University in 1943. Within eight weeks of the bombing of Pearl Harbor, he enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve. At the end of World War II, Ambassador Mulcahy joined the Foreign Service. He served in Germany, Kenya, Ethiopia, Southern Rhodesia, Tunisia, Nigeria, and Chad. Ambassador Mulcahy was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on March 23, 1989.

Q: We're at the point where you were assigned to Salisbury. Was it called Southern Rhodesia then?

MULCAHY: Salisbury was a double capital. It was the capital of Southern Rhodesia, which was a self-governing colony and had been since 1924. It was also the capital of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. That meant the two Rhodesias, Northern and Southern, and Nyasaland which, of course, is now Malawi. Northern Rhodesia was under the control of the Colonial Office and was a straight crown colony.

Q: This is 1959 to 1962 that you were there.

MULCAHY: I was there 1959-1962. The Federation had been created in 1952. It was based on the idea of racial partnership. The whites and the blacks were going to come together and form this great territory into one nation within the British Commonwealth of Nations, although there were about a quarter of a million whites in the territory and there were, at that time, something like 11 to 12 million blacks, as far as they knew. Even before I got there Doctor (Hastings Kamuzu) Banda, the nationalist leader of Nyasaland, had returned and was already in the Federal prison at Gwelo in Southern Rhodesia. He was accused of being in a plot intended to carry out a general massacre of the whites in Nyasaland which, of course, was a trumped-up charge. He wouldn't have been able to command that many people at the time he was thrown in jail. But it was just a lesson to him. Kenneth Kaunda was also in jail, as all Commonwealth prime ministers have to be at one time or another if they come from the third world. Sir Roy Welensky was the Federal prime minister and Sir Edgar Whitehead was the prime minister in a relatively liberal administration in Southern Rhodesia. They had blacks voting. They had two voting rolls, an upper and a lower roll, and there were blacks on the upper because they had the income and property ownership and literacy. There were some whites, poor pensioners, for example, military pensioners who wouldn't have enough money to qualify for the upper role and voted with mostly blacks on the lower rolls. They had blacks in the Southern Rhodesian parliament. There were blacks in the Federal parliament. It was quite a model to begin with.

Q: How did we view it at the time?

MULCAHY: We were very much in favor of it. We were skeptical, however. We thought that they weren't moving toward integration of the Africans into the political process fast enough and we used to laugh with everybody else when Lord Malvern, Sir Godfrey Huggins, the first prime minister of the Federation, and long time prime minister of Southern Rhodesia as well, an M.D., had characterized the racial partnership as similar to the partnership between a horse and a rider. Of course, they do everything just in unison until they become one. Of course, the white man was the rider and the black man was the horse. They simply didn't move fast enough.

To jump far ahead, when Sir Roy Walensky was winding up the Federation and came to Washington, I sat with him for . . .

Q: This was when?

MULCAHY: This would have been in late 1963. He admitted that they had moved far too slowly. He said that he should have had half his Cabinet black by that time where he had two blacks in his Cabinet. The university should have been 2/3 black instead of 1/3 black. The civil service should have been at least 50% black and was 20% black. He admitted that he had moved too cautiously, that he let the controlling voices of the white community gauge his pace rather than . . .

Q: At that time, how did you operate? You were the deputy principal officer. How many people were in our consulate general?

MULCAHY: We had a large consulate general because we had an AID program there and a very active USIA program. We had about 65 Americans and about the standard twice that many local employees when I first got there. We grew somewhat in the time I was there, largely by opening posts in Lusaka, the capital of Northern Rhodesia, now Zambia, and in Blantyre, the administrative capital of Nyasaland, now Malawi. Those were both two-man consulates but we also had AID officials attached to the consulates in each of the countries as well as USIA officers. We'd have a cultural affairs officer and a reading room/library station there with exchange professors at the University of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. . .

Q: Actually this was, at that time, certainly British turf. Were we positioning ourselves to take their place, do you think?

MULCAHY: No, no, we were not, definitely not. It was run really as a Commonwealth country. Sir Roy Welensky was not only prime minister, but he was foreign minister, and the Federation conducted its own foreign affairs, always subject to the veto of Whitehall, which it never exercised except for the ultimate veto of putting them out of business at a certain time when the two northern constituencies of the Federation opted for getting out. We hoped the Federation would develop faster and better than it did. We always wished them well. We also hoped that they would set an example for South Africa, that they would make racial partnership work because there was nothing resembling the racial system in South Africa in the Federation. There were restrictions still put on the blacks at the time I got there, but they were ended in one fell swoop when Sir Francis Ibiam whom I subsequently met in Nigeria, the chief justice of Nigeria, was denied a cup of tea in a white restaurant in the Copper Belt of Northern Rhodesia when he was coming on an official visit. The Governor of Northern Rhodesia, within a week, had proscribed every taint of racialism. There were no restaurants, no hotels reserved for whites only any longer. The same thing happened next under the colonial governor of Nyasaland and Southern Rhodesia could only follow suit. Then the Federal government made it illegal to discriminate against anybody because of race. That was done quite successfully in a very short period of time.

The whole thing began to fall apart, though, because of the lack of sense of humor on the part of the Southern Rhodesian whites. They thought that the whole process of racial integration and integration of the Coloreds of whom there were a few dozen thousand and the blacks--should have taken a lifetime or a generation, at least.

Q: Past their time.

MULCAHY: Yes, past their time, that it wouldn't happen in their time where the governments of the component parts would be under black majorities. They thought, oh, maybe by 1990 or something.

Q: I've heard the story that some of the British spoke rather disparagingly of Southern Rhodesia. Kenya was known as officers' country and Southern Rhodesia was for other ranks. But maybe there's a truth, implying that a more lower-class type of settler went there who, maybe, was with less of a sense of humor or flexibility because they were really concerned about their status, where somebody who is from a well established upper class in the white society wouldn't really have to worry about it.

MULCAHY: I've heard that same description of the difference between Kenya and Rhodesia in the old days. It was fairly true, but I'd say the only justification for it really would be that in Rhodesia you got the entire gamut of the British social scale. You had titled people. My good friend Angus Graham, the Duke of Montrose, was Minister of Agriculture in Southern Rhodesia, and there were other peers of the realm who owned great ranches and tobacco farms in Rhodesia. They tended not to be very rich people, families who had lost all their great wealth if they ever had any and were literally subsisting on their farms, their mealies, their corn crops and their tobacco crops or their cattle. They went the whole gamut and it was a great place for people to come to from India when they left after 1947.

Q: Speaking about British civil service. . .

MULCAHY: The British civil service. Then, of course, you had a large influx there of white Afrikaner farmers from South Africa. The accent of the second and third generation Rhodesians of whom there were numerous ones, people born there of grandparents who had immigrated there, was not much different from the English spoken in South Africa and a lot of them used to be sent there for education as did the blacks. But the Rhodesians had good educational facilities for the blacks by comparison to any other place in Africa except South Africa. A lot of the black leaders were sent as youngsters to Fort Hare, for example, near Port Elizabeth, to Fort Hare College, I think it was called, but it was a post-secondary college in the American sense. They got really quite decent educations.

I think Joshua Nkomo had never been educated down there. Robert Mugabe had been educated in the Jesuit institutions in South Africa, Catholic institutions down there.

I used to get chastised by some of these white diehards down there: "Now what do you Americans know? The State Department will send you here for two years, three years, maybe four years at the most and, boom you're off to someplace else. How can you possibly understand the problems here or understand our Africans?"

I'd say, "Much better than you can. I've already lived in three other places in Africa, and I've traveled over a great deal of Africa, and I know a great deal more about Africans than you do. And one of the things you don't know (this was one of my favorite speeches) is that you have produced here some of the finest, the best, the most understanding Africans, the hardest working Africans on this continent. You've done it and still you don't give them their chances. You don't give them their chances to move above a certain level. You're holding them back. Join them instead of trying to keep them in their place."

Well, I meant it because they had a higher rate of literacy--again except for the blacks in South Africa, ironically enough--a higher rate of literacy than any place on the continent, more university graduates than any other place, except South Africa, on the whole continent. They were an excellent quality of African there.

Q: Did you have much of a chance--again, we're talking about the 1959 to 1962 period--to make contact with the black African, the emerging leadership, or not? Could you identify it?

MULCAHY: Very definitely. The two biggest men on the Salisbury scene today are Robert Mugabe and Joshua Nkomo. They were often at my house, drinking my beer. Robert preferred my Scotch. The labor leaders, the teachers, and the journalists, the people who are still the leaders today, the first generation of Rhodesian political leadership, were at our houses. It was a matter of principle that we never gave a representational affair without having blacks there. We always had blacks at our cocktail parties and dinner parties. Some people turned down our invitations because they knew they'd run into blacks but it was *de rigueur* with us. You say this is a mixed racial society, we will treat you as a mixed racial society.

When I got there in 1959, Joe Palmer was consulate general with the personal rank of minister. That title always went with the job at Salisbury because you operated the consulate general more or less as a diplomatic mission. You had a foreign ministry to deal with and you exchanged notes as they do at proper diplomatic posts.

Q: How did you evaluate at the time the potential leaders of blacks. What were you reporting and how did you see, particularly the two men you mentioned?

MULCAHY: They were the top two people, Mugabe being the most visible spokesman, a bright young man, the most visible spokesman for the Shona, the majority representing four-fifths of the indigenous population there--between two-thirds and four-fifths of the population. Joshua Nkomo who, for 15 years before I got there, was the recognized leader of what was then known as the African National Congress, the Southern Rhodesia African National Congress. Kenneth Kaunda had only recently emerged in Zambia as the leader of the Zambia African National Congress. The African National Congress had been outlawed while I was there when strikes were fomented, general strikes, and the police had to use force to put them down. They outlawed the African National Congress and threw people of the leadership in jail for short periods, then let them out again. They reformed as the Zambia African National Union. Then people thought of Joshua Nkomo as something of a great big genial teddy bear and he wasn't half as heavy weight wise as he is today. He was always smiling, a big chubby, harmless-appearing man whereas Robert Mugabe was much younger, much more fiery--if anything, with a much better command of the language than Joshua had--a superior education. Mugabe and his closest followers, who were the principal intellectuals in the party, seceded from Zano and became Zapu, Zimbabwe African People's Union. This we all regretted and we said our regrets to them as it was happening. You know, "Don't do it. Stick together."

We could do this. We had real good relations with them, between the consulate general and these people. We had scholarship programs and were sending a lot of the younger people to the States on our leadership programs. . .

Q: Were you getting any reprimands--not official reprimands, obviously--from the white people, Ian Smith and his crew, saying, "What are you all doing and you're trying to queer the deal?"

MULCAHY: Yes, but in a real sense you couldn't. Ian Smith I met only once and that was at a cocktail party at the Consul General's residence when I first got there. He was leaving political life. He had been the whip in the Federal parliament for the majority party but he had become disaffected. He and another group had become disenchanted with Whitehead at the Southern Rhodesian level, and with Welensky at the Federal level, as being too soft on the Africans and not sticking up enough for the white rights. They, of course, were the people who eventually formed the Rhodesian Front and ultimately took over the Southern Rhodesian government at the time I was leaving there--the right wingers of the white community.

The liberals were beaten all along the way and we got criticism from that ilk. You got protests about how soft you were and about all the blacks you had at your houses, about these blacks you were sending to the States. You got used to that and you just discounted it because you knew where it was coming from.

Q: Tell me, you were there in a very interesting place at the time of the administration's change from the Eisenhower Administration to the Kennedy Administration. One of the major threats of the Kennedy Administration was, "Things are picking up in Africa and new winds are blowing and let's get ahead of this." Did you feel that, from the directions, instructions, how you operated? Was there an appreciable difference, once the Kennedy Administration got into power, between that and what it had been under the Eisenhower Administration?

MULCAHY: Yes. It didn't come overnight. We were delighted from the outset with the Kennedy Administration's approach to African affairs, dignifying it by sending someone as distinguished as Governor Mennen Williams to be the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, a man who himself was presidential timbre at one time. Of course, he came to Africa soon after he took office. We had Teddy Kennedy, along with Senators Frank Moss of Utah and Frank Church of Idaho and a large party of their assistants and their wives, at Salisbury for about three days a month after the election, during the transition period. Even before Teddy had taken office as senator, he was in Salisbury. We were there when Soapy Williams made his speech in Nairobi calling for "Africa for the Africans". . .

Q: Would you describe that a little bit.

MULCAHY: This was a particularly memorable day in my life because, in the Rhodesia Herald on that Washington's Birthday in 1961, a holiday for us, I was having a late

breakfast in my bathrobe and reading the front page of the Herald. I read the line: "Africa for the Africans,' Says Williams. New Assistant Secretary of State Arrives at Nairobi."

I said, "Uh, oh. This is not going to go over well here." I had barely read that when my steward came and said there was a telephone call for me. Sir Roy Welensky wanted to talk to me, the Federal prime minister and foreign minister.

So I said to Kathie, "I bet this is about the Williams thing there, sounding off."

Sir Roy said, "I'm sorry. I called your office and I had forgotten this is Washington's Birthday. You're on a holiday but are you going to be able to come into town some time this morning?"

I said, "Yes, Sir Roy, I can come in just as early as it would be convenient for you. Would you like to talk to me personally?"

He said, "Yes, I would."

I said, "Well, I'll be in there within an hour."

He said, "You'll be ushered right in as soon as you come." I said, "I think I know the agenda."

He said, "Well, did you read the paper this morning?"

I said, "Yes, I did."

So I went in and I received his oral impression that this was real stuff and nonsense for this man, who probably never set foot on the continent, to say "Africa for the Africans." And so forth and so forth.

"This is a delicate situation and things have to be handled very carefully. You know that, Ed. You've been in Africa a long time and I know you people at the consulate general don't agree with all that sort of thing."

I said, "Well, I think that's what we're all aiming for ultimately, Sir Roy, isn't it?"

"This is going to set you back a long way with the people who have power here in Africa."

I said, "Well, we don't have but a little paragraph of something he said off the top of his head at the airport on his arrival at Nairobi."

"Could you get me the whole text of it?"

I said, "I'll try." And I did. I spent the whole day in the office putting calls through London--they had to go through London to get to Nairobi--and John Emmerson who was Consul General at the time was in Nairobi. They were calling the principal officers at all the various posts in eastern and southern Africa to Nairobi to meet Governor Williams who was on a relatively brief tour of Africa at that time. I got a promise from John Emmerson that he would send the text before the end of the day. It was terribly hard getting people to the telephone because they were all locked into meetings. But I had the text of it the next day. I brought it into Sir Roy. He happened not to be there, so I left it with his Permanent Secretary for Foreign Relations.

Of course, it was loudly condemned on the talk shows on the local television and radio and in irate letters to the editor. Of course, poor Governor Williams, on his second visit to the Federation, was socked in the jaw in the Lusaka airport by a recruiter of African labor for the Johannesburg mines. It was difficult.

With the Kennedys, we were into African affairs feet first and, of course, the black Africans everywhere were delighted that their affairs were going to get such huge attention. It really began--the consciousness of Africa--even toward the end of the Eisenhower Administration. The year 1960, was the single year, I guess, in which most African countries, the largest number of African countries obtained their independence. Q: *In the State Department we used to talk about it being the "discovery of Africa."*

MULCAHY: That's right. Of course, the Bureau of African Affairs had been created. It was in two stages. In 1956 there had been a Deputy Assistant Secretary for African Affairs created in the NEA Bureau, the Near East, Asian, South African Bureau. Then a year later, a separate Bureau of African Affairs.

CHARLES E. RUSHING
Political Officer
Salisbury (1960-1963)

Charles E. Rushing was born in Illinois in 1929. He received his bachelor's degree from Augustana College in 1951 and his law degree from Duke University in 1954. He served in the US Army from 1954-1955. His career included positions in Italy, Eritrea, Southern Rhodesia, Congo, Laos, Liberia, Denmark, and Ireland. From 1985-1991 he served as an ambassador to the UN in Geneva. Mr. Rushing was interviewed by Thomas Dunnigan in July 1996.

Q: *After these months in Asmara, you were suddenly transferred to Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia. Tell me about that. How did that come about?*

RUSHING: I met and married an Italian young woman who had been born in Asmara, as had her parents. Her grandparents were among those who came to Eritrea in the early

1900s from Sicily and Puglia. She was working for Aden Airways, which folded a long time ago. It was a part of the overseas operation of BOAC [British Overseas Airways Corporation].

She and I met at the airport when I was meeting the courier. I was duty officer which meant I had to be available 24 hours a day each week-end, every third week. One of the great things about Asmara was that you could hear the airplanes coming in to land from anywhere in town and you could beat them to the airport. So, it was never a question of having to call up and say, "Is it on time?" I was playing tennis and I heard the airplane, so I got into the car in grimy, smelly tennis clothes and drove out to the airport to meet the courier. Asmara was a big courier station. From Asmara, couriers would go to Aden and Khartoum before stopping at Addis and farther south and ending up in South Africa. Besides the courier, there was this lovely woman there.

Q: Who is now Mrs. Rushing and she is indeed lovely.

RUSHING: In those days, as you remember, if you married someone from the country to which you were assigned, you were transferred almost immediately. Of course, also in those days, you had to submit a request to marry a foreign national to the Secretary of State together with your letter of resignation. One or the other would be accepted.

Q: Happily, it all turned out well.

RUSHING: Yes, it did. So, therefore, after marrying, we were transferred to Southern Rhodesia, which was quite a change, although still Africa. Another beautiful city. Five thousand feet high, jacaranda trees, sophisticated infrastructure.

Q: Who was the consul general there at the time?

RUSHING: John Emmerson. Delightful and effective. An FSO Japanese expert who was one of the four "Johns" crucified during the McCarthy era. He had been our consul general in Lagos before Salisbury. He was succeeded by a political appointee named Goren, whose first name I've forgotten. He had been the chancellor or vice chancellor of Baylor University and then deputy director of the Peace Corps. After Salisbury, he was assigned to Libya, and I believe was killed there in an automobile accident.

Q: At that time, Southern Rhodesia was still a colony, I believe, but there was a thrust for independence.

RUSHING: Southern Rhodesia at the time was a Crown Colony, and one of the three elements of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, the other two Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. In the 1950s, the Federation had the highest growth rate in the world for a few years. But the winds of change were blowing. Southern Rhodesia held out longer than Nyasaland, which became Malawi, or Northern Rhodesia. The Prime Minister of the Federation at the time was Roy Walensky. He had been a railroad man. There was a story in connection with that. One of the leading Southern Rhodesian nationalists, was driving

from Salisbury to the second largest city in Southern Rhodesia, Bulawayo, and lost in a race with a train at a railroad crossing and was killed. The story that circulated among the Africans was that the engine driver was Walensky.

Q: That did little to help matters, I'm sure. Was there segregation at the time in Southern Rhodesia?

RUSHING: Yes. The "best" hotel in Salisbury at the time did not admit black Africans. But the consulate general used a hotel by the name of The Jamison, which was also a first-class hotel, very nice, and it did admit blacks.

Q: So, when black Americans came through, they could stay there?

RUSHING: Right.

Q: Was there much violence at the time? Was the embassy at all concerned?

RUSHING: No, there really wasn't.

Q: So you and the other Americans there were not in danger?

RUSHING: No.

Q: What were the links between the rights of Southern Rhodesia and those of South Africa? Were they strong?

RUSHING: Yes, They were relatively strong. Of course, the whites in South Africa had been there since the 17th Century, when the original Dutch settlers came there. The Southern Rhodesian whites liked to think of themselves as more liberal and more open-minded, more accommodating to African aspirations, and I think that was generally true.

Q: You mentioned the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. Was our consulate general in Salisbury accredited to the Federation or to the Southern Rhodesian government? How did that work?

RUSHING: Accreditation came from the Queen as did my exequatur as consul. It was a complicated constitutional arrangement. Southern Rhodesia was a Crown Colony but also a component of the Federation which also included Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland which were British Protectorates, I think. The capital of the Federation was Salisbury which also was the capital of the Crown Colony of Southern Rhodesia.

Q: Did we see the Federation as a viable instrument or did we think it was just contrived?

RUSHING: I think we were ambivalent about this. I remember when Governor [Soapy] Williams, as State's Assistant Secretary for African Affairs, came through with Sam Lewis, who was his aide. Governor Williams was something of a romantic. He believed

that the Africans, if given full power, would be able to achieve a great deal by themselves. This did not prove the case in most instances. The African regimes were often wrecked by tribalism and corruption. So, on the one hand, I know the U.S. espoused freedom and self-government for the Africans, who mostly opposed the Federation. On the other hand, I think there was also a feeling that may not have been articulated, that there was hope for the Federation and it made sense for the three territories to be together, and that it would be stronger and perhaps would be ultimately of greater benefit to the Africans.

Q: What destroyed the Federation? Was it the black-white problem?

RUSHING: The black-white problem. The political and economic power was in the hands of the whites who were unwilling to share enough of it, fast enough, with the blacks.

Q: Southern Rhodesia being white and the other two had a stronger black influence.

RUSHING: But still in Southern Rhodesia, whites were maybe only a quarter of the population or even less. Maybe there were 500,000 whites in Southern Rhodesia at the time. I don't remember what the total population was, perhaps seven or eight million. With the later advent of a black government, the white population dropped to maybe 250,000.

Q: But they were the controlling level.

RUSHING: Oh, yes, indeed. The most insistent African nationalists were under Banda in what became Malawi. They were pushing harder, I think, than anyone else. It's curious that when Banda did come to power, he turned out to be the most conservative of the three leaders. It was the only black country in Africa that recognized the white government in South Africa and Malawi had an embassy down there.

Q: You mentioned Governor Williams' visit. Did you get many American visitors?

RUSHING: A fair amount, yes. One year we hosted a visit by the National War College. There were also various Congressmen and American businessmen, many of whom were in the tobacco business.

Q: And were black organizations in the States concerned about conditions there or was that ever evident?

RUSHING: I'm sure they were, but I don't remember that. It was not manifested much at the time. We, of course, in the consulate general, maintained close contact with the African national leaders. I knew Robert Mugabe (the present President) personally.

Q: I wanted to ask, were the whites annoyed?

RUSHING: They undoubtedly were. There may have been some private expressions of concern made directly to the consul general, but I was not aware of them.

Q: Were the contending parties, that is, the Europeans and the blacks, seeking out the consulate general to give their views?

RUSHING: Yes. They were. There were two mainly white parties, one led by Sir Edgar Whitehead, who was then the Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia, and the other was led by Winston Field, who was a conservative farmer less willing to accede to African aspirations. The critical elections were held in 1962, I think. Yours truly, together with the press and most everyone predicted a victory for Sir Edgar Whitehead, and we were wrong. The party led by Winston Field came to power. It was called the Rhodesian Front.

Q: Only whites could vote in this election? Were there any black candidates?

RUSHING: There was a small party that was mixed. (This is not to say that the two mainly white parties did not include a few blacks.) Some blacks could vote and a few served in parliament. At a distance of 35 years, there's a considerable amount I don't remember well. When Field came to power, the chances of an accommodation between the whites and the blacks, leading to some sort of multiracial government and society with full African participation, went out the window. A kind of civil war broke out with the blacks using Mozambique and Zambia (Northern Rhodesia) as bases.

Q: Until finally independence was obtained. Were you receiving clear instructions from Washington? Those were very difficult times presumably.

RUSHING: As I recall, we were told to go to Field and his people and say that we wanted them to be understanding and advance some of the things that the Africans wanted, leading eventually to full franchise. Instead, Field declared unilateral independence from Britain in 1965. The Federation had dissolved in 1963 when Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland became independent.

DICK ERSTEIN
Public Affairs Officer, USIS
Salisbury (1961-1964)

Dick Erstein entered into the Information Program in 1951. His postings abroad included Greece, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Zambia, Ghana, and Kenya. Mr. Erstein was interviewed by Jack O'Brien in 1989.

Q: So after two years in Ghana you received what assignment?

ERSTEIN: After two years in Ghana I became public affairs officer of the old Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. After World War II there were three separate countries that

the British Government put together as a federation: Southern Rhodesia, which was rich in farming and tobacco; Northern Rhodesia, that was rich in minerals, copper and others; and Nyasaland, which was rich in labor, excessive people. However, the federation soon fell apart because while it made sense economically it didn't make sense to the aspirations of the people. They were dominated by the white parliament that met in the capital city of Salisbury. Therefore the Federation broke up in 1963, and at the end of 1963 three separate countries emerged: Zimbabwe from Southern Rhodesia, Malawi from Nyasaland, and eventually Zambia from Northern Rhodesia. They erected borders and took on all of the trappings of independent separate states.

Q: What was the official US attitude towards the breakup?

ERSTEIN: We did not interfere with the breakup. In fact, we saw that continuing the Federation couldn't work. After World War II, the British formed the Federation rather starry-eyed feeling that it was a perfect match economically and so it would work out socially. They also thought it would be an example of a harmonious multi-racial society which it never became. The British sent down many settlers to that area, artisans, bricklayers, carpenters and so on, because the Africans didn't have those skills. Once these artisans from Britain settled in, found they had a nice cottage with servants, much fresh milk, and sunshine, as opposed to the smogs and bad living conditions in such English cities as Birmingham, it was hard to uproot them. That is why it was so difficult for independence to come about as compared to Ghana which was in an unhealthy area on the West Coast of Africa, steamy and full of malaria, where the British never did settle. They just went down there to work and kept their homes in Britain.

Q: During this breakup, did we Americans, particularly USIS, find ourselves in the position of being caught between conflicting interests?

ERSTEIN: Yes, especially insofar as Southern Rhodesia was concerned. Northern Rhodesia, which became Zambia, and Nyasaland, which became Malawi, established governments and there were no problems in our relationship with them. However, the British would not give independence to the Southern Rhodesia whites who had control of the government. So Southern Rhodesia made a unilateral declaration of independence, known as UDI. UDI meant that the British government did not recognize the government of Southern Rhodesia. We stuck with the British and didn't either. This was after I had left the post, but the US diplomatic mission there was in the very difficult position of not recognizing the de facto government. They had to deal with it on matters of import duties, of matters of the pouch, but they were not allowed to deal with it on the basis of government to government.

MICHAEL G. WYGANT
Consular Officer
Salisbury (1962-1964)

Michael G. Wygant was born in Newburgh, New York in 1936 and was raised in Montclair, New Jersey. He received a bachelor's degree from Dartmouth College, where he passed the Foreign Service exam during his junior year. He served briefly in the U.S. Army before entering the Foreign Service in 1959. Mr. Wygant's career included positions in Zimbabwe, Togo, Vietnam, and Gambia. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on August 14, 1990.

Q: You were assigned to Salisbury and you were there from '62 to '64. This was an interesting period. The countries around it were all going independent and Salisbury obviously digging in the heels. What were your impressions before you went out there, and then how did you find the situation?

WYGANT: It was a fascinating experience from many angles. First of all, I had never been overseas, so just the fact that we were finally going overseas and being real Foreign Service officers in a foreign area...

Q: You say "we." This is you and your wife Lee.

WYGANT: My wife and I, yes. Lee and I have been together throughout this entire experience, and we have three children who were with us during most of the experience, so I use "we" a lot.

About ten days after we arrived in December, 1962 the party of which Ian Smith was a member won an election over the long-established "liberal" party. This of course was an election only within the white community. The white establishment party was overturned, and a rather conservative farmer by the name of Winston Field led the conservative movement to an electoral victory. He became the prime minister; Ian Smith became his treasurer. And that was a sharp break with the past as far as the white hierarchy in Southern Rhodesia was concerned.

Southern Rhodesia was then part of the federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, so that there was a federal aspect of the election, although the federation was basically coming apart by that time. It was clear that Northern Rhodesia was going to become Zambia shortly, and that Nyasaland was about to become Malawi. They would go their separate ways under black leadership. But the arrival on the scene of this conservative government, I think, accelerated the fracturing of the federation.

It was also clear from the time we arrived that the white establishment was not going to concede anything to the overwhelming majority black population. While Zambia and Malawi were headed in the direction of majority rule, it was quite clear that the white minority in Southern Rhodesia was not going to share power in any meaningful sort of way with the country's blacks.

This was also, as you may recall, a very turbulent time in the United States in terms of race relations. The civil rights movement was going very strongly in the United States.

We left a few years before the landmark civil rights legislation was passed, but American popular opinion was becoming much aroused over racial issues. We were headed in one direction, whereas Rhodesia's whites were moving the exact opposite.

The white Rhodesians were terribly concerned that the United States was pushing them too hard to make accommodation with Rhodesian blacks, and therefore in our relations with the whites we found ourselves constantly trying to explain American policy and explain what was happening in the U.S. civil rights movement, and being told that whatever was happening back in the States really had no relevance to their part of the world.

By the time we left, which was in the summer of 1964, Ian Smith had overthrown Winston Field in a palace coup within the ruling party, and it was quite clear that Smith and his followers were headed toward their unilateral declaration of independence. That actually happened about a year after we left, but we did have an opportunity to see a part of the last of white-ruled Africa. The British were still nominally in charge in Southern Rhodesia; very much in charge in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland.

Q: When you say "the British," you're talking about the British government, as opposed to just the white settlers.

WYGANT: Yes, the British government. There was still a governor-general of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. I guess that position finally faded into history in 1963. But there were also British governors in all three colonies: Southern Rhodesia, Northern Rhodesia, and Nyasaland.

I was able to go up to Malawi for independence in 1964, which, as I recall, was around July 5th or 6th, it was close to the U.S. independence day in any event. This was the only independence celebration that I actually attended in Africa, and it was a colorful and moving experience lasting several days.

I recall one anecdote that might be of some interest. I had gone from Salisbury up to Blantyre because there were just two other American diplomats in Malawi at the time and they needed some extra help, so the Salisbury consulate general was willing to let me go there for about a week or ten days. We had our Fourth of July reception at the mission in Blantyre and we were attending the various ceremonies related to Malawi's independence. The British certainly did it up very well, as they always do for these ceremonies.

And then quite unexpectedly, almost at the last moment, G. Mennen (Soapy) Williams, the assistant secretary of state for African affairs at the time, decided that he was going to come to the celebration. The official head of the delegation was our newly appointed ambassador to Malawi, but Williams was coming along to lend an extra hand at the independence celebration, as he was visiting a number of African countries at the time.

So he arrived, I believe, on the 5th, and it was either the 6th or the 7th that they had the final ceremony, which was the opening of the parliament in Zomba. Zomba is about 40 miles north of Blantyre, on what was then the only paved road in Malawi. The leader of the official British delegation was Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh. We had all gone up to Zomba for the opening of the parliament. Williams' schedule was such that he had to leave immediately after this ceremony and head off to the next African country on his visiting itinerary.

Well, this created a bit of a protocol problem for the British. They said that the first cavalcade to go down the road from Zomba to Blantyre would be the prince's entourage, and that anybody else would have to follow afterwards. We had some discussions with the British officials, and eventually they conceded that, since the American assistant secretary of state was in such a hurry to get on with his schedule, he could go down the road first. (I was still up in Zomba, but I heard about this afterwards.)

The towns between Zomba and Blantyre are very densely populated. In fact at that time Nyasaland had a higher population than either Southern or Northern Rhodesia, with about a tenth of the land area. So there was this extremely dense crowd of people dancing, children singing and so forth in each little town along the road.

Williams got into his official Cadillac and took off with flags flying in a caravan of two or three cars. Along the way, the children and the dancers and the various merry-makers assumed this was Prince Philip coming by, so they were dancing and singing and the bands were playing. Soapy Williams, former governor of Michigan, of course loved a good campaign crowd, and he was waving and smiling, and he had a wonderful, triumphant progress from Zomba to Blantyre. The prince came along several hours later, and I don't know whether the prince got quite the same reception.

Q: Were you under any sort of restraints of not rocking the boat as far as dealing with the blacks?

WYGANT: No. Not at all. We were highly encouraged by our then-consul general (unfortunately he was killed in a road accident quite a few years ago). Paul Geren, who was then consul general was a very strong-minded Southern Baptist of missionary background. He had notably strong feelings about the equality of blacks and whites, and was very outspoken in the way he dealt with the white establishment in Rhodesia. He encouraged his staff to have as broad contacts as possible with the black community, so we fortunately did.

About the time that I was leaving, Ian Smith was beginning to put some of these people into various kinds of detention and even into prison. But up until just before we left, it was possible to go into the townships, which were black, and see some of the leaders and talk to them. And so I never felt that I had any restraint at all in terms of developing contacts with the politically active black community.

Q: What was your impression of the Ian Smith people and how they were handling this?

WYGANT: I think my overall impression was that they were extremely shortsighted: people who were looking to the past and had no vision for the future, at least in terms of the realities of what was taking place in the rest of Africa. I guess it was around 1960 or 1961 that Harold MacMillan, then British prime minister, Macmillan, went to Cape Town and gave his famous speech about the winds of change blowing through Africa. I don't think Ian Smith ever understood the winds of change--certainly not at that point.

Q: It must have been rather difficult to have relations with them.

WYGANT: Yes, it was. The government was quite hard-line toward Americans and felt that we were trying to pressure them and interfering in ways that we shouldn't have. At my level as vice consul I wasn't dealing with the likes of prime ministers and government ministers, but I believe that the consul general and the deputy consul general did have a lot of difficulty in dealing with this government.

HERMAN J. COHEN
Labor Attaché
Salisbury (1963-1965)

Ambassador Herman J. Cohen was born in New York City. After graduating from The City College of New York, he joined the Foreign Service in 1955. His career has included positions in France, Uganda, Zambia, Zaire, Senegal and Rhodesia. Ambassador Cohen was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on August 15, 1996.

Q: Well, in '63 where did you go?

COHEN: It was about Christmas time in '63, we got transferred to Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia, which is now called Zimbabwe. There, they had a regional labor attaché position covering three countries. Southern Rhodesia, Zambia, which had been Northern Rhodesia, and Malawi, which in those days was called Nyasaland. Malawi and Zambia were independent countries. They had just become independent in '64. I guess they were about to become independent, but Southern Rhodesia was a South African type situation with a white minority with the British refusing to give them independence until they accepted majority rule which they did not do. But, the biggest post in the region was in Salisbury, economically the most important.

Q: It was a consulate general?

COHEN: A consulate general, but still a bigger post than either of the two neighboring embassies.

Q: Who was the consul general at that time?

COHEN: A gentleman named Geren. I believe he was a political appointee.

Q: As a regional labor officer you weren't also a consular or administrative officer any more.

COHEN: No that is all I did. It was a rather large post. They had a full time consular officer, a full time administrative officer, a full time political officer and so on. It was like an embassy although it was called consulate general. It did a lot of regional services for the other posts, so I was just one of those regional officers. In many ways I was my own boss. I would just say I'm going up to Zambia for a few days or to Malawi for a few days. I spent a lot of time though on Southern Rhodesian politics. It was a tough situation there.

Q: Was there any, one always thinks of the white businessmen dominating, Ian Smith's movement and all that, but was there a labor component either white or black in the mix? I haven't heard of that.

COHEN: That is what I found so fascinating. The business community being rather affluent and enlightened, they were in favor of progress toward democracy with majority rule. It was the white working class who were very reluctant because they saw themselves being displaced by Africans, the railway workers, mine workers, service workers of various kinds, banking, auto mechanics.

Q: There was a fairly large group more than anywhere else, of white settlers who came from modest backgrounds.

COHEN: That is right. They said the lieutenants settled in Kenya and the Sergeants went to Rhodesia.

Q: Rhodesia for other ranks.

COHEN: And there were about a quarter of a million. There were a lot of working class types, lower middle class and of course very much afraid of majority rule. They had a labor movement, railway workers, mineworkers, so as labor attaché I dealt with them. But at the same time, there was also a fairly large black labor movement, railway workers, mineworkers, textile workers, what have you, and I dealt with them. What was fascinating there, this was a white government, sort of racist. The consul general, the political officer dealt mainly with them, and they didn't want to get tarnished by dealing with blacks too much. But, as the labor attaché dealing with black unions, I dealt with them and through the unions I dealt with the black nationalists political leaders who were in jail half of the time. So I would go visit them and for me it was perfectly natural, but for the political officer and the consul general it was not easy for them to do that.

Q: Let's talk about the white unions first. The British labor system is sort of class oriented and on the ideological spectrum often particularly at the real union level, what is it they used to sing, the red banner forever, rather leftist and idealistic about the Soviet Union

and all that. Did you find that, or was this a different breed of cat?

COHEN: No this I would call them right wing, not so much in their attitude toward capitalism. They still thought capitalism was the enemy, but still their main concern was race being overpowered by the black majority, so everything else took second place. Also, since the standard of living for the blacks was so low, an average white worker, say he is working on the railway, he had a swimming pool and servants. So for him he didn't have a problem of his being on the lower end of the social scale as they would in England.

Q: How did you operate in this dual system? You were working at one level with these affluent by local standards union types who were racist and then with the blacks, you were getting instructions from unions in the United States which were going through a lot of problems then. This was the height of the civil rights movement.

COHEN: The unions, especially Irving Brown, had given up on the white unions. There was no sense of solidarity between the AFL and these guys, anticommunism apart. As far as the AFL-CIO was concerned, Southern Rhodesia and South Africa were essentially racial issues not ideological, so they spent all of their time with the black unions. Therefore, they were looked at as enemies by the regime. I was looked at ambivalently. On the one hand, when I dealt with white unions, I dealt with them as friends of labor, and they sort of accepted me that way. When I was dealing with black unions, the government looked a little suspiciously as what is he doing with these guys? What rebellions is he fomenting, especially when I used the unions to talk to the political nationalists. I remember once I was invited to give a speech at a school. In the British tradition, schools celebrate "prize-giving" day at the end of the year. So they asked the consulate to supply a speaker. So we called the headmaster back and said Mr. Cohen will do this. The headmaster was very nice; he told me what they were looking for. Then about two weeks later he called and said, "I'm so embarrassed, Mr. Cohen. The government is insisting that you provide a copy of your speech ahead of time." I don't normally do this because I tend to speak extemporaneously from notes. So then I was forced to write a speech. I went ahead and wrote a speech and sent them a copy. I gave the speech, and the headmaster said, "I'm so terribly sorry to make you go through this, but you know, the government said to us "this man is dangerous, so therefore we want a copy of his speech." After I was there about a year, I was classified as being pro majority rule.

Q: When you say you had these contacts and you were working with them, what were you doing? Both with the whites and the blacks on the labor side. We will talk about the other countries later; we are talking about Rhodesia now.

COHEN: I kept them engaged in a lot of conversation about how their unions were operating, what were they doing, how they dealt with management, very labor type issues. They were happy to fill me in and tell me about their complaints and their problems. I would always lead into politics. What is your view of the way the government is working, your attitude toward the blacks? So this was my way of getting political

reporting and sent telegrams and dispatches about that.

Q: Were you getting both good information and instructions about, we are really talking about the height of the civil rights movement activity which was rather intense and quite nasty at times in the United States, the integration and all this which was both a pertinent example, you know good example, bad example and so forth. I mean a lot was happening turmoil in the United States. Was this useful, difficult or what for you in dealing with the white and black unions?

COHEN: We didn't have much impact from the U.S. civil rights issues to be honest. It was just the basic policy of the U.S. government to support democratization and majority rule especially from the Kennedy administration. Kennedy was assassinated while I was still in Kampala, but it continued under Johnson. There was a backdrop of support for democracy, but we didn't get that much...

Q: It was not the era today's era where you had CNN where if there is a riot in the United States, particularly white policemen beating up black demonstrators, every village in the world can watch this.

COHEN: That is right. When we talked about moving ahead to democracy and stopping the repression of the blacks, the whites would ask what we did to the American Indian. That was a standard response.

Q: What about in Nyasaland that was later Malawi and Zambia, what were the situations there?

COHEN: Just to backtrack a second, Rhodesia was slightly different from South Africa in that they didn't have enforced segregation. There was no government regulation. It was segregation in the sense that a hotel wouldn't have to accept blacks if they didn't want to, or a restaurant, but there were a few hotels and restaurants that were desegregated, so we in the consulate general made a point of going only to those places when taking Africans out to lunch. To that extent, the U.S. civil rights thing did have an impact. Well, Malawi and Zimbabwe were already independent. There it was dealing with them like in Uganda, to promote free unions as a part of development and part of democracy, so we interfaced with unions, business, and government there. It was standard labor attaché treatment.

Q: Were the governments in either of those places looking at labor unions as being a force outside of their control.

COHEN: Well it was already the beginning of the one party state. It was starting to come in. They started out as democracies. In Zambia particularly the mineworkers union was very powerful because copper mining was such a major element in the economy. They were exporting 400,000 tons of copper a year. They were heavily urbanized, and the British left a very strong mineworkers union, so they were a separate power. They didn't consider themselves aligned, and the government was already eyeing them as an enemy and something that had to be controlled. My going around to see them was not well

viewed. Not to speak of the fact that I was coming from another country. I was protected by the U.S. ambassador in Lusaka who was a political appointee from the Kennedy administration, Ambassador Robert Good. It was already getting dicey, but the counterpart of that was the unions really liked me. They saw me as an ally against the totalitarianism of the regime. Malawi was already pretty far gone. They had become a dictatorship. There was nothing much we could do except try to use the unions as a source of information.

Q: Did you ever find yourself either in competition or cooperation with the equivalent to the British did they have labor officers and the like, too?

COHEN: I think we were the only ones doing it. Occasionally some Scandinavian countries would do that. We didn't find any competition in this area. Actually the outsiders we saw the most of were the ICFTU representatives. They had them in a lot of countries, so we used to talk to them a lot.

Q: How about again this is the height of the Cold War, did you see much Soviet playing around in this area?

COHEN: The Soviets didn't do too much with unions as far as I could tell; although, you would have the World Federation of Trade Unions try to recruit. In some countries the central labor federation was affiliated with them. None of the countries I was in. All of the countries I was in were affiliated with the ICFTU, so that was less of a worry for us. But, it was mainly a question of tensions between governments who wanted to be more and more totalitarian and free labor.

Q: Did you have any equivalent to instructions or a pitch that you made sort of opposed to totalitarian or one party systems and that?

COHEN: No we didn't. In fact, another aspect of our view of Africa, which was sort of linked to civil rights, was that these guys were independent. Who were we to criticize them. If they want to have the type of government they consider good for them; we are not going to interfere. We did want them to have free labor unions, but a totalitarian system can't tolerate free anything, so they had to co-opt the unions.

Q: Did you ever have any run-ins with the governments?

COHEN: Well, the Zambian government objected, I think at one point, they said we shouldn't contact the mineworkers any more. It was near the end of my stay. In fact at one point they didn't allow diplomats to travel outside Lusaka without permission. You had to ask it. Southern Rhodesia, they didn't like it, but they never stopped us. In fact at one point I remember giving a party at my house for the black labor unions, and I invited the white labor minister who was a real extreme hard line right-winger. He came and afterward he thanked me. He said that it was his first ever contact with black unions. It shows that politics was far more important than unions and labor relations.

Q: Well you left there in 196...

COHEN: Well in the middle of '65, the whites declared their independence from Britain. It was called UDI, the Unilateral Declaration of Independence. It came a few weeks after Harold Wilson had spent a few days there. That was a lot of time for a Prime Minister. He came there and tried to talk them out of doing it, try to make a deal with them, the whites. The whites decided no; the government decided it was time. I think it was in November, 1965 when they declared independence. I was just completing my second year there, and of course the State Department went ape over that. This was moving backwards, a blow to democracy and all that. We refused to recognize them, and to show our displeasure, we were going to reduce the size of the mission of the consulate general. Of course I wanted to stay because it was a very pleasant place, and was interesting. But, the political officer got to stay and I got moved out. They said you are a regional labor attaché, go to one of your other countries, so they shipped me to Zambia. There instead of being the labor attaché, I filled the slot of the economic and commercial officer who was just leaving on transfer, but I also did labor work.

EDWARD WARREN HOLMES
AF, Country Director, Rhodesia
Washington, DC (1966-1971)

Edward Warren Holmes was born in Beverly, Massachusetts in 1923. He received a bachelor's degree from Brown University in 1945 and a master's degree in international law from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy in 1946. Mr. Holmes joined the Foreign Service in 1946. He served in Nicaragua, Venezuela, Israel, South Africa, Ethiopia, Malawi, Ghana, and Washington, DC. Mr. Holmes was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1993.

Q: You went back with the Africa Bureau. What were you doing?

HOLMES: First of all, I spent a year in the Operations Center, which is the place in the Department that never sleeps, that receives cables round the clock, particularly after hours, and decides what is urgent enough to merit calling somebody. We have the authority to call the secretary at home, which we have used on some occasions. Those were the days of the Vietnam situation, so there was an awful lot of traffic from Vietnam, with the secretary, of course, being terribly interested in it, as was President Johnson. So it was a very interesting time, because it was constant troubles or interesting developments in Vietnam. So I served one year in the Ops. Center, which is normal.

Q: It sort of burns you out.

HOLMES: Well, you work at odd hours, round the clock, and you take shifts, the midnight shift and so forth; you keep moving around in your time.

So then, from there, I moved back to the African Bureau and became country director for... Not at first. First, I was, I guess, country officer for Rhodesia and Malawi, something like that. This was a time of shuffling around in the Bureau, and then I did become country director for what was called Southeast Africa, which was Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, and the Rhodesias, that area.

Q: You were there 1966 to '71. What was the...

HOLMES: Well, that was a typical job of a country director handling all...

Q: Were you there during the... UDI?

HOLMES: Yes, UDI, right. And we didn't recognize... The British never recognized it.

Q: Could you explain how we used the situation... Southern Rhodesia became Zimbabwe, how this developed and what our attitude was...

HOLMES: Well, with the breakup of the federation, which started when I was in Blantyre, that was the first element of the three breakaways, once that happened, Northern Rhodesia followed very soon thereafter. So the federation broke into its three constituent elements, with the northern two, of course, controlled by African governments, but Rhodesia being controlled by white settler elements. There was an election in Rhodesia, and the more liberal party, headed by Todd, was thrown out and a much more rightist group took over.

Q: Ian Smith.

HOLMES: Ian Smith and the Rhodesian Front. They chafed under British control. I mean, they said, after all, the other two elements in the federation are independent, we want our independence, basically, we don't want to be a colony any longer. Britain moved slowly, I would say, and they just simply declared their independence at some point. The British, I don't think, ... would ever do that, but they did it. And then the British clamped down and refused to recognize their independence. We and most of the world followed suit and did not recognize them.

Q: What did we do then? Did we still keep our consulate general?

HOLMES: We had a consulate general there, headed by Paul O'Neal, a good friend of mine, who finally closed it down after about a year. There was a question of whether we should or not, and the British allowed us to keep it for a long while as sort of a listening post, one way of maintaining contact.

I think the British felt at first that this would be over with fairly soon, that these people would come to their senses and drop their independence. But it didn't work that way; they were very resolute, the Southern Rhodesians. There were sanctions applied to them by

the United Nations, mandatory sanctions. I think it was the first time of mandatory sanctions, which we subscribed to. But, after all, they bordered South Africa, and the border was clearly open--oil came through, everything came through. So sanctions didn't affect them too much. It had a disruptive effect, particularly on their exports, but even then, they managed. It lasted for quite a few years, I can't tell you how long.

But all the time that I was working on that, that was *the* big thing, our relations, the whole UDI situation. What were we going to do? What was going to happen? ... the old throne or not? Would the British succeed? And also this developed into a political thing back here, with certain right-wing elements in our Congress saying we should recognize this good Christian gentleman, Ian Smith, who no doubt put the blacks down, and why are we bringing these good people down? There were delegations that came out and met over here. So there was constant turmoil during that whole period, over the whole question of trying to maintain sanctions, which we did maintain, pretty much, until the end, I think, although the pressures were growing to drop sanctions, in Congress.

Q: When the Nixon administration came in and Henry Kissinger was sort of running the show, did you feel that there was a change in our attitude?

HOLMES: Yes. Kissinger, of course, was a much more active secretary. He personally got involved in trying to solve this situation, and also pressured the British just to end it somehow, to end it... recognize... But that didn't happen... Well, you know, there were endless meetings. There was a meeting aboard the *Tiger*, the British battleship, and they almost reached agreement, and then it fell through. But finally, the British earlier... There was a formula, there was a formula, a face-saving formula, which was arranged... I can't remember, I had gone by then. Of course, I read about it. Somehow it was... It ended on pretty well British terms.

Q: As far as Africa went, this was sort of the main show in Africa, wasn't it?

HOLMES: Well, the other African countries were very, very much against Ian Smith, of course. They felt it should be a really independent country, with free elections, which would mean a black government, as has happened since. So they were very much pressuring us to keep the sanctions going and to close our consulates to him, which we eventually did. They wanted us to close the consulates because they felt that that was a link to the hated Ian Smith regime.

Yes, we were under enormous pressure from black Africa. They had meetings, and the Organization of African Unity would always condemn, of course, Ian Smith. They felt the British should just send in troops and end this thing. But the British were not about to send troops. It was clear that they were not about to send troops to put down their own kith and kin, you might say. These settler families were well connected in England, particularly the Conservative Party. So, although they maintained this sanctions program pretty carefully, they never were about to put in troops, as the black countries thought they should.

So we were in the middle of this, in a sense. Although it was not our problem, what we did carried a lot of weight. So it was an interesting time, I would say.

Q: How about events in Kenya and Tanzania? Did you cover those, too?

HOLMES: Yes, but there were no tremendous problems there. Our attention was pretty well focused on the Rhodesian problem, because when it gets into Congress, as you know, then you get congressional letters, then you have to justify things and explain things.

Besides which, American companies were not keen on this, particularly some of our mining companies who had mining interests in Rhodesia. Their big thing was chromium. A big battle over chromium. We had to have chromium for our military uses, for our defense establishment. Everything would collapse if they couldn't bring up the chromium from their mines there. But the embargo cut that off, and so they were pulling and hauling.

It was very much a domestic political issue. So the Desk, obviously, got involved in all sorts of papers and explanations, talking. It took an awful lot of our time.

MICHAEL P.E. HOYT
State Department; Rhodesia Desk Officer
Washington, DC (1972-1974)

Michael P.E. Hoyt was born in Illinois on November 16, 1929. He received a bachelor's degree and a master's degree from the University of Chicago and served in the U.S. Air Force overseas. He joined the Foreign Service in 1956. Mr. Hoyt's career included positions in Karachi, Casablanca, Leopoldville, Stanleyville, Douala, Bujumbura, Ibadan, and Washington, DC. He was interviewed by Ray Sadler on January 30, 1995.

HOYT: I got back to the Department in 1972-74, I was the desk officer for Rhodesia. This is a republican administration, not particularly interested in Africa. On Rhodesia, it was known that Nixon, before he became president, visited white ruled. It was still under its unilaterally declared independence under Ian Smith. I think he had a certain sympathy with him.

I found a directive in my files which made it very clear that we were to back-off sanctions and try to rectify the situation. The directive was never put into effect, it was a draft. Under the republican Nixon administration saw that they could not dismantle the sanctions. The sanctions were voted in the UN and were legally binding on us.

But Harry Byrd, in the senate, did their work for them. He promoted and got passed a...

Q: *Harry Flood Byrd?*

HOYT: Yes, Harry Byrd who put through the famous Byrd amendment, Byrd provision, which exempted chrome, the main element, of the UN sanctions.

Q: *Oh, okay.*

HOYT: The famous Byrd provision.

I spent a lot of my time trying to get that repealed. Finally got the administration to get everybody to agree that we should push to have the provision repealed. It was strictly illegal. We were legally obligated to support the sanctions. We voted in the United Nations, we voted for them, there was no way to except them. I worked very hard.

Newsom tried to keep a low key. It finally came down to closure votes in the senate. It had to get 60 votes. We were working on them. I went with Newsom to see Senator Taft. He was one of the key republicans who was against repeal of the Byrd provision. I went with Newsom to talk to him and his staff. Newsom made a presentation which I thought was very weak. Taft's staff man was very far out, and he indicated there was no way the senator was going to support repeal.

I just broke in, and I said, "Well, you've got to realize that this is illegal. We have a legal obligation under the UN charter, under the laws of the United States, to follow the sanctions program."

The senator looked at me and thanked us for our presentation.

When it came down to the vote--there were 3 closure votes. Two failed and it came to the third one. This is only the second or third closure vote in history, by this time. In the final vote, Taft left. The opposition collapsed and it passed--the Byrd provision was repealed in the senate.

I felt quite elated about it. I reported in to Newsom who was very glad to hear it but he had, of course, kept a very low profile during this thing. WI sent briefing papers to Kissinger, but he would invariably come up with the wrong testimony. We'd have to correct it later.

But, it never got through the House because it was never popular with the Black Caucus. Representative Diggs, who was the head of the African subcommittee, did not push repeal. He was charged and later went to prison siphoning off part of his staffs' salary. He went to prison the day I retired in 1980. His wife, who was a foreign service officer, resigned on the same day. I met her the same day he went into prison.

Anyway, there just wasn't much steam behind it in the House so it did not pass the House. I think, I'm not sure, it was repealed a few years later. It may have become moot when Rhodesia received its independence in 1980.

Anyway, my job as Rhodesia desk officer, my main job was to maintain the sanctions. Everything with any sort of exceptions, foreign assets withdrawal, had to go through my desk.

I remember one thing. There had been a Rhodesia mission in Washington, the Rhodesia Information Office. After UDI they kept one lower-grade officer in the mission. It became clear that we would make no move to expel him--given the furor over the Katangese office in Washington at the time of the secession. We couldn't even get the FBI to watch him in case he was breaking some law. Hoover just refused to have anything to do with it. So he stayed but he knew that if he ever left, he'd never come back.

But then the query came through, unofficially, they wanted to know if his wife could go on to Rhodesia for Christmas and come back. I said that we were not fight the families and pass the word that we would let her back in.

Q: In terms of ammunitions, was there any trafficking of munitions through the United States?

HOYT: I wasn't aware of it.

The only thing I was aware of was trying to keep the sanctions program going. I tracked down aircraft spare parts going to Rhodesia. In one case they took a couple of 707s out of the airfield in Geneva and flew them down to Rhodesia. I spent a lot of time trying to track down those people, trying to apply sanctions to them, the people that did it.

The Swiss were not cooperative. It was very difficult to work with the Swiss because you can't go to Switzerland and enforce any kind of sanctions. We did call them to Washington. They claimed, of course, that they had nothing to do with it. That somebody else grabbed the airplanes and pulled them out.

But, more important, were DC8 shipped to Gabon. There was a license working through to export a DC8 to Gabon. In fact, this was the second one that they were exporting. I was opposing it vigorously. Newsom supported it. For some reason, Kissinger supported it, he wanted to do it. I said, "I have proof here that the first DC8 you sent there is in the meat trade and they're flying meat from Rhodesia to Holland."

However, the export license was granted. Actually, it was Ferguson, the acting assistant secretary for African affairs, who issued the approval. When later the recriminations came down for having approved, Newsom said he hadn't approve it, Ferguson had. I had been to a staff meeting in which Newsom said he was in favor of granting the license. That did not set well with me.

Anyway, I continued to try and stop the actual export. When came across some later information, I brought it to the attention of the Central African desk, under Hank Cohen. He delayed action on it until it actually left the country.

ROY T. HAVERKAMP
State Department; Director, Office of Southern African Affairs
Washington, DC (1975-1976)

Roy T. Haverkamp was born in 1924 in Missouri. He served in the U.S. Air Force in World War II and later earned degrees from Yale University and Cambridge University. Mr. Haverkamp joined the Foreign Service in 1952. His career included positions in Korea, Sweden, Japan, Cambodia, Congo, Benin, Vietnam, Guinea, the United Kingdom, Jamaica, and Grenada. He was interviewed on April 11, 1994 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.

Q: Well, then you went back to Washington where you served from 1975-78. Where were you serving?

HAVERKAMP: From 1975-76 I was the Director of the Office of Southern African Affairs, which included South Africa, Angola, Mozambique, Rhodesia, Botswana, Lesotho, and Swaziland.

Q: So, while you were there was Rhodesia on the front burner?

HAVERKAMP: That was on the front burner because the liberation movements there, particularly the movement that was headed by Robert Mubage were really making headway against the White government. I think it was like South Africa. In Rhodesia the Ian Smith government was more vulnerable than their South African supporters. The Black-White population ratio in Rhodesia was too much in favor of the liberation movement and Robert Mugabe, the leader of the strongest movement, had support in hordes and was a very shrewd and clever tactician. Ian Smith was naive and hopeless.

Q: What could we do about it, anything?

HAVERKAMP: I think what we did there in the long run was right. We worked with the British who eventually had a series of meetings involving representatives from members of the British Commonwealth and the liberation movement leaders that brought peace and a settlement in which the Ian Smith government left Rhodesia, there was an election and Mugabe came out on top.

I think what we could have done we did, but it took the Nixon and Ford

administrations to become interested and do something about it. But I think we did the right thing.

Q: While you were there what was your impression of reports coming in from both the field, the CIA and maybe elsewhere on those areas of Africa that you were dealing with?

HAVERKAMP: I thought they were pretty good. One thing that a good intelligence agency can do is that they can give their government an objective understanding of problems that it has internally with its own people that it would never acknowledge publicly. Foreign intelligence agencies that are good can pick this up and so can embassies. On issues of Blacks and Whites in Southern Africa there were also ideological zealots in Washington who tried their best to obscure reality, but the reporting by intelligence agencies was realistic.

Q: I get somewhat the impression that as has happened you have always had this very strong right wing which is powerful in Congress and elsewhere, particularly in the Republican administration and sometimes will toss a whole area to let them have more say. This happened during the Eisenhower Administration with Asia. Asia was turned over, you might say, to the right wing so he could go ahead and do his thing in Europe. I don't know if this would be fair to say or not.

HAVERKAMP: I don't know. I never saw it in that context in Africa. Obviously, the right wing predominated policy wise, but the left wing prevailed. In Asia our security interests with Europe were much more closely linked, for example China and Russia.

Q: Perhaps not even consciously, but it seems that at least in part Africa was left off to one side, so that if someone took a strong interest, say in Congress, they weren't up against a hard policy.

HAVERKAMP: By relating what went on in Africa to what the Soviets, the Chinese communists and their acolytes were doing, these hard policies developed quickly, e.g. North Africa, Zaire, Angola and South Africa. Also there was a great deal of ignorance or lack of understanding particularly towards South Africa. Some liked the policy of apartheid, while others, they considered themselves "realists", were convinced that numbers did not matter. What counted was that the government had the only organized disciplined force and could not only maintain law and order, but also contain any Soviet supported insurgency.

FRANK G. WISNER
AF, Country Director, Southern Africa
Washington, DC (1976-1979)

Ambassador Frank G. Wisner was born in New York in 1938. He graduated from Princeton University in 1961. He was stationed in Saigon,

Dinh Tuong Province, Tuyen Duc Province, Tunis, Algiers, and Dacca. He later served as Ambassador to Zambia, Egypt, the Philippines, and India. Ambassador Wisner was interviewed by Richard L. Jackson on March 22, 1998.

Q: Frank, as you've taken the Angola story forward, you were working on that from different vantage points. We left you, I think, with Under Secretary Sisco, you then worked for Dr. Kissinger and were one of the Deputy Executive Secretaries under Secretary Vance and, of course, Ambassador in Zambia. Could you sketch in some of those stages and also some of the other issues that you worked on at that time?

WISNER: I am happy to. Joe Sisco resigned from the Department of State and assumed the Presidency of the American University in 1974. Phil Habib became the Under Secretary of State, and Phil had his own top guy, Dan O'Donohue, who he wanted to bring upstairs. So I was out of a job. And I was planning to get married that summer -- I had been a widower for nearly two years at this point. I was planning to marry Christine de Ganay that summer, and Sabrina was still very small, and I thought for a moment about taking a leave of absence from the Department of State, of going to the Carnegie Endowment at Tom Hughes' invitation and doing some work on a subject that I believed and still believe is very important -- that is the relationship between the foreign affairs community and Congress. One day I was called into Larry Eagleburger's office, and Larry threw that challenge that you can't say no to in the Foreign Service. "Frank", he said, "do you want to go and goof off for a year or do you want to do real work? If you want to do real work...and, by the way, none of us as Republicans are particularly keen on seeing an officer of this Department go off to a Democratic think tank like the Carnegie Endowment." In a jocular manner, Larry raised the partisan point. Then he put before me the prospect of joining the Bureau of African Affairs as the country director for Southern Africa. Now, Southern Africa was of enormous importance to the Secretary for, having received a setback at the hands of the Congress and on the battlefield that he received in Angola, Secretary Kissinger, as I earlier said, had shifted his focus to doing something about Rhodesia and Namibia and beginning to engage in Southern Africa in a much much more important manner, and he needed an effective backup office in the Department of State. The backup office had to be the African Bureau and its Office of Southern African Affairs and, at that time, Kissinger felt the office was not on the same wavelength with the Secretary. He wanted a change in leadership in the office, and I had to admit that I knew where Luanda was from my time with Joe Sisco, but I could hardly place on a map Salisbury and Lourenço Marques, Maputo, Port Elizabeth, Blantyre and Lilongwe which were in Southern Africa. I'd never been in Southern Africa. I'd been in Vietnam, I'd been in South Asia, I'd been in North Africa, but never been in Southern Africa. Larry dismissed my reservations, and I found myself in the summer of 1976 as the new country director for Southern Africa. I must add the Bureau and the Department gave me a terrific team. Dennis Keogh, who lost his life in Namibia, was an outstanding officer and served as my deputy, carrying the office for months while I was abroad. George Moose and Jeff Davidow went on to become Ambassadors and Assistant Secretaries. I went off and got married, came back, and not too long after I came back,

Kissinger took off on his shuttle, his second meeting with the South Africans and his first shuttle in Africa. We went off with a very fascinating set of objectives.

These were Rhodesian-related, and the point was to see if we could move the diplomacy of Southern Africa forward so that Ian Smith and his government would agree to negotiate a path to independence with the nationalist parties of Rhodesia and bring about the creation of a new Zimbabwe. We would do this as executive agents, if you will, of the British who still held colonial authority in Rhodesia, though UDI had occurred and the territory was in the hands of the white minority regime. Kissinger's plan was to create a set of propositions around which a transition to elections and a transition to majority rule would take place, over a period of time: a set of propositions that he would sell first to the Africans, then having already started working on John Vorster, finish the job with the South Africans and then get them to help him sell it to the Rhodesians, then get the two parties together -- the white minority regime and the cantankerous and divided nationalist side together in a final conference and put it back under British authority and then have Britain hold the brass ring. Kissinger's conception was brilliant, and his execution was admirable. That he failed to reach 100% -- is not to gainsay the fact that he got us well along that path and opened the door for what ended up later, an independent Zimbabwe and the basis of what eventually became the Reagan approach to calming the rest of the region down. Limiting Soviet influence and squeezing them and the Cubans out of the Southern African picture.

Kissinger went, and I was with him, to see the South Africans in Switzerland in August. We couldn't see them anywhere else, couldn't see them in the States, couldn't see them in a country like Britain, where the mobs would have surged around the South African prime minister, so the Swiss were very helpful, and I admire the Swiss. They have been very important at moments like this to American diplomacy for many, many years. The government has been a good friend of ours. It is also true Swiss interests were being served. They had strong ties in Southern Africa and, most notably, in South Africa, but still it was one of those very helpful moments. We were able to see the South Africans, and that gave Kissinger confidence his diplomacy could succeed. South Africa's government would use its authority to convince the Rhodesians to accept a set of negotiating principles which would end UDI and open the way to independence in Rhodesia under majority rule. These principles by the way, were prepared in the closest consultations with the British government. Kissinger then took off with his team-Win Lord, the Policy Planning Director; Bill Rogers, the Under Secretary for Economics; my excellent boss, Africa Assistant Secretary, William Schauffele, and Peter Rodman.

When we arrived in Tanzania, for two days of meetings with Julius Nyerere, Kissinger met his match. Nyerere -- brilliant, deeply suspicious, wanting to see the African side win decisively, especially Africans beholden to Nyerere's radical persuasiveness, not terribly trustful of the role the United States would play -- gave if you wanted to call his halfhearted support, that would be overstating what Julius Nyerere did. In fact, Nyerere told Kissinger to go forth and deliver the Rhodesians; he undercut Kissinger's diplomacy at the same time, decrying its objectives and its author. When Kissinger left the second meeting, Nyerere publicly criticized the American proposals. Happily, when we arrived

in Lusaka, the play was reversed, and Kaunda embraced Kissinger and his proposals. We needed this signal of support; it gave Kissinger a strong basis on which we could all fly to South Africa and meet the Rhodesians.

And there, in Pretoria, in the Union Building, I joined Kissinger for his historic meeting with Ian Smith and those members of the Rhodesian minority government who had come down theoretically to watch a rugby game, in fact to meet with John Vorster and Kissinger. In a truly brilliant tour-de-force, Kissinger painted for Ian Smith the world situation, bringing it right down to the Rhodesian predicament, building the logic that Rhodesia could never work its way out of the problems it was in, never get support from the outside world if it didn't commit itself to a peace process and a track that would end up leading to independence under majority rule. Smith accepted the five-point proposal that Kissinger put on the table as a basis to go back and talk to his Cabinet colleagues. John Vorster was present to assure good faith. Smith wouldn't have come to it, had it not been for John Vorster. Maligned as he is, John Vorster is one of the true fathers of Zimbabwe's independence.

Kissinger went back to London, but he stopped in a visit to thank Mobutu. He respected Mobutu, his sense of power, and the role Zaire, because of its size, could play in Africa. Kenyatta, too. We went up and met him. Kissinger explained to Kenyatta how important it was to see this new peace approach through and to limit outside and Communist influence. Kenyatta was on board to try to build African support for a moderate outcome, not leave everything in the hands of the likes of Julius Nyerere.

And then he flew to London, and I joined the Secretary in a very late night Cabinet meeting in Number 10 Downing Street, where Kissinger explained his five points. At that moment it began to dawn on us that the British -- a Labor government, Jim Callaghan's Labor Government -- for all their protestations of wishing to solve the Rhodesian problem, didn't want to have to face the awful fact of actually carrying through and particularly taking what would seem to be American ideas -- though coordinated with them, they didn't believe they would ever have to take our ideas, but then to have to be faced with them and negotiate them with Ian Smith, who was a veritable anathema to the Rhodesian Government. Furthermore, I suspect Callaghan never fully explained to his government what he had set Kissinger loose to do. The Labor left, notably Michael Foote, did not want to be seen in cahoots with Smith and Vorster. Well, the British began hemming and hawing, a prelude to the failure of the Geneva Conference. On our way back to Washington, we heard Smith's acceptance of the five points and, with the UN General Assembly about to meet, the fat was really in the fire. Kissinger spent much of the latter part of September, 1976 selling his concept of a Rhodesian settlement, as well his concept of a Namibian settlement, to the players in the General Assembly and finally, when Tony Crosland came to New York to work out how the British were to proceed in managing the Rhodesian story. I was with Kissinger throughout that time in New York, attending all his African meetings, talking with him, watching him at work and I was, needless to say, fascinated and admiring. I remember the night with particular poignancy when I was called into the meeting with Tony Crosland, the Foreign Secretary. Kissinger, Phil Habib was there, the British UN Ambassador Ivor Richards was there, I was the

notetaker. I think Bill Schaefe was there, the Assistant Secretary for Africa from the Department. And Crosland, at that point, said the British Government in effect didn't have the heart to send a foreign secretary to deal with the Rhodesian parties, white and black, and they were going to name their UN ambassador and who would Kissinger have there, and Kissinger said he had this man named Wisner in mind, and I took the notes and I looked at it and realized I was being referred to. I was astonished which was prelude to the fact that, though I was just married, I was also about to leave and not return until December.

From the end of September until December, 1976, I represented Henry Kissinger in Geneva during the course of the negotiations. The negotiations were a fascinating experience for me, but deeply frustrating, because I saw a chance to achieve peace slip away from us. The British were more inclined to argue with Smith than to try to find ways to bridge gaps between the Zimbabwean parties and the Rhodesian white minority regime; Smith was up there. And so the negotiations bogged down into debates about the Kissinger package and the authorities of various elements of it, something called the Council of State, a matter of important detail for a scholar of the subject. The British did not come to bring the process to a conclusion and, by about a quarter of the way through, our election was held so there was now no longer a President Jerry Ford. The signals out of the Democrats were that they would take an entirely new look at African policy, and this attempt to try to work with the Zimbabweans and white Rhodesians and with the South Africans was held in suspicion. The black parties began to get the view that they might get a better deal out of Washington than the one Ford and Kissinger had on offer. British diplomacy was a disappointment. We really thought we had given London a hand, but Labor and senior civil servants like the cautious diplomat Tony Duff, added to the drag on British thinking. Geneva broke up in December. Henry Kissinger had a final round in London where he saw that the British weren't going to go back to the table on the basis of what he'd achieved, and that really brought an end to our attempts in that cycle to produce it.

But remember what we had accomplished: Rhodesians had, in effect, said they were willing to negotiate their way out of UDI, towards black majority rule on the basis of a transitional set of arrangements. South Africa had played her cards, had come in and moved the Rhodesians forward which opened, then, the possibility of the next cycle -- Cy Vance's attempts, with Andy Young, to find another basis were not in the beginning successful, but set the stage for Maggie Thatcher to come on board and to kick-start Lancaster House, get an agreement and bring Rhodesia to independence -- a fact that had to await, literally, the end of the decade and the beginning of the '80s to become a full and solid fact. But it would not have happened in the way it happened -- so Africa wouldn't have been the same -- without Henry's intervention on this key point. I was pleased to have been with it.

When I returned to Washington in December, at the end of the Administration, my last weeks with Kissinger, I remember Andy Young coming to my office and saying I needed to get ready for the fact there was going to be a big shift and either I was part of that shift and I started working well with the incoming crowd or, if I stuck to working closely with

Mr. Kissinger who was still my boss, I would not be part of the new team. So be it I said to myself. When the Democrats came and Carter was sworn in, Vance became Secretary, my days in Southern Africa were numbered. But in a very interesting manner, very generous manner, Secretary Vance asked me to come up and join his new Executive Secretary Peter Tarnoff, my old friend from Vietnam days, as Peter's deputy executive secretary and to keep an eye on these African issues.

EDWARD GIBSON LANPHER
Political Officer
London (1977-1982)

Deputy Chief of Mission
Harare (1982-'1986)

Ambassador Lanpher was Born in Richmond, Virginia in 1942 and graduated from Brown. He entered the Foreign Service in 1966. He served in numerous posts including Tel Aviv, Libreville, London, Harare and Canberra. He was named Ambassador to Zimbabwe in 1991. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2002.

LANPHER: Mid-'79. At the end of 1978, I had been traveling with George McGovern and a couple members of his staff in Africa for about three weeks. We had been all up and down Africa, including to Rhodesia and Angola and all sorts of places. But we finished up that trip in December 1978, passing through London. McGovern and I went in to brief our then ambassador in London, Kingman Brewster, on our trip because he was keenly interested particularly in the Southern Africa dimension because it was a big issue in the UK. The Africa fellow in London in the political section was an old friend of mine, Ray Seitz, who later became ambassador to London. Ray and Kingman took me aside after our meeting and said, "We'd like you to come to London next summer and replace Ray Seitz," who had been there four years. I said, "Well, that sounds kind of attractive." They allowed as how they had been plying this for some time and had the concurrence of the Assistant Secretary for Africa. So, it was sort of a done deal. It was a surprise to me. But as it worked out, I did go to London in August 1979 about two weeks before the Rhodesian negotiations began in September.

Q: You were there from '79 until when?

LANPHER: '82.

Q: Let's talk about it. What was the status when you got there of the Rhodesian negotiations?

LANPHER: We had been working very closely with the British for at least three or four

years. As I arrived in London in August 1979, because of all sorts of pressures – the war was dragging on – the British had convinced all parties to come to London in September for an all-parties negotiation of a settlement. Those negotiations began about the 10th of September and they went on for 105 days, morning, noon, and night, weekends, no time off. My role was to represent the United States. We weren't a formal part of the Lancaster House Conference in the sense that we were not a direct party. It was chaired by the British foreign secretary, Lord Carrington, and all the Rhodesian parties, black and white, were represented at the conference. Our role was to be supportive of the British toward the edges of the conference and to intervene where we thought it was the right thing to do and in support of the British. So, I was the American in London during that period. It was literally a 24 hour a day job. I'd be out meeting with the various African parties and representatives of Rhodesia's neighboring states, the Zambians, the Mozambicans, or the South Africans, in the middle of the night in strange places around London. I think we played a fairly major and key supporting role at that conference. And the British were devoting 100% effort to this conference. They were going to put Rhodesia behind them one way or the other. So, Carrington did nothing but Rhodesia for three or four months. Mrs. Thatcher had to be kept on board. She was the Prime Minister. She didn't much like black communists, as I recall. But the British ran a very clever and very tough conference. They brought all their intelligence resources out of Africa and devoted them to working the streets of London. They tapped everybody's phone. They were on top of this like a blanket. There was an impasse over the issue of the future constitution in the first part of October. At this point, the Secretary General of the Commonwealth, who was keenly involved, Sonny Ramphal, called me up and said, "Come over. I need to talk." He said, "I've been in touch with all the parties. The British are being too tough and this conference could break down. I think it's time that the United States made an intervention here with black parties." I said, "Okay. Let me talk to Washington." At the same time, the British came to me and said, "We think we're having a bit of a problem here. Maybe you should intervene." One of the problems was on the issue of land and aid to a future independent state. Working with Washington over a period of about 48 hours, working closely with the Africa Bureau, Tony Lake, Andy Young and the NSC, we put together an intervention instruction that was actually signed off by President Carter. I was asked to deliver it to Mugabe and Nkomo, which I did in Sonny Ramphal's living room in his private house. I had no notetaker with me. Kingman Brewster was entirely supportive of this whole effort and I kept him closely informed. He offered his help in many occasions. When people got out of line in Washington, he'd call his college roommate, Mr. Vance, and problems were solved back in Washington. I sat down with Mugabe and Nkomo and made this U.S. offer, if you will, the essence of which was, "If this conference is successful and a new democratically elected government emerges, we will be very, very generous in terms of aid." It was conditional. It had to be a democratically successful outcome and everything like that. I remember Mugabe and Nkomo questioning me closely on this. They said, "This aid, will you buy out the white farmers?" I said, "No. We will be very generous in terms of reconstruction aid, clinics, hospitals, schools, cattle dips, and development assistance, but the American taxpayer was not going to be in the business of buying out white farmers." They didn't like that answer. This must have gone on for an hour and a half and they came at me every which way. I said, "Well, President Carter has instructed me to make this offer. We're not going

to be in a position to buy out white farmers.” This stuck in their craw. Finally, I had to ad hoc it and explain to them in very simple terms that to the extent that we are supportive of building schools and hospitals and everything else, “Your people won’t. That will free up resources from the new government of Zimbabwe to do with what you want.” The fungibility concept. Half a light went on and then it got fuller and fuller as they understood what I was saying. It had never occurred to them. I guess way back in about 1975, Kissinger had talked about setting up an international fund, supported by the U.S. and others, to buy out white farmers. This had stuck in their minds all these years. They kept asking me about this Kissinger fund. I said, “Understand, gentlemen, Henry Kissinger is not Secretary of State today. That idea is dead. I’m representing Mr. Vance and Mr. Carter.” They got it and it gave them enough of a hook and a sense of commitment that about two days later they agreed to the British constitutional proposal. In their public statement, they said some flattering things about the U.S. having given assurances that made this possible or words to that effect. Our intervention was constructive. Ultimately after independence, in the first four or five years of independence, we did deliver over \$350 million worth of aid.

Q: What was your reading of Mugabe and Nkomo?

LANPHER: Let’s start with Nkomo. His movement had been based on primarily the Ndebele people of southwestern Rhodesia. He had been based in exile. He was an old union leader going back to the ‘50s and ‘60s. He was an enormous man, huge, tall, fat, everything. He had been based in Lusaka, Zambia, and supported heavily by the Soviet Union and other countries, but primarily the Soviet Union. I first met him in March 1978 on a visit to Lusaka just after he had survived an assassination attempt by the Rhodesians. Joshua was a wheeler dealer. They used to say facetiously about Joshua that you can’t buy Nkomo, but you can rent him on a short-term basis. But he was a wheeler dealer and somewhat of an opportunist. He was a grand old man of the liberation movement.

Mugabe, by contrast, had spent a lot of time in Ian Smith’s jails. He got out in about 1976 and fled the country, went to Mozambique. His party, the ZANU, had had a fairly stormy history of people getting killed, assassinated, within the party. There were constant fights for control of the party. And Mugabe emerged as the leader in ‘76/’77. I always thought he emerged because he was the most acetic of the bunch. The others were sort of boozers, womanizers, and some of them thugs and not terribly articulate for the most part. Mugabe was acetic. He wasn’t a womanizer or a boozier. He was very articulate. But he wasn’t a politician in the way most people regard a politician. He had real problems, and I observed this throughout my association with that country... He was always very formal. He didn’t appear to have any close friends. He wasn’t a back slapper or a schmoozer. I always guessed that he emerged because he was the cleanest of the bunch. But he was also clearly ruthless. He had enemies eliminated. There were allegations going way back that he had enemies within the party silenced. But I never had the sense – and this is with the benefit of some hindsight – that he was in any way committed to a democratic outcome. I think he was committed to achieving power by whatever means. I think a democratic election was very definitely a second best alternative from his point of view. He would rather have come to power through the gun, the bullet, as opposed to the ballot.

But as it turned out, he was compelled. The British put a squeezeplay on. Everybody put a squeezeplay on. The neighboring states, particularly Mozambique, where Mugabe had been in exile in the end, put the squeeze on Mugabe and forced him into signing this Lancaster House accord in the middle of December.

It really got down to the end in early to mid-December. Everything had been agreed and we all thought that we were going to have a signing. Everything had been agreed to the point where the British had come to me about two weeks earlier and said to me, "We think we're going to make it, but if we're going to make it (and there was an elaborate transition period built into this draft agreement), we're going to have to get our troops and the Commonwealth troops there in a hurry for this transition period and election monitoring period. We can't lose any momentum. But we don't have the airlift for it. Can we get airlift from you all?" I said, "I'll find out." We organized a military airlift and had all the planning begin and everything. We told the British we'd have to charge them for it and they said, "Fine." But we gave the okay in principal. But we got down to the last week and Mugabe and his party began to balk. They were unhappy with this and that. Finally, I recall, it was a Friday night in that Christmas party season, and I was at a Christmas party, I guess at the embassy, and my beeper went off and I had two phone calls, one from Sunny Ramphal, the Secretary General of the Commonwealth, and the second from the British, saying, "It looks like things are falling apart. Nkomo is now threatening to walk out. Mugabe is threatening to walk out." Ramphal said, "You need to see Joshua Nkomo as soon as possible. Find out what's bothering him. See what you can do about it." So, I asked the British, and I guess I must have talked to Washington as well, and I had some very good, supportive fellows back in Washington. One was Jerry Funk at the NSC, the Africa guy there; and country director for Southern Africa, Paul Hare; and then Moose and his people. I spent most of the night on the phone. I worked it out so that I would see Joshua Nkomo first thing on Saturday morning at a hotel where was staying. I went to see Nkomo. It was just the two of us. He was sitting there with his chief stick, pounding it in his hand. We went back and forth for the better part of an hour. He was grumbling about the British and these pressure tactics. Finally, I don't know exactly what I said, but I talked a good line, "You can't sacrifice the boys in the bush just because of some petty issue. Peace is still important and the future of your country is too important." The usual. Finally, I got down to business with him after letting him blow off steam and said, "What is it that you want that will make it easier for you to sign this agreement on Monday?" He hemmed and hawed. Finally, I got his bottom line, which was, one more assembly point for his guerrillas in the central part of the country. The way it had been agreed at that point was that these assembly points were going to be on the periphery. Thinking politically, he wanted to have an assembly point in the center. So, I said, "Fine. I'll see what I can do about that." So, I went back to my office in the embassy. It was kind of a dramatic weekend. I was exhausted. When I got to the embassy, there in the lobby was the chief of protocol for ZANU, Mugabe's party, with a wad of passports, about 15 of them. I said to him, Peter Chenetsa, "What are you doing here, Peter?" I knew all these characters by this time. He said, "We're leaving the conference. We want visas to go to New York to present our case to the United Nations." I said, "Peter, that's a mistake." But he wasn't a policy official. I said, "That's a big mistake. You'll have to come back on Monday. Our consular section is closed down –

can't issue visas over the weekend. We have rules against that." I was sort of gilding the truth here a little bit. But I got rid of him. I went to my office and called the British and told them what I had gotten out of Nkomo, his bottom line, and that the ZANU were serious about leaving, that I had just thrown their chief of protocol out of the embassy and that they had to get on to Mugabe and stop this nonsense. The Brits were very appreciative. They instructed their then-governor and military chief, who were already down in Salisbury, Rhodesia, at this point, to go to the Rhodesians and get one more assembly point. The British later told me it was very difficult down in Salisbury, but they prevailed and got the assembly point. As far as Mugabe was concerned, the British did a very wise thing. I can't remember if I recommended it. I think I did, but I think they would have figured it out on their own. And that was that they had to get the Mozambican president, Samora Machel, to intervene with Mugabe and tell him to sign the damned document. The Mozambicans had a 28 year old diplomat in London who was probably the best diplomat in London at the time, Fernando Honwana, who I had introduced to the British and they had worked very closely with him. That Saturday afternoon, the British got onto Honwana, told him what the situation was, and asked if he could get his president to intervene. As I learned later, that's exactly what happened. Honwana called Machel and Machel got on the phone to Mugabe and said, in essence, "If you don't sign, all you'll have in Mozambique is a house in exile. You will sign." And they initialed the agreement on the Monday and the formal signing was set up for the Thursday. And it worked. The Mozambicans played a very key role. This young 28 year old, who I had gotten very close to – I'd be in his hotel room late at night and the phone would ring, Machel asking, "What the hell's going on? Give me a progress report." He was that close to his president. Sadly, both this young fellow, Honwana, and Machel died in an air crash in 1986. Very sad.

Q: How about the Ian Smith side? Did you have much to do with that?

LANPHER: I didn't have a lot to do with them. Number one, that was the side of the negotiations that the British handled pretty exclusively. This was agreed. The Smith people were pretty hostile to the U.S. One of the interesting vignettes out of Lancaster House was that Jesse Helms back here in the Senate didn't much care for what was going on in London and he didn't want to see his white friends there disenfranchised. So, Jesse Helms made every effort he could to play a spoiler role at that conference. It was quite incredible. One day coming back from lunch at the foreign office I looked out the cab window and saw two of Jesse Helms' key staff members, John Carbaugh and Jim Lucier, on the sidewalk right outside the Ritz Hotel. I got the cab to stop and jumped out and went over to these two, who I had known from my battles on the Hill. I said, "What are you guys doing here in London?" They said, "Oh, we're here to advise Ian Smith and his side. We don't want to see this conference succeed." I said, "We're on opposite sides of the fence on this one." But there they were in London. I called the British and said, "Are you aware?" They said, "We've just become aware that they are here. We want them out of here, but we can't do much about it." So, I went back to the embassy and sent a cable back to Washington, one of these NODIS cables, "These guys are here trying to play a spoiler role. Is there anything we can do to get them out?" I had a call that evening or early the next morning from Dick Moose, the Assistant Secretary, saying, "When your

cable on Carbaugh and Lucier hit Mr. Vance's desk, he had to be scraped off the ceiling. He was hopping mad." He was following the negotiations very closely, reading every cable out of London and everywhere else. Vance had had problems with Carbaugh and Lucier on the Panama Canal treaties, on SALT, on Central America policy, and other things. And here they were, screwing up Rhodesia. But according to Moose, and I don't have this except by hearsay, apparently, Vance just went ballistic. He was a very calm man. I had known him for several years. He had offered me the job as his executive assistant on one occasion when I was in Commercial Relations. But he apparently told his staff to clear his schedule, get his car, he was going to the Hill. He went up to the Hill and grabbed Senator Javits and maybe a couple of others and briefed them on what was going on and got the Senate to get to Jesse Helms and order his aides out of London. It was a personal intervention by Vance that got them out. That's just a vignette.

Q: This was the time of the Cold War. There was always this thing about Africa about communist influence and red arrows pointing from Africa from one country to another. How seriously was the communist/Soviet issue during this? How were we treating that?

LANPHER: With the benefit of hindsight, certainly we got fairly worked up as a country, as a government, over Soviet, Chinese, and Cuban activities in Africa I would say in about 1974 or in '75 with the collapse of the Portuguese empire in Africa - Mozambique, Angola - the Soviets, East Germans, Cubans coming in. I think Kissinger as Vietnam disappeared from the landscape or into the wreckage and as SALT - this was 1975 - wasn't going to happen on his watch, problems with the Soviets... Kissinger fastened on Africa and the Soviets and the Cubans - this was in 1975 - and got fairly deeply involved, made several trips to Africa and was quite serious about containing this menace. If you recall, and I worked on it later when I was country director for Southern Africa in the late '80s, we finally in December 1988 achieved an agreement on Angola that had the Cubans withdraw. They were there a long time. They were in Ethiopia. But we got them out of Angola. I think we signed the agreement at the UN a day or two days before Christmas in '88. That was in the Reagan administration.

Q: During these Lancaster House negotiations, were the Soviets playing any role?

LANPHER: I didn't talk to the Soviets in London. I was aware that there were Soviet diplomats chasing after, presumably advising, or at least staying well informed particularly with Joshua Nkomo's ZAPU party. British intelligence was watching the Soviets very carefully and were monitoring whatever they could monitor in London at the time. The Chinese and others were advising, consulting with, staying abreast, of what was happening in Mugabe's party. The Chinese had been primarily supportive of ZANU. But the British stayed in pretty firm control. The long and short of it is, I'm not sure what the Soviets and the Chinese did in terms of influence with either ZAPU or ZANU at Lancaster House.

Q: But anyway, they weren't a major factor.

LANPHER: I don't think so.

Q: After this time, I hope you got a day or two off to meet your family again.

LANPHER: Well, it was interesting. As a matter of fact, the agreement was initialed on a Monday, and the formal agreement was to be signed on Thursday. In the natural course of events, I would have been at the signing ceremony. I was invited. But as soon as we got the initials on the agreement on Monday, the British wanted to launch the airlift. We got an execute order. It would have been on the Tuesday night, the first of our planes came into RAF Brise Norton northwest of London up in Oxfordshire. The Brits had all their gear and their people ready to go. I was asked to go down on this airlift. We had a liaison fellow in Salisbury. I was to go down and liaise with him and the British governor, Lord Soames. Our man in Salisbury was my old friend Jeff Davidow, who's now just leaving as ambassador to Mexico. So, I went up to Brise Norton and rode down to Salisbury on a C5 Galaxy with six big helicopters in the belly of the plane and 60 crewmen upstairs. It was quite a sight to have a C5 land in Salisbury. I think it was 26 or 28 flights into Salisbury within 36 hours and Salisbury had never seen a show like that.

Q: You're pointing out one of the foreign policy weapons that we had, which was the ability with the U.S. military to call upon these airlifts. It's not just there but all over. Nobody else can do this. Way back in the Congo when they did parachute drops of Belgian paratroopers in Operation Dragon Rouge, there were American planes. The airlift capacity is a significant part of our foreign policy in so many places.

LANPHER: I think you're right. Certainly the British when they came to me two or three weeks before the end of the conference and said, "We just think we might," but for budgetary reasons, we got rid of their Britannias, their long-range RAF transports. They said, "We got rid of our Britannias back in the early '70s or something like that. We don't have the lift capability. The biggest planes we have now are C130s. We've got to move a lot of men and a lot of equipment very quickly. We just don't have the capacity to do it." If they had done it by ship or by slow plane or whatever, they would have lost the momentum and they thought it was very important to have the momentum, outnumbered as they were going to be, with a show of force right up front. It was an impressive show of force. There were 5,000 people out at the Salisbury airport that weekend with their jaws hanging down. When a C5 comes in, it kneels down, the front comes up, and out come six helicopters ready to go. One of the first planes in this was an Air Lift Control Element plane. A C141 comes in and sets up satellite dishes and drags a Coke machine out from the belly of the plane. The Americans are here and they're in charge. They know what they're doing. It was the British in charge, but we made it possible. And it was an impressive show as those planes rolled in. They had never seen anything like it. And it sent a message that this is a serious operation. So, I think you're right. The fact that we do have that lift capability... Well, we see it in Afghanistan. We've seen it every place.

Q: This is a good place to stop for now. We're in December of '79.

Today is September 5, 2002. We've got you in December 1979. You have landed in Salisbury. What were you up to?

LANPHER: I was sent down there basically to hand the baton over to our man in Salisbury who was there sort of officially, sort of unofficially. He had been there for about three or four months. This was Jeff Davidow, who currently has just left his post as ambassador to Mexico. I went down and it was kind of an impressive show of force at the Salisbury airport. It was an auspicious beginning. Anyway, I passed the baton to Jeff, briefed him on a lot of the ins and outs of the Lancaster House conference, who was up, who was down, who the key players were that he should be working with. I was there for two or three days. Jeff and I went and called on the British governor, Lord Soames, and his deputy governor, Sir Anthony Duff. That was about it. I went back out to the airport two days later and grabbed a C141 to go back to London. After a refueling stop in Kenya, in Mombasa, we headed towards Cairo for our next refueling stop. This is a sidebar. But I heard a pop when I was sitting in the cockpit. I said to the pilot, "What was that?" He said, "That was one of our engines blowing up." I said, "Well, are we going to turn around and go back." He said, "We'll go into Cairo." About half an hour further along, I heard another pop and I said, "What was that?" He said, "That was another engine blowing." I said, "Now what are we going to do?" He said, "We're going back to Mombasa." Anyway, I wound up getting back to London on Christmas Eve, so that was a good thing.

The transition period was set for about two months with elections to be held at the end of February. It was a short electoral period. The British wanted it short, knowing it was going to be very difficult to keep all the parties in the agreement. When they saw how they thought they were going to do on the ground, somebody might back out, and go back to the bush. So, it was a very tense time. The British did an admirable job of what you and I would call "deception." They lied to all the parties. They'd meet with the parties separately and say, "Our polls indicate that you're going to win." Then they'd tell the next guy, "You're going to win." But ultimately, they kept all the parties in, although it was very close at times. And they had other problems like getting the South Africans out of the country. They had some troops in Rhodesia. The British conduct of the transition period raised a lot of hackles among the frontline states like Tanzania and Zambia. The British were very tough. They weren't nice. They were going to put this problem behind them. There were any number of Security Council meetings on the conduct of the transition period. There were resolutions condemning the British in the Security Council. We really got into it with the British because my ambassador and I in London knew, and our man in Salisbury, Jeff Davidow, knew full well that there was no alternative to the British conduct of this transition period. Whatever the British did, we had to back them up, that was our view. There were people back in Washington, however, people like Don McHenry, Andy Young, Tony Lake, and Dick Moose, who took a different view. We really got into it with Washington over these Security Council resolutions. We unfortunately abstained on a resolution and let it pass rather than vetoing it, which I believe we should have. I'll never forget, the next morning, I got a call from the deputy acting head of the Rhodesia department, Charles Powel, who later went on to become Mrs. Thatcher's national security advisor. This was the morning after this vote. He said,

“The Secretary of State, Lord Carrington, has asked me to pass along a message to you from him and asks that you pass it on to Washington.” It was words to the effect, “I see you joined up with the fucking Tanzanians.” I passed it on to Washington in a NODIS message. In the end, the elections were held and Mugabe won. There were 80 contested seats and he won 57 of them. Joshua Nkomo won 20. Muzawewa won two or three. That was about it. They had a midnight flag lowering at the Harare, then Salisbury Stadium, Rufaro Stadium, and that was it. Soames did a good job of working on Mugabe when the election results were announced. Mugabe - that was then, not now - was persuaded to give a speech of reconciliation. I was in London for that period. It was as difficult in many ways as the Lancaster House conference had been.

Q: At least from the perspective of London, did we get involved in nation building in Zimbabwe?

LANPHER: Yes. Following up on our pledges at Lancaster House that if the process were successful we would move fast and with lots of money in terms of reconstruction assistance, cattle, schools, clinics, you name it. So, I had a steady stream of visitors from Washington as we tried to put some flesh on the bones and worked with the British on this and with the other members of the Commonwealth. Starting with the transition period but over the next six months until we got an AID mission established on the ground in Harare, much of that activity, discussions, coordination, took place in London. I was heavily involved in that.

Q: In '82, you left in the summer.

LANPHER: I left in the summer of '82 and went down to then Harare, formerly Salisbury, to replace Jeff Davidow as DCM.

Q: Who was our ambassador?

LANPHER: Bob Keeley, a career guy.

Q: He had Uganda experience and all this.

LANPHER: Yes. And I think Mauritius as well.

Q: You were there from when to when?

LANPHER: I was there from July '82 to July '86.

Q: Wow, a long time.

LANPHER: Yes. Four years.

Q: What was the situation like when you arrived?

LANPHER: When I arrived, I overlapped with Jeff Davidow for about a week. Keeley was on vacation. I went around and met a lot of people. A lot of people I had already known from Lancaster House. Then Jeff left and I was chargé. I was chargé until about the end of August. After I had been there on my own for about 10 days, we had a very bad Friday. First, I got word that a group of tourists had been taken hostage on the road between Bulawayo and Victoria Falls. There were British, Australian, and American tourists. The next day, the women were released and sadly, the six young men who were on one of these trucks, safaris, through Africa, we never found their bodies for about three years. That consumed an awful lot of time over three years.

Q: What was the motivation? What was going on?

LANPHER: I don't believe it was political. I think it was criminal. But there were armed bands of people left over from the war. There were a lot of guns in the country. It turned out that it was a bunch of bad guys that did this. We didn't find them for three years. We worked closely with the government of Zimbabwe. We had outside advisors hired by the parents of the American young men. I worked with the central intelligence organization in Zimbabwe, met with them daily and weekly for three years on this and turning over every rock, nook, and cranny. It was very sad. Finally one day three years later, I got a phone call from CIO saying, "We think we've found the bodies. Come with us." We went down into the most desolate part of Matabeleland, where there was still a bit of an insurgency on. We went in with an armed group and found the shallow graves that the hyenas had gotten into and there were bones and skulls and everything scattered over about one acre of this desolate bush country. They finally caught up with the guy who had been leader of the gang and put him on trial, sentenced him to death. One morning I was sitting in my office and my deputy director/CIO, a friend of mine, one of the old whites still in the organization, called me up and said, "Come on down to Harare Central Prison and help us hand the fellow." I begged off. I said I had had a bad Friday. That same Friday night, a commando group came in from South Africa to the central part of Zimbabwe and destroyed most of Zimbabwe's air force on the ground with satchel charges.

Q: What the hell was that about?

LANPHER: I don't know. I don't know why they did it. This was 1982. South Africans were in a pretty bloody minded sort of mood. They were messing around in Angola, of course. They didn't like the rhetoric coming out of Harare. There were some planes sitting relatively unguarded, the Zimbabwe air force on the ground, and they took them out. So, it was a bad beginning as chargé on that weekend.

Q: How did you find the government there at the beginning?

LANPHER: This was '82. The government was doing pretty decently. They still had a fair number of the old whites in the civil service. It was running fairly efficiently. Our aid program was up and running and running very well. We coordinated well with the government. And relations between the U.S. and Zimbabwe were pretty good. They

could be inept, the Zimbabweans, but overall not bad. In fact, overall, pretty good. Things went downhill a bit progressively between then and the time I left as DCM. The Zimbabweans started to feel their oats on things like supporting Danny Ortega in Nicaragua, later on Grenada. They were feeling their sovereignty on the international scene rather than minding the store at home progressively. They made some unfortunate remarks and took some unfortunate steps. When we had the 241 Marines blown up in Beirut, we (the embassy) and the bishop of Harare organized a memorial service and invited the diplomatic corps to it. The Zimbabweans, unfortunately, called around to other missions and said, "Boycott. Don't go. We haven't sanctioned this" as if it was their business. We had some progressively difficult times with the Zimbabweans. And we also got into a situation, rightfully so, where we were properly critical of the way they were handling what they called an "insurgency" in Matabeleland. It was pretty brutal repression and we said so. We put it in our Human Rights Report and we documented things pretty well. They didn't like that.

Q: Did you or Keeley have any sort of solid relationship with Mugabe?

LANPHER: No. I'd seen Mugabe quite often during the Lancaster House period. Nobody in the diplomatic corps had an ideal relationship with Mugabe. Yes, we had meetings with him. But they took a long time to arrange. He didn't see a lot of diplomats. He probably saw us and the British High Commissioner more than anybody else. But Mugabe was always a very formal, very correct fellow, very articulate. We took a number of congressional visitors in to see him and he was invariably polite, well dressed, and well mannered. But nobody had a warm and fuzzy relationship with Robert Mugabe. A distant, remote man.

Q: What about the people around him?

LANPHER: I researched this constantly trying to find out who was really close to him. I had my CIA station working on it. I went as far back as going back to talk to people who had gone to high school with him. As far as I could ever find out, he didn't have any close circle, a real kitchen cabinet. He didn't have a group of advisors either official or unofficial who at the end of the day he'd kick back with, put his feet up on the table, and ask them, "How am I doing?" He wasn't a boozier or anything like that, so there were no cold beers at the end of the day as far as we could ever tell. And I think that's true to this day. He has associates and he has people. But friends? Real buddies? I don't think so.

Q: What was your impression... Were we concerned about the writ of Harare getting out and around? Was the government imposing itself on the country?

LANPHER: He was elected in 1980. The election was about as free and fair as you can get. There was intimidation. He and his party had clearly put the word out at the time of the election that "If you don't vote for us, we're going back to war." But it was still an accurate reflection of popular sentiment. He had a lot of popularity. He had won the war. He was the leader. And there was never any question as to his popularity at that point. It was primarily based on his own Shona tribe and three or four subtribes within the Shonas.

But his percentage of the vote roughly equaled the Shona percentage of the population. Joshua Nkomo's party, their roughly 20 seats, represented the fact that they were about 20% of the population.

Q: What about the white farmers?

LANPHER: The white farmers at least through '86, if not through '98, were perhaps the chosen group in that society. The government didn't seriously mess with them. The white farmers up until '98 never had it so good, far better than during Ian Smith's time. There were occasional problems, but they made more money, they were secure, and the government was better. They'd buy their new Mercedes every year. They had tractors that they were getting through a commodity import program that we sponsored, brand new John Deeres with air conditioned cabs in one case that I recall. They would put up local currency and we would bring the tractor in. They lived terrifically well. Their tobacco auction floor was a model for auction floors elsewhere in the world. They computerized it, did everything. It was quite incredible. They did very well. I had a lot of friends in the farming community. I was invited countless times to go and talk to their monthly local meetings in outlying districts. Quite a remarkable community. I think during that period, up until '97/'98, although Mugabe would harrumph a lot about the land issue, he never really did anything about it. The government bought land on a willing seller-willing buyer basis. When a farm came up for sale, the government had the right of first refusal. Sometimes they bought it and sometimes they didn't. But it all worked pretty well. He was never into land reform. This is partly with the benefit of hindsight, but partly at the time, Mugabe, although he was not a chief in the traditional sense, viewed himself as a traditional chief/leader. In the traditional world, there was no free hold title. The chiefs controlled the land. Mugabe could never come to grips with the idea of free hold title deeds and everything that went with them. So they never really got into the land reform. They resettled about 50,000 people in 12 years on state land. But that was a drop in the bucket. He just wouldn't come to grips with the issue of title deeds. It was part of his chieflike patronage mentality, which continues to this day through all this problem. Of course, in the real world of real agriculture, if you don't have title to your property, you don't have any collateral and nobody's going to lend you any money for seeds or tractors or anything else. So, he was definitely part of the problem.

Q: How about the issue of Angola, South Africa, and all that? Would Zimbabwe turn on itself? Was it considered a frontline state still?

LANPHER: Very much so. Rhetorically, Mugabe was one of the lead South Africa bashers, but in point of fact, he did nothing about South Africa. In fact, I asked him once way back at Lancaster House in one of the few semi-casual conversations we ever had, "Assuming this process here at Lancaster House is successful and you get elected as the president of the new Zimbabwe, how are you going to deal with South Africa? Are you going to allow the South African ANC, the South African exiles, to establish guerrilla bases in Zimbabwe across the border from South Africa the way the Mozambicans let you operate bases from their territory?" I can't remember his exact words, but in effect, he said, "No" and went on to say, "In this world, you can pick your friends, but you have

to live with your neighbors.” So there was a degree of realism about what, if anything, tangible he could do. He also understood, and maybe not in the sort of detail you and I would understand, that because of its landlocked status and the turmoil in Mozambique, Zimbabwe was totally reliant on South Africa for imports and exports. Everything for Zimbabwe came in through Durban or Port Elizabeth, came up by train. Zimbabwe in those days - I talked to all the experts on this - needed about 20 trains a day from South Africa just to maintain its economic status quo.

Q: Did you get involved with South African diplomacy there?

LANPHER: Yes. We talked to the Zimbabweans about South Africa, tried to tell them what we were doing, what we were trying to do in South Africa in terms of affecting change. I wouldn't say it was terribly active. Of course, the South Africans had an embassy in Harare. We were more focused on seeing Zimbabwe succeed as a multiracial democratic state as an example for a future South Africa. That was sort of our thinking in those days. So we concentrated very heavily on that aid program. We more than lived up to our commitment at Lancaster House. In the first five years of independence, we put over \$350 million into Zimbabwe, a country at that time of about 10 million people. That was a lot of money. And those were bigger dollars in those days than they are now. And we thought our aid program was very successful and so did the Zimbabweans. We built teachers' colleges, hospitals, grain silos. We did good work.

Q: Were the Soviets messing around there at all?

LANPHER: It's funny, we opened our embassy the day the British flag came down. We had had people there on the ground, an interests section type of operation. The Zimbabweans didn't let the Soviets open an embassy for a bit over a year after independence because the Soviets had supported Joshua Nkomo and the ZAPU party. The Soviets never played much of a role after independence. First of all, they had no money for aid, so they weren't players there. The Chinese were much more influential and did have an aid program. The Cubans and all the other bad guys came in, everybody from the PLO to the Libyans to everybody else. But none of them really amounted to very much. The Chinese perhaps, along with the British and us, were probably the biggest and most influential. Also, as AID donors, the EU and World Bank were very important..

Q: Did these gestures of not supporting us on various things get shrugged off?

LANPHER: Well, for a while, they were shrugged off. But progressively they got under our skin in a pretty big way. I can't remember what the date was, but when that Korean airliner was shot down, Mugabe happened to be in the United States or traveling to the United States. There was a Security Council resolution pending. We pulled out all the stops to get Mugabe to vote with us on that issue. This was the Reagan administration. We got Andy Young to lean on him, to lobby him. Secretary George Shultz, after Mugabe had had a meeting in the White House, went to his hotel and asked for his vote. And Mugabe blew us off. After that, our aid levels started rapidly going down. The

incident in Beirut, Danny Ortega, began to be an accumulation of “in your face” behavior that got to us.

Q: What was the Danny Ortega...

LANPHER: He was a Third Worlder and Mugabe was in lock step. We were trying to get rid of him and Mugabe was solidly in his camp. And Mugabe did gratuitous things like go to Havana and thumb his nose at us. It was just annoying. He didn't play his cards very well. He could have gotten a lot more aid out of us if he had behaved himself a little better. And the final thing which led to a cutoff in our aid happened about a week or 10 days before I was to leave Zimbabwe in mid-July 1986. I was the chargé and had been chargé for over half the four years I was in Zimbabwe. On the Fourth of July 1986, I was having my usual July Fourth reception. Because it was winter and there was a chance of bad or cold weather, I always had it at the big hotel in Harare in the ballroom at lunchtime. I was never much for these receptions, but we did it out of tradition.

Coincidentally, I got word that former President Carter was going to be in Harare on a visit. He played a very important role at Lancaster House. He was sort of one of the godfathers of Zimbabwe's independence. So, I informed the ministry for foreign affairs he would be at the reception. The Zimbabweans had also organized an appointment for Carter for about 11:00AM with President Mugabe. Because the Zimbabweans had had at that point a recent history of sending ministers to speak at national day receptions and say stupid things, gratuitous things, I negotiated with the permanent secretary for foreign affairs an agreement that there wouldn't be any speeches, simply an exchange of traditional toasts and that Carter wouldn't be speaking, I wouldn't be speaking, and he agreed that the Zimbabwe side wouldn't speak. So, I had 350 people in this ballroom. Carter and his wife and daughter were there. It was one of those happy occasions. The manager of the hotel had had a cake as big as this table baked in the shape of the United States. Everything was very nice. Bars were open and booze was flowing and a happy time was being had by all. About a half an hour into it, I decided it was time that we did these toasts and got that over with. So, everybody did their toasts. I did a toast. Carter did a toast. I'm still up next to the podium. Carter and his wife had moved across maybe 20-30 feet away to be in the front row of the audience. And a Zimbabwe minister got up. I thought he was going to do the Zimbabwe toast to the good health of the people of the United States and so on. But he drew out of his pocket a sheaf of paper. He obviously had a prepared speech. This guy was the minister of youth, sport, and culture. He stood up and said he'd be delivering a speech on behalf of the foreign minister. I turned to the foreign secretary, Alex Mashangazi, and said, “Alex, we had an agreement: no speeches. What's going on here?” He was standing next to me. All Alex could do was look at his shoes. This guy started to speak. It was a prepared text. It was a vile diatribe against the United States, against the British, going after things that had been of interest to Carter, like Afghanistan, you name it, he threw the book at us. After about five minutes, I said to Alex, “This is nonsense.” We were all sort of stunned. Finally, I looked across the room at Carter. I was hot. People who know me know that I don't have a huge temper, but when I'm angry, I go cold. I looked at Carter and gave him a cold look. He caught my eye and he was steamed up, you could see. I nodded my head towards the door and Carter nodded back. So, I left. The podium was on the far side of the room from the door. I

started towards the door across this open space in front of the podium. As I got even with Carter, he and Rosalyn fell in behind me and everybody else in the room, save a few people that had probably had enough to drink, followed us out. And the minister kept speaking, droning on and on with this diatribe. So we walked out of our own July Fourth party. It was an incredible scene. It made the front page of all the British press. It made the front page of "The Washington Post," and "The New York Times." Both their reporters were there. And the Reuters guy and the BBC guy. The BBC guy called me up at the office later in the afternoon and said, "Thank you, Gib. That was the first time I've made the BBC domestic service in many years." But it was quite an event. We also got lead editorials out of the "Post" and the "Times" on subsequent days commending what we had done, having stood up for America. I suppose it probably helped get me promoted that year. Then 10 days later, I left the country. But I should say I went back to the office and obviously called Washington and sent in a written report of what had happened, what I had said, and the fact that I had communicated with the government that I expected a formal apology right then and that absent an apology, I would not be signing two aid agreements totaling \$16 million which I had been planning to sign the next Wednesday. I put this in a cable to Washington. It was one of those "unless otherwise instructed, this is what I have done and what I intend to do" and I never heard from Washington except by phone saying, "Hey, we're with you, man." So, I didn't sign over the aid. As a matter of fact, Washington decided to totally suspend our aid program. It stayed suspended for about a year, a year and a half. I, actually as country director for Southern Africa, which was my ongoing assignment, got the aid program restarted. But it turned out that as far as we could tell, and I had our intelligence people look into this, we came to the conclusion based on all sorts of information that Mugabe had had no wind of this speech, hadn't authorized it, and that this had been the work of his foreign minister, a complete idiot. I discovered years after I retired from the service, on a later trip to Zimbabwe for the International Crisis Group as a consultant, who had written that speech that was read that day. It turned out it was a white in the foreign ministry that was still around. He was a very skillful writer.

Q: What was his motivation? I assume he was British.

LANPHER: I think he was born in Zimbabwe. In fact, certainly in the year 2000, he was still in the government and had risen to the rank of Secretary for Commerce and Industry or something like that. He had been a member of the old Rhodesian foreign service. Quite incredible.

Q: If you don't sign an aid agreement, what happens to the aid apparatus and all that?

LANPHER: In this case, we suspended our aid, suspended any new aid. But we had a lot in the pipeline that had already been signed over and we continued to deliver that aid. We had already cut our aid program back quite substantially, but we had ongoing programs such as family planning, child spacing. It was a very effective program. So none of the ongoing programs were stopped cold. We just didn't put any new money into anything for about a year and a half.

Q: At that point, AIDS...

LANPHER: As I was leaving Zimbabwe in '86, maybe '85, we first started hearing about AIDS. It was a big thing in San Francisco in those days. But we weren't hearing very much locally. Yes, there was some AIDS. But it wasn't a priority for us. We didn't have an AIDS program. I will say, when I went back to Zimbabwe at the end of 1991 as ambassador, I quickly discovered how many of my old contacts were dying or had already died of AIDS. I told my AID director then in the first week I was back in Harare in November 1991 that we were going to have an AIDS component of our AID program or we weren't going to have an AID program, period. It was clear that the disease was galloping. Parenthetically today, somewhere between 25 and 30% of the adult population of Zimbabwe is HIV positive, really tragic.

DONALD PETTERSON

**State Department; Director, Office of Southern African Affairs
Washington, DC (1978)**

Ambassador Donald Petterson was born in California in 1930. Petterson served in the US Navy for four years before graduating from the University of California Santa Barbara. Petterson joined the Foreign Service in 1960 and has served overseas in Mexico, Tanzania, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, South Africa and as ambassador to Somalia, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, and Sudan. In Washington, DC Petterson served on the Policy Planning Staff and as a deputy assistant secretary in the African Bureau. Ambassador Petterson was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy and Lambert Heyniger in 1996.

PETTERSON: Tony wanted to keep me in Policy Planning, but that spring I was asked to become the director of the Office of Southern African Affairs, which was the busiest office in the African Bureau, and one of the busiest in all the State Department. The countries for which we had responsibility in AF/S were Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, South Africa, Mozambique, Rhodesia, and Namibia. South Africa, Rhodesia, and Namibia were all big issues, and all demanded a lot of work and a lot of time. I was fortunate to have very able desk officers, people like Jeffrey Davidow, who had worked in my political section in South Africa, and who was an enormously - [laughter] he was an enormous guy, about six foot six or so - enormously talented officer, with great personal and intellectual skills. He went on to become, eventually, assistant secretary of state for Latin America Affairs, and he is now ambassador to Mexico. My deputy was Dennis Keogh, who also was very able and who later would be killed in a terrorist bombing in Namibia.

The administration actively pursued and negotiated settlements for Rhodesia and Namibia. I became closely associated with Assistant Secretary of State Richard Moose. He had started out in the administration as under secretary for management, but moved

over to take the African portfolio. Wayne Fredericks, who had been a deputy assistant secretary in the African bureau during the Kennedy administration and had worked in Africa for the Ford Foundation, had been offered the position. But he was hit by a car while crossing a street in London. In the hospital, he felt too incapacitated to accept the assistant secretary job. He later regretted his decision because he fully recovered.

Q: I was a desk officer in the African Bureau several years before, when Soapy Williams was Assistant Secretary, and Wayne Fredericks was his principal Deputy-

PETTERSON: Yes. Wayne was a very able person. Because of the immediacy and prominence of African issues, especially southern African issues, the administration wanted a replacement for Fredericks right away, and Dick Moose was chosen.

Moose and I traveled to London a number of times for talks with British Foreign Secretary David Owen on the Rhodesia question. I also traveled a great deal with Ambassador Donald McHenry. The United States and the other Western members of the UN Security Council, which then were West Germany, Britain, France, and Canada, joined together in an effort to negotiate with South Africa for Namibia's independence. Don McHenry, who was the deputy U.S. permanent representative to the United Nations, was another extraordinarily capable person from whom I learned a lot. He was a superb negotiator. We traveled together several times to Africa, participating in talks in various eastern and southern African capitals, talking to government leaders, getting ideas, enlisting support for the efforts of the "Gang of Five" (as the Security Council negotiating team was called). Because McHenry was so able, and hard working as well, by tacit agreement of the other members of the Gang of Five (who recognized his abilities), he was our lead negotiator. It was interesting to see him in talks with John Vorster, the very gruff Afrikaner prime minister. Strangely enough, the two learned to appreciate each other. It was obvious that Vorster came to admire McHenry. And Don told me one day, "You know, I kind of like the old son of a bitch!" [Laughter]

Q: What's going on here?

PETTERSON: The senators and other conservatives were displeased that the administration was not keen to issue a visa to Ian Smith, who was the white prime minister of Rhodesia and who wanted to visit the United States at that time. So the four senators put a hold on my nomination and that of two other Foreign Service officers who were waiting to get confirmed. However, before long, the administration decided to give Smith a visa, not because of this holdup on the nominations, but for other reasons. Hayakawa, Garn, and Hatch lifted their holds on all three nominations, but Jesse Helms kept his hold on mine. It seems that he and his staff had concluded that I was the architect of the Carter administration's southern African policy, which they did not like. So I went up on the Hill to meet with Helms' staff aides and try to disabuse them, and through them Helms, of that notion. During our talk, Helms' principal staffer on the committee, John Carbo, he said that I seemed like a nice guy, that he was sure I had a nice family, that I had a nice suit on, but [laughter] they didn't like the southern African policy, and I was the guy who had made that policy.

I said, “Wait a minute!”

Q: [Laughter]

PETTERSON: I said, “What about Secretary Vance? What about Andy Young, (who was then UN ambassador and who very much was involved in policy making)?” I said, “What about Don McHenry? Tony Lake? Dick Moose?”

Their response was, “Nope, you.”

So I left the Hill with a hold still on my nomination, very upset. My parents were coming out from California, and Julie and I had begun to make arrangements for the move to Somalia, and there I was, stuck!

Well, fortunately for me, Vice President Mondale, with whom I had worked with a bit and who seemed to like me, and Secretary Vance came to my rescue and managed to get Helms to back off.

ROBERT V. KEELEY
AF, Deputy Assistant Secretary
Washington, DC (1978-1980)

Ambassador
Harare (1980-1984)

Ambassador Robert V. Keeley was born in Lebanon of American parents in 1929. He joined the Foreign Service in 1956. His career included positions in Jordan, Mali, Uganda, Cambodia, and ambassadorships to Greece, Mauritius, and Zimbabwe. Ambassador Keeley was interviewed by Thomas Stern in 1991

KEELEY: At the end of my first year in Mauritius I got a message from Assistant Secretary for Africa Dick Moose. I knew him from when he had worked for Senator Fulbright, and I had helped him and his partner Jim Lowenstein with an inquiry they had made for Fulbright's committee into the situation in Greece in 1971. I had seen him at a Chiefs of Mission Conference in Abidjan. He told me that I would have to come back to Washington to help him in the African Bureau as one of his deputies. I told him I would be very happy to do that, but that I had been in Mauritius for only one year and I thought it was wrong to shorten tours too greatly. I was just getting to learn something about the place. I told him I would be delighted to return to Washington if he let me finish my full two years. Sure enough, just as my second anniversary was about to come up, I got a message from Moose telling me to get back to Washington. He wanted me to take over supervision of the southern Africa office as his number two deputy. Bill Harrop was

number one deputy and Lannon Walker was number four. Number three was Vernon Johnson, who had been our AID director in Uganda when I served there. So I returned to the Department and was in that job in the AF Bureau from late 1978 to mid-1980.

Q: That Office covered which countries?

KEELEY: The southern Africa office covered South Africa, Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland, Mozambique, Angola, Rhodesia, Namibia (or Southwest Africa), Zambia and Malawi. I was primarily concerned with three of them: Rhodesia and Namibia (both were decolonization problems) and South Africa. Marginally I was also involved with Angola and Mozambique. The others were really not on the front burner. To divide it percentage-wise, it was 60% Rhodesia, less than 30% Namibia, and about 10% South Africa because South Africa was not progressing very rapidly, though we had continuing problems over sanctions, possible nuclear developments, human rights issues, and a lot of other things.

My focus was essentially on Rhodesia because there was a war going on there and we were engaged in a major effort to try to find a solution to the problem. That solution was eventually found, not by us so much as by the British. In the summer of 1979 Dick Moose told me that I would also have to take charge of East Africa, in addition to southern Africa, because Tanzanian troops and Ugandan exiles had marched into Uganda and had thrown Idi Amin out. As I had been the last American official out of Uganda, Moose wanted me to return to that problem to figure out what we should do.

It was a very sticky situation. We had to decide whether we wanted to reopen an Embassy in Kampala. I got stuck with that problem. I explained to Moose that I had one major problem with his reorganization: I not only inherited Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda, but Somalia and Ethiopia as well. Also, there was always a threat of a civil war in the Sudan. I thought that the span was just too much; I was covering all of Africa from the Sudan and the Horn down the East Coast to South Africa and up through Namibia and Angola. That was a major part of the Continent. As it turned out, I still had to focus primarily on Rhodesia and to a lesser extent on Namibia because they were the "hot spots."

Q: What were our major interests in Rhodesia in the late 70s?

KEELEY: In the first place, there was a war that was threatening to spill over into other areas. It was, to some extent, part of the East-West conflict in that the guerrillas, ZANU and ZAPU (the Mugabe and Nkomo people), were getting most of their assistance from the Eastern Bloc. Nkomo and ZAPU were headquartered in Zambia, Mugabe and ZANU in Mozambique. Mozambique and Angola were considered Soviet satellites at that time. So the struggle was seen as an East-West issue, though that was a serious oversimplification.

One of our main concerns was the effect the Rhodesia situation would have on South Africa. Looking at it in perhaps a somewhat idealistic perspective, we thought that if a solution could be found for Rhodesia which might transform it peacefully and

democratically into a black-majority ruled country although still populated by some whites, that this would be an example for potential developments in South Africa. South Africa was the dominant country in that part of Africa and was of greatest concern to the U.S. because of its size, its wealth, its strategic location and its strategic minerals. In terms of the rest of Africa, it is the major country. It is the industrialized country; it has an enormous mining industry; it is rich agriculturally; it is rich in human resources. I don't want to say that Rhodesia was a sideshow to South Africa; on the contrary, it was the immediate problem.

The British had major responsibility for the problem because Rhodesia had been a British crown colony, which had declared its independence against Britain's wishes. We worked closely with the British. The issue attracted the attention of the new President Carter, who may have been somewhat influenced by Andrew Young, who was close to the President and was our Ambassador to the U.N. The U.N. played a role in the Rhodesia affair via international sanctions, and an even greater role in Namibia, because the latter was really a ward of the U.N. at the time. So there were a lot of reasons for being interested in Rhodesia.

Q: In retrospect, what lessons did you draw from the departure of colonial powers from Africa, with particular reference to the way it was done and the problems that created?

KEELELEY: That is a major subject and has no easy answers. For one, the transition from a colonial regime to an independent one ruled by an indigenous majority is much easier if there is no settler population. That is not strictly a racial issue, although the settlers were generally white. Serious problems have arisen universally in the decolonization process under those circumstances. Take Kenya with the Mau-Mau rebellion: large settler population, difficult transition. Uganda had no settlers: easy transition. Angola and Mozambique required actual civil guerrilla wars and revolution against Portuguese rule because there was a very large settler element, despite its non-racist character. Algeria is an even better example; it was actually a part of France, governed out of Paris; that was an extremely difficult separation because there were two resident populations struggling against each other. There are other examples of the same sort of situation.

The most difficult, because of the racial composition, is South Africa. On the other hand, the Afrikaners are not "settlers" any more because they have been there for centuries; they were settlers at one time, very early on. But Rhodesia really had a white settler population who engineered the UDI and resisted black rule. Their arrival in Rhodesia went back to about 1890 when Cecil Rhodes sent an expeditionary force into that territory. So the whites had been in Rhodesia approximately 80 to 90 years; they were not exactly recent arrivals. The issue in Rhodesia was who was going to rule: the white minority or the black majority.

The outcome in those countries that the French and the British left abruptly, as in Guinea, for example--which according to Charles de Gaulle voted wrong when given the option of independence or continuation under French control--where the French left abruptly--"ripped out the phones in anger as they left," according to some observers--was not that

much different from those countries which opted for independence later on, allowing an orderly European withdrawal. Some of them did choose to keep their ties to the European ex-colonial power, through such devices as the French Union and the British Commonwealth.

It wasn't a British departure from Rhodesia that really caused the problem. Rhodesia had already been a self-governing crown colony since 1923; it had an indigenous government and had not really been ruled from London since 1923. It was called a "colony," but it was really not. The British were represented by a Governor General; Rhodesia had its own government, its own Parliament, its own existing local political institutions. When Rhodesia declared its independence, not much changed in terms of institutions. Around 1917 or 1918, a crucial vote had taken place in Rhodesia to determine whether it should join South Africa as the fifth province; the population had voted negatively and determined to stay independent of South Africa. Then, a few years later, they were given their own status. So the Rhodesians were accustomed to self-government. That is, the white Rhodesians were.

The pressure to change the system really came initially from the British, who wanted the franchise extended to the black majority prior to the granting of full independence. There was a long series of efforts to thwart that. First came the Central African Federation of the two Rhodesias and Nyasaland under Roy Welensky. There were many other steps suggested. Then Zambia (ex-Northern Rhodesia) and Malawi (ex-Nyasaland) broke away and Southern Rhodesia was left to the rule of the white minority.

Zambia and the other new countries of the area had been ruled as colonies. Southern Rhodesia was unique in its history of relative independence. The British withdrew rather suddenly from Zambia and the other former colonies. There was no extensive transition. It was almost like falling dominoes. In the early 60s, the French went first, followed by the British, one by one starting in 1960. Kenya was the last and Zambia just a bit earlier. It was not very gradual.

After the departure of the colonial power, the vacuums created generated a lot of conflict. They are now beginning to settle down. Some people would say that it has taken too long. Others point out that it took us in the U.S. decades to sort out our post-colonial problems; that it really wasn't until after the Civil War and the settlement of the slavery issue that we achieved a stable domestic situation. There was a lot of turmoil in the United States in the first half of the 19th Century. In the Middle East, particularly in Palestine, the British withdrew precipitously, without leaving any kind of governmental structure in place. Israel just grew up in that vacuum.

The country--or territorial or colonial--borders were drawn up by the colonial powers as they occupied various parts of Africa and as they fought with each other. Eventually, the borders were agreed upon, more or less permanently, at a conference in Berlin in 1884 and 1885, I believe, followed by a good many bilateral agreements among the colonizing powers. Almost all the major European countries had a colony or colonies in Africa; so they got together to draw the boundaries in order to stop wars among themselves on the

African continent. The *de facto* borders became permanent and *de jure* by means of these agreements among the Europeans. Of course, the Africans were not consulted.

The African countries, as they gained independence, made what I consider a very wise decision. They said that although the borders were irrational, illogical, made no sense geographically or tribally or linguistically, they were willing to accept them; otherwise there would be constant wars and turmoil over borders. So they accepted the existing lines of demarcation, with a few exceptions, like the border between Somalia and Ethiopia in the Ogaden, which has been a constant source of friction. There have been other struggles, but the remarkable fact is that the irrational borders have been accepted by and large by the new countries as legitimate borders.

One of the things that was done by the colonial powers--which may appear obvious but isn't given much consideration--was to use rivers as demarcation lines because a river is the most easily observed natural feature. That does not make it necessarily a logical border, however, because most rivers are traversable even if not navigable and the same tribe may well live on both banks, and usually does. A line drawn in the middle of a river will divide a tribe into two nationalities. That was the worst thing that was done. What should have been done would have been to go 40 to 50 miles inland and draw the border there and then the same tribe would have belonged to the same nation. But that is not what was done; the rivers became the borders. Or in some cases, other natural features were used. A large mountain makes sense because the same people will not tend to live on both sides of it. More likely, one tribe will live on one side and another tribe on the other side. It's stating the obvious to say that the borders were drawn for the convenience of the Europeans, not the Africans. But the Africans did a wise thing by accepting the existing borders, illogical as they may have been. If they had begun to draw new lines, they would have started never-ending quarrels over these divisions.

As I said earlier, on Rhodesia the British rescued us in the end when Margaret Thatcher came into office. The Conservatives had in their platform, and I think she strongly supported it, that sanctions against Rhodesia would be discontinued. They were going to expire in November 1979. Thatcher said she would not renew them. Our Congressional situation was somewhat different; we did not have to renew sanctions from time to time because our legislation had not set a time limit. But in the British case, when sanctions expired, that was the end of the process; in our case, Congress did not need to take any action, unless they wanted to change things.

That was the biggest fight that went on in our Bureau, the Department, and in the Administration in general, over the sanctions issue. Lord Carrington became the Foreign Secretary; then there was a Commonwealth Conference in Lusaka, Zambia. Carrington had convinced Mrs. Thatcher that there was a way to resolve the Rhodesian problem through negotiations. A group of Commonwealth leaders were appointed to work as mediators. Carrington took charge of solving the issue and in fact relieved us from further responsibility. We had been pretty much the lead country, although it had been worked essentially as a combined Andrew Young-David Owen operation during the previous year. The responsibility for solving the Rhodesian problem became pretty much a British

one. The meetings of all interested parties took place at Lancaster House, and the new Constitution was named after that location. The November deadline for the expiration of British sanctions was useful in that it placed pressure on all sides--Ian Smith, the two guerrilla groups, the British and U.S. governments--because if some solution had not been found by that time, there would have been a settlement one way or another. It might have been settled more favorably for Ian Smith and the Rhodesian whites.

Our problem was that pressure was building up in our Congress to lift sanctions earlier than the British deadline--in June or July. We had quite a fight on our hands, because the Administration's Congressional relations staffs, particularly the White House one, predicted that we would lose if the issue would come to a vote. We, in the African Bureau and in the State Department generally, considered the end of U.S. sanctions as a disaster. My role was primarily to prepare position papers, write memoranda and recommend appropriate actions. Dick Moose was able to convince Secretary Vance that the lifting of American sanctions would be disastrous and Vance in turn was able to convince President Carter that it was essential that we maintain the sanctions in order to give the British time to resolve the problem before their own sanctions expired in November. That was a short time frame; nevertheless, Carter's political advisors were opposed to any effort to extend U.S. sanctions. I think Brzezinski sided with the political types, who were really opposed to the President getting personally involved in what appeared to be a losing cause--on the unpopular side of the issue, which seemed to be a sure loser in the Senate. The battle began in the House; we had already written off the Senate; but if we won in the House, that was sufficient for the legislation lifting sanctions to fail.

The President worked very hard for the maintenance of sanctions. The critical factor was the Congressional Black Caucus, who, although not numerous, felt very strongly on this issue, as one would expect, because they viewed it as a human and civil rights issue concerning blacks--Africans in this case. They lobbied intensively. They approached any other Congressman who might be wavering and issued a thinly veiled threat--something like, "In the weeks before your next election, how would you like it if 25 black preachers came into your district to give Sunday sermons in your black churches on how you voted on the Rhodesian sanctions issue?" Most Congressmen would of course prefer that that would not happen, particularly if they were running in a marginal district. The Black Caucus swayed a lot of votes in that way; they felt very strongly about the sanctions. In the end, the Administration won by only a few votes in the House and sanctions were maintained. From that point, the British carried the ball. Lord Carrington was very effective.

We did a couple of things which were, in a sense, compromises with our opponents. We agreed, for example, to send an observer to Salisbury (now Harare) to set up an office--not a Consulate or an Embassy--but just one person, attached officially to our Pretoria Embassy, to observe the situation in Rhodesia. Rhodesia was going to go through an election. It was a very complex story. The idea was to show that we were not completely ignoring Ian Smith and Muzorewa and his colleagues in power and that we were going to have an election observer. Our presence would also give us an opportunity to pass some

judgment on the fairness of the elections and the validity of the results and of the transition, if there were to be one. So Jeff Davidow became our observer in Salisbury. We also had another officer in our Embassy in London, Gib Lanpher, who later became my second DCM in Harare, succeeding Jeff Davidow, and who has just become our Ambassador to Zimbabwe, the fifth ambassador, and the second career officer to occupy that post. Gib was our observer at the Lancaster House conference. So we took some small actions, and they were done primarily to satisfy the opposition that we were not completely ignoring their point of view.

Q: You had a wide area of jurisdiction as Deputy Assistant Secretary in the African Bureau. Were there any other issues that arose in your domain that were of interest to the Department's leadership?

KEELEY: Certainly Namibia, although we were not the "action" office on that issue. Namibia was a ward of the U.N. and therefore the responsible office was the Bureau for International Organizations, headed then by Bill Maynes. Tom Niles was the key officer; he really was "Mr. Namibia" and did most of the drafting on this subject. We worked primarily with our Mission to the U.N. in New York, first Andrew Young and later Don McHenry; they were our Ambassadors to the U.N. The African Bureau played a role in the Namibia problem and worked also with the people in the Secretary's Policy Planning Staff who were active both on the Rhodesia and Namibia issues. They were major issues at the time; Namibia was not resolved during my tour in AF; as a matter of fact, it took another ten years after I left before any solution was found--it was just last year that the problems were solved. Interestingly enough, we were wrong in our prognostications at the time. All of us who worked on both issues in the State Department thought that Namibia would be solved first and Rhodesia second (or not at all). In fact, the reverse occurred: Rhodesia got solved and Namibia did not. One reason was that Namibia was actually a decolonization issue--Southwest Africa was a colony, a mandate; it had not been absorbed by South Africa. The problem was to obtain the agreement of all the parties concerned--the South Africans, the Namibians, and later, in the Reagan administration, the Angolans, which also then brought the Cubans and the Soviets in. We thought that decolonization was easier than the Rhodesian situation, which was already a state that had declared its independence, had abandoned its British tie, had its own government, and had claimed its own international standing, although it was only recognized by South Africa. But we thought it would be easier for South Africa to compromise on the Namibian issue than on the Rhodesian one; we were wrong. It took many more years to solve the Namibian problem; it became much more complex than Rhodesia.

Q: Did the U.S. government have a general policy toward the area for which you were responsible or was it a country-by-country approach? I am referring for example to the general pressure that was being applied during this period by Pat Derian and her Human Rights Bureau which was, according to some observers, being applied across the board without reference to local circumstances or cultures?

KEELEY: I don't think we felt any particular pressure from Pat Derian's office, because we were more or less in agreement with her fundamental approach. We were trying to achieve settlements that would bring about black majority rule, as in Rhodesia, which was a basic human rights issue for that country. We were also applying pressure to South Africa. In general, my sense was that we looked at the problems similarly, but that they had different time frames because of the varying complexities. For example, the South African problem was extremely complex because of its history, because of the forces at work, the balance of forces within the country, our own domestic politics, our international standing, the East-West competition. So while we worked on South African human rights problems, we didn't have any high hopes of resolving that situation any time soon. We were certainly right about that. It looked like and in fact was a long range problem. As in other cases, we were looking for a solution that would bring political rights to the majority population. That was also true for Namibia. That was generally our position throughout Africa, at least during the Carter Administration.

Problems did arise in countries with which I had very little to do. For example, Zaire, which did not and does not have a good human rights record, to put it mildly. Zaire was regarded as a key ally, a country that was important to us, a country that was playing an important role in other problems that the U.S. was involved in; e.g., Angola, Namibia, and in general the East-West dimension in Africa. For Zaire, allowances were made for its poor human rights record; I am sure that Pat Derian and others were horrified, but the exceptions were made. I was not personally happy with our policy toward Zaire and never have been since the time when I was the desk officer. In any case, there were cases that received special treatment and for which we deviated from the general concern for human rights, and in fact thereby diluted our general concern for the sake of other national interests.

There was of course an East-West competition in Africa; it played a role in many of the situations we had to deal with; e.g., Mozambique and Angola, the conflict between Ethiopia and Somalia. At one time we were closely allied with Ethiopia; we tried to be friendly with Somalia, but it allied itself with the Soviets. Then there was a war, after which the combatants switched sides. Mengistu came to power in Ethiopia and in fact turned it into a Soviet satellite. Somalia then switched to the West; it was a complex business. It was all due to the East-West conflict being projected into Africa. We did not deal with Somalia or Ethiopia on their own terms. There were other illustrations, like Libya later on and the whole Chad situation. There were quite a few situations where the East-West competition played a dominating role.

As 1980 began, Dick Moose asked me to become his principal Deputy, to replace Bill Harrop. I had been the second ranking Deputy. Harrop was going to Nairobi as Ambassador. That move would have changed my responsibilities considerably, even though Moose wanted me to continue to follow Rhodesia and Namibia. But I would have done quite a few new things, including personnel and administration of the Bureau, which in AF in those days were basically done by the Assistant Secretary and his principal Deputy. They were the only two, for example, who were involved in the choice of career officers to be recommended to the Secretary for ambassadorial appointments.

As it turned out, I acted as the principal Deputy for only about a month or six weeks, because all of a sudden a Rhodesian solution was effected. The new Constitution was approved; elections were held. I made a couple of visits to Rhodesia and South Africa to observe the situation during the pre-electoral period. A new government was installed and all of a sudden we had recognized the new country (Zimbabwe). We opened an Embassy--Jeff Davidow and I opened it on the morning of the independence ceremony on April 18, 1980. I was part of the U.S. delegation to the independence ceremony. The delegation was headed jointly by Averell Harriman and Andrew Young. I was a member both because I was the Deputy Assistant Secretary and because my nomination to be the first American Ambassador to Zimbabwe had just been approved. The announcement of my nomination was made by Harriman as we raised the flag over our new Embassy. The *agrément* took all of two hours. It was a brand new government that hadn't yet learned that you are supposed to sit on those requests for a week or two or more just to show your independence and that you are taking it seriously. Jeff Davidow went into the new Foreign Ministry-to-be with the note, said it was our request for *agrément*, and they said, "O.K." So Harriman was able to announce it at the flag raising ceremony.

That made my tour as principal Deputy very short. I didn't get to Harare until June, after obtaining Senate confirmation. I then spent nearly four years in Zimbabwe, until the Spring of 1984.

Q: You happen to be one of the few Ambassadorial candidates who was actually qualified for his position since you had been working on Rhodesian-Zimbabwean problems for a number of years. Were you at all surprised by what you found when you actually took over your job in Harare?

KEELEY: Let me first say that my appointment came about because Dick Moose, in consultation with others, thought that I would be the ideal person for the job because I had worked on the Rhodesia problem intensively for two years and knew as much about it as anyone in the U.S. government. Moose felt strongly that the appointment should go to a career officer because, first of all, this was a newly opened Embassy, which always has a lot of administrative problems best handled by an experienced Foreign Service professional. There were rumors that the White House had a political appointee in mind--a prominent African-American. I think the Department's support of my appointment was a counter to that in some respects. Moose made the case to Cyrus Vance, who supported the argument that a professional was needed as the first ambassador. He didn't have any particular feeling about me, but accepted the premise. He went to the President and the whole appointment was wrapped up in one day. That was unusual; normally the candidate, even if a Foreign Service officer, usually doesn't happen to have been the Deputy Assistant Secretary handling the affairs of the country to which he or she is going to be nominated.

The appointment was processed expeditiously, in part to preclude the possibility of a political appointment. In all honesty, there was a hidden agenda. One of our major concerns was that we wanted the whites to stay in Zimbabwe after independence. We

believed that a mass exodus would have been disastrous. They might have fled out of fear or disgust or hatred or uncertainty about their future. In fact, at an earlier time, we had worked out an evacuation plan with the British. They had asked for our help because the situation in Rhodesia had been very dicey from time to time leading up to the elections. There was a feeling in many quarters that there would be a mass exodus--sheer flight--of a couple of hundred thousand people over the border into South Africa. None of that happened. But there was a feeling that the U.S. had to work hard to reassure the whites in Zimbabwe about their future. To be brutally frank, there was some concern that if the U.S. were to send a prominent African-American, who was a leading political figure--someone like Andrew Young, for example--it would send a bad signal to the whites. They might have perceived the appointment as a signal that the U.S. considered the future of Zimbabwe to be solely for the blacks, and that we didn't care at all about what would happen to the whites.

I was written up in the "Style" section of the *Washington Post*. The story was written by a black reporter--Jackie Trescott--and it was published just before my departure. I gave her a lengthy interview and she talked to many other people--members of the Black Caucus and people who knew me like Andrew Young and Don McHenry and others. Our hidden agenda was hinted at in the story; the story indicated that I was not really a significant or well-known person or prominent enough to undertake this very important assignment. While the article treated me personally in a very favorable light, the suggestion was that it would have been wiser to send a prominent political figure--perhaps a black. I mention this because this issue was not discussed even behind the scenes at the time, but I believe it was a factor in my appointment. The decision-makers, I guess, decided that the emphasis should be given to sending a white professional rather than someone else, as a signal. I don't think that people like Young and McHenry were objecting to my appointment--they said nice things about me--but there was some feeling that we should have sent a different signal.

I happen to agree with the decision that was made, because when I got to Harare, I felt that one of our major roles, as a new Embassy and as the representative of the U.S. government, was to convince the whites that they had a future in Zimbabwe and that the election results were not a disaster. We tried to point out that we thought that Zimbabwe was a success and that there was no reason for white flight, particularly if it was to go to South Africa, which had major racial problems. I was frankly very disappointed that there was a steady trickle--certainly not a rush--of about 1,000 whites per month leaving Zimbabwe during the whole period I was there. There were probably only about 100,000 whites left by the time my tour was over. The exodus was not a panic, but it was steady; people went to South Africa, Canada, the U.S., Australia, Argentina, etc. Fortunately, the largest and most important white community--the white commercial farmers--stayed; in fact they increased in numbers slightly, as some who had fled from the fighting during the war returned to their farms.

By 1984, there were some faint signs of a reversal; some whites were returning because they had been unhappy with what they found in South Africa and didn't want to repeat their Rhodesian experiences there. They were tired of fighting the racial issue and

Zimbabwe was after all a lovely country and they had had a wonderful life there. Some whites did suffer after independence because there had obviously been preferential employment in many fields for whites and they had lost that. Some of the whites who stayed claimed that they were economic hostages; they had made tremendous investments, particularly on farms--equipment, cattle, houses, barns and dams. They claimed they couldn't leave because all of their wealth was tied up in assets which they couldn't sell or at least couldn't sell for a fair price. Even if they had gotten a fair price, they probably could not have gotten their money out of the country.

I spent an enormous amount of time talking to those people. I accepted every invitation to talk to any farmer group; I must have addressed fifty or sixty of them all over the country. The farmers were very well organized geographically and by product. There were the cattlemen, the maize and cotton growers, the tobacco people, etc. I would spend a whole day with each group. I would leave my house early in the morning. Zimbabwe is a country where you can get almost everywhere from the capital and return in a day, if you start early enough and stay late enough. I would go out to see the chief farmer--the head of the group--lunch with him, meet his family, tour his farm, and then go to his group's regular meeting. I would listen to the Treasurer's report, then the Secretary's report, and all of that. Then I would speak for about an hour and then answer questions for another hour. Then I would have tea with them, get into my car and return to Harare.

I was very well received. The questions were usually very difficult because they reflected a very skeptical attitude. I was amazed that these people appreciated my efforts and viewed the U.S. as the last resort that would rescue them if all else failed. They believed that we would not let them down. That was the opposite of the attitude of most of them toward the British, because they felt that the British had let them down, had abused them, etc. And they were mostly of British stock, although a significant number were Afrikaners. Somehow the United States had not been blamed for having sided with the blacks; that blame was laid on others: the British and the blacks. That to me was a very strange experience, because I could see these whites just yearning for approval, support and help from the United States. They felt that "if the balloon went up" (as they used to describe it) the United States would be there to save them. I didn't deny it, although I also didn't make any promises. In fact, these farmers stayed, not because of my work, but because they felt they had no other choice.

I did not see a need for the United States ever to have to come to the rescue of these white people; I did not believe that the situation would ever deteriorate to that extent. I was essentially trying to convince them to be patient and to believe that Mugabe was something different from how he had been painted. It was a very difficult psychological situation. The Ian Smith government, for its own reasons, had painted Mugabe and his associates as the "devils incarnate." They called them "Marxists-Leninists," hard-line communists, racist sadists, murderers. Of course, there had been atrocities perpetrated by all sides during the conflict. There were tales of horror; in some parts of the country, there wasn't a single family--black or white--that hadn't lost somebody. So the whites saw Mugabe as a monster who suddenly becomes Prime Minister and is running the government. That makes for a difficult psychological situation. Very frankly, many of the

whites had been brain-washed. To wipe that image out and to see Mugabe as a human being interested in the welfare of the country, including the white population, was very difficult.

Mugabe, very wisely, went on television the night of his electoral victory. Most whites had their bags packed just waiting for the electoral results to be announced, intending to get into their cars and drive over the border into South Africa, taking whatever they could cram into the car, if Mugabe won the election. Mugabe's speech that evening was extraordinary; allegedly he was helped by Lord Soames, who was the Governor General, representing the British crown. Mugabe said in effect that the struggle was over and peace and reconciliation were at hand, and that he wanted a non-racial society, not a multi-racial society. He had always made that distinction, which I learned he felt was very important. South Africa in his view was a multi-racial society, meaning that the most important aspect of a person was his or her race. Everyone would be pigeon-holed by that categorization. That determined their rights and privileges and how they fit in the system. You were white or colored or Indian or black. Mugabe said that Zimbabwe would have a non-racial society. The first question to be asked would not be what a person's race was; the first question was to be, "What can you do?" If the person could perform, he didn't care what the color of his skin was or what his antecedents were. That was extraordinarily reassuring to the whites, most of whom unpacked and decided to give the new government a chance. As I said, the disappointment was that there was a steady white egress, starting mostly with those who didn't have much. The business people, the farmers, the asset-holders stayed because they couldn't leave. Many are still there; some, as I have said, actually returned. I think Zimbabwe has been a success.

Q: Did the government encourage you to talk to the white population?

KEELEY: No. I did that pretty much on my own. I took it to be our policy. I really didn't have to be told, having worked on the issue for a number of years. Our policy was to encourage everyone to stay in Zimbabwe--whites and blacks. We wanted people to stay and work together and make the new country a success. In my dealings with the government, I was interacting primarily with blacks. Mugabe installed the head of the Commercial Farmers' Union, a white man, Dennis Norman, as his Minister of Agriculture. Mugabe had the same objectives as I had. It was important to keep the confidence of the white community. He felt that if to do so he had to install a leader of that community as a Cabinet Minister, he would do so.

My British colleague was a career officer whom I had known from a previous assignment. He made perhaps three appearances before white groups and was pelted with criticism and abuse. That was enough for him and he stopped doing it. The white farmers took out their hatred of Great Britain on him personally. I was amazed that I did not have any similar experiences. Well, I did have one, but it was my fault. I did make one serious mistake--the most serious mistake I made while in Zimbabwe. After giving these same speeches day after day, I guess I got bored with it. I thought I would do something different. I had accepted two invitations in Umtali (later called Mutare), which is in the East of Zimbabwe, near Mozambique, and in an area where the whites had suffered the

most during the war. It was the area closest to Mozambique and therefore had been territory over-run by guerrillas before independence--raids, terrorism, attacks on missionaries, murders, rapes, disembowelments, all the atrocities that occurred during the war. So the whites in that area were particularly bitter and I was well aware of it, although I did not appreciate the depth of their bitterness.

Mugabe had visited Washington and I had been with him because it was semi-State Visit. This was in the fall of 1980 when Carter was still President. USIA had made a short film of that visit, which I thought was a very fine piece of work. I looked at it a couple of times. As I said, I had accepted two invitations in Umtali, one for lunch and one for dinner--one hosted by the Lions and the other by the Rotary Club, obviously both basically white organizations. I decided that instead of my standard talk, I would show the film. It was about a half hour long and it had not been shown in Zimbabwe before. I did not realize what the audience's perception would be; they viewed me as a Mugabe publicist and booster because after all it was a film about his visit to the U.S. I thought that they might be impressed by how their new Prime Minister had been received so well by the U.S. President. Most of the people in the film were American whites who accepted a black as a normal human being, not as a monster. He went to the Lincoln Memorial, Howard University, Capitol Hill, etc.--all the standard itinerary. He met with Congressmen, lunched with the President.

There was one episode that was particularly telling and which became a highlight of the film. Mugabe went to New York, primarily to address the U.N. While there, he went to Harlem as part of his tour. I didn't go to New York with him because I stayed in Washington to do some work. While in Harlem, Mugabe met with the black community at an outdoor rally, a huge crowd, and gave a short speech in which he said at one point, while raising his clenched fist: "We won! We won! We won!" There was a tremendous cheer from the audience. It was an American black audience, but it was what he would have said to a ZANU rally in Zimbabwe during the electoral campaign; as a matter of fact, the Harlem speech was similar to one that he may have given before in Zimbabwe.

The impact of that part of the film on the white audience at the Rotary luncheon in Umtali was strong and visible. Some walked out immediately; others got very angry. The question period was very difficult. They resented that I had shown the film. At that time, their attitude was that Mugabe's statement meant that the whites had lost. I think that attitude changed over time, but it was certainly prevalent in early 1981. It is interesting to compare Mugabe's reaction to that of the whites in Rhodesia who never felt that they had lost. The Zimbabwean whites thought that they had been betrayed, and that if Mugabe thought he had "won," then they must have "lost" in the war between the whites and blacks. They thought I was deriding them.

That afternoon, after the film showing, I had a visitation at my hotel from the sponsors of my evening appearance at the Lions Club dinner. They asked me not to show the film or to censor it, because they had heard reports of its content. I was not inclined to do that. We finally compromised, which called for me to introduce the film in order to explain the circumstances and to try to soften the blow by explaining what the film was all about. It

helped; the evening went much more smoothly. The questions were still hostile, however. There was one black in the audience who was a teacher. He had come from Western Zimbabwe--the Hwange National Park area--where he was a member of a Lions Club. He had simply transferred his membership to his new town, and the Umtali Lions had no choice but to accept him as a member. He stood up during the question period and gave the audience a lecture of a sort they had never heard. He had real guts. His comments silenced the whole audience, although they probably did not make them happy. Needless to say, I never showed that film again, but I learned from the experience what high emotions and deep-seated feelings existed in Zimbabwe. Those could be dealt with by talking to people, but you couldn't expose them to a visual experience which didn't allow for an immediate exchange; that was just too hard a blow for people who were still suffering psychologically from a civil war and who feared for their future.

Q: Did Ian Smith have any role to play after independence?

KEELEY: He didn't really have a role. Although his party won most of the white seats in the first election, he was part of a minority. He would attend Parliament and he would give speeches, but his party was always outvoted on the key issues. So he and his colleagues were more of an irritant than a help to the government. In the next election, other white candidates ran as independents or as part of the ZANU ticket and a different group of whites became Parliamentarians. Some joined the government; as a matter of fact, some of Smith's former allies defected. So over a period of time, Smith's influence waned. I had practically no dealings with him because he lived way down in the South on his ranch and only came to Harare for Parliament meetings; he didn't have any particular interest in us and I really didn't want to be perceived as being close to him. I met him a few times.

There was one interesting occasion. One day early in my tour I went to see Mugabe and Smith was in the anteroom, waiting. I introduced myself as the new American Ambassador and we sat and chatted. It was almost embarrassing, because I got called in first, although he had been there ahead of me. I think that happened because my appointment had been first, although he had come very early; in any case, it must have galled him that I went first. To make matters worse, I had a long meeting with Mugabe because I had a lot of business to transact. When I came out, Smith was still there. I said "Goodbye" to him and thought about how the mighty had fallen--from Prime Minister to just another citizen who had to wait for the American Ambassador to finish before seeing the new Prime Minister.

Smith was resented by the blacks; he was intransigent, unreconstructed. They resented particularly that Smith had gone to South Africa. He was married to a South African or at least his in-laws lived there. And while in South Africa, he criticized Mugabe and the new government in Harare. It was not the fact that he criticized Mugabe, because he did that all the time, but that he did it outside the country and especially in South Africa. They tried to punish him in various ways--did some nasty things in retaliation.

I have only one judgment on Ian Smith, which I had made long before I got to Zimbabwe: he was an unsuccessful politician who could have succeeded if he had had greater vision, because he did have the loyalty of his people. He was very effective; he won his elections honestly, which admittedly were "for whites only." He appealed to his constituency; he took a hard line, but the elections were always fair. But he failed to show any leadership, in my opinion, because he negotiated with the British government over a period of fifteen years (from 1965 to 1979) and never solved the problem. The British tried various formulas over and over again; there were eight or nine different successive scenarios to resolve the outstanding issues, each named after the places where the British had advanced them. The final one, as mentioned earlier, was the Lancaster House Constitution.

Most of the schemes proposed in earlier negotiations were designed to change the Constitution so that blacks could be enfranchised and to reserve a certain number of seats for the blacks or the whites or for veto powers. The number of plans that people had devised for Rhodesia was almost infinite. Ian Smith was always willing to accept one of the schemes, but it was always the last previous one after it was too late; in other words, he was willing to accept a plan that had been proffered two or three years earlier, but he would refuse the scheme offered him that day. Then another two or three years would pass and he would be willing to return to the one he had turned down earlier. He never had the vision to see that the situation would progressively deteriorate and that time was not on his side; he should have stopped at some stage and accepted whatever had been offered at the time. He had many, many opportunities to do that; he was always flexible, but always too late. He didn't understand the course of history which leaves one in its wake; you have to catch up with it or look ahead and say, "I don't like the scheme that is being offered, but if I don't accept it, the next one will be worse." So I don't view Smith as a statesman, nor as a successful politician.

Q: Let me ask you a question about a "one party" system which is encountered often in Africa. What are your views about the nature of a "one party" system?

KEELEY: I have thought a lot about that question and it is one that I have often addressed because it is important in Zimbabwe. In general, I am opposed to "one party" systems, not because I am a democrat, not because I am an American and thereby imbued with the beauty of our "two party" system; I am opposed to "one party" systems in general because they tend to lead to dictatorship, stagnation, immobility. That system has been rampant throughout Africa; most of the countries have "one party" systems either legally or *de facto*. What happens is that the same gang stays in power--often the same leader--year after year, decade after decade. It becomes impossible to change policies; the party becomes so entrenched that it cannot be dislodged. Its leaders and members become increasingly corrupt; the citizens become disaffected and lose interest in politics because there is no real choice. You invite violence and coups and overthrows because that is the only way to get rid of the power structure.

I am delighted to see that many African countries are now moving in the direction of multi-party systems. Senegal, I thought, did the best job of all. Senghor brought off a

brilliant stroke: he created three parties--his own being in the center, then there was one on the right and one on the left. Obviously the center would win and stay in power, but at least people had choices. It was democratic. The same party is still in power, headed by his successor, but I prefer that situation to almost any other scheme--not because there are three parties, but because there is a choice. I am glad to see it happening elsewhere because that is the only way citizens are going to influence policies and get them changed. Tanzania, Kenya, Zambia and other countries come to mind; they pursue discredited policies, but the people are unable to change them even though their countries are going deeper and deeper into a hole. There is no way to change things.

In defense of the "one party" system, it should be said that in a country like Zambia or Tanzania, there are so many tribes--100 or 200 perhaps--that tribalism, which is the most serious political problem in Africa, can run rampant. The "one party" system has succeeded at least in extinguishing or diminishing the effect of tribalism, because everyone had to work within the existing political system. Defendants of the "one party" system will argue that it is democratic because there is competition within the party. That is sometimes true. But sometimes the central committee chooses all the candidates. In other more democratic situations, anyone can compete for the party's slate; in effect, whoever wins the primary gets the approval of the party and wins the election.

Zimbabwe is a special case. Through my experiences there, I became a defendant of its "one party" system, but not for Mugabe's reasons, which were not the whole story as far as I was concerned. He was concerned that a multi-party system would eat up too much energy, that too much effort and national vigor would be consumed in the competition for offices. People would become too partisan, too nasty; he was afraid that the important issues would be neglected in the scramble for power. The winner would have to make demagogic promises, thereby "buying" votes. He thought Zimbabwe did not need that; it was a young country that had to develop economically and had to focus its energies on serious issues. Everyone could work within one party; everyone had a chance for elective office. Interested individuals would come up through the party's ranks and then move to leadership positions. That was Mugabe's case for a single party system.

My rationale is somewhat different. Zimbabwe's black population is essentially made up of two tribes: the Shona and the Matabele. The latter are one cohesive group living in the Southwest. Nkomo was their leader although he was part Shona. The Matabele or Ndebele are a Zulu tribe which was not originally native to Zimbabwe; they had migrated north from South Africa during the Zulu Wars. They are a very hierarchical tribe by tradition. They had a King, or Chief; one leader who was the boss; what he says, goes.

The Shona are divided into essentially three major groups along with a number of smaller groups. They all speak a common language. They all have lived in their areas for a long time and they all identify themselves as Shonas. There were two African political parties before independence: ZANU, Mugabe's party, and ZAPU, Nkomo's party. That created a permanent minority. The Matabele were about 20% of the population or a bit less; since people tended to vote strictly along tribal lines, ZAPU would always gather about 20% of

the vote. Mugabe's party would always get 80%; it is not possible under those circumstances to have a "loyal opposition;" it would have to be a disloyal opposition.

The truth of that observation was proven after independence when Matabele guerrillas were causing all sorts of problems: murders, pillaging, abductions in the Southwest of the new country. They knew that they had no chance of attaining real power; they were locked into a permanent minority position. So I concluded that it was better to have one grouping within which the Matabele--Nkomo's people--could become a faction where they could make alliances with others, particularly the southern Shona who were in part related to them. This gave the minority an opportunity to jockey for some power and obtain some ministries, and would give one of their own a prominent position in the country. They could also aspire to some appointive positions rather than being shut out entirely from the power structure. In other words, it was much better to bring them into the tent than having them always looking in from the outside. That is my view and I think that is what Mugabe was striving for, without saying so directly.

Eventually, the two tribes did form a political union within a single party. Now I expect they may head in the opposite direction; they may well go multi-party. Most of Africa is heading in that direction and that is positive if they can somehow break down the tribal barriers. The Zimbabwe problem was that there were essentially two tribes of very uneven size and therefore the "one party" system, if not a panacea, was at least a palliative that could help temporarily until people learned to identify with other interests besides tribe. It could be that a tribe itself might become multi-party eventually; the Shona, for example, could break up into their three component units. They could operate within one party or break up into three. But they have to be careful; they cannot afford to pile tribalism on top of geographic sectionalism. There could be an escalation of tension.

Zimbabwe is unusual in that the Shona tribe is the most democratic of all the African tribes with which I am familiar. I don't know the reason. Anthropologically, they were a settled group in one geographic area; they were agricultural; they were generally peaceful. They didn't raid their neighbors. They were not herders; they didn't steal cattle. They were organized by families, each of which belonged to a larger clan which would elect a leader--leadership was not hereditary. It could have been a relative of the previous leader, but it could also be someone from a different family entirely. There seemed to be no rule about succession. It was usually an elder, a more senior person who was considered wise. It was practically always a male, but someone experienced who commanded respect. He would tell the clan when to plant, what ceremony to perform if the rains didn't come, etc. He would also represent his people at the next higher level council; then he might be chosen to represent a larger group in the next higher level council and so on. But there was no King or Chief; there may have been a tribal leader, particularly in time of stress such as war, who would have been elected democratically from the grass roots. There was always a Council of Elders representing all the clans meeting together in a democratic fashion to decide some policy or action by consensus. The decisions would be transmitted back down to the lowest structure--the clan and the family--through this system of elected officials. The Shona structure was completely opposite from the Matabele, who had a King who had complete sway over the tribe's

policies and actions. He decided when to plant; if his commands were not obeyed, death was the punishment for the offender.

Mugabe came from the Shona culture. I can understand that in light of his experience he did not see the disadvantages of a "one party" system, particularly if the party were run like a Shona tribe. In fact, he operated very much as a Shona council did, by consensus. He was clearly the leader and the boss, but he was not dictatorial. He would hold cabinet meetings, which he probably viewed as the equivalent of the supreme Council of Elders of a Shona tribe. In such a meeting, he would propose a new policy or he would pose a problem such as the lack of investment in private enterprise. Or he would talk about owning only one house, because he didn't like corruption--a multitude of houses was probably a sign that the owner was corrupt. The cabinet might grumble because some of them may well have owned more than one house; some of them would moan and groan because they felt that they had to take care of their families or one might have an elderly mother for whom he had bought a house in the countryside. If there was enough grumbling, Mugabe would recognize that he had no consensus. So he would say that the issue would be taken up the following week. During the next week, he would take a few people aside and lecture to them; he would work them over, asking them whether they wanted to be perceived as honest men or as crooks. Sooner or later, he would develop a consensus, he would call another meeting and put the issue on the table again. This time, Mugabe would get a lot of approvals; there might still be some grumbling, but it would clearly be a minority. That was his style. I don't consider that undemocratic; it is something like Lyndon Johnson's "Let us reason together," except perhaps with a little more authority and a lot more muscle behind him. Really not unlike Johnson's Presidency, or the way he ran the Senate.

MARCUS L. WINTER
Agricultural Officer, USAID
Harare (1981-1984)

Marcus L. Winter was born and raised in Minnesota. He received a bachelor's degree in agricultural economics from the University of Minnesota at Minneapolis/St. Paul. His career included positions in Peru, East Africa, and Zimbabwe. Mr. Winter was interviewed by W. Haven North on January 23, 1997.

WINTER: From there, in 1981, I went to Zimbabwe. I was there for three and a half years.

Q: What was your position?

WINTER: My position was the Agricultural Officer in Zimbabwe. This was shortly after Zimbabwe gained independence and the AID program was just starting. When I arrived, I believe the AID Mission consisted of three Americans.

Q: A lot of contrast with Egypt.

WINTER: Yes it certainly was. Eventually the staff increased to eight direct-hire Americans but it was nothing like Egypt. The program, although quite substantial, was also very different. We were responsible for developing and implementing the U.S. commitment made at independence to provide \$70 million in assistance per year for three years.

In addition, additional resources were made available through a housing program and through a commodity import program. So we were really dealing with an annual budget of \$100 million in a country that was relatively small in terms of population. A high level of resources and a small staff meant we needed to do things differently.

Doing things differently largely took the form of sector programs and the allocation of local currencies for programs of the Government of Zimbabwe. There was basically a health sector program which included family planning, an education sector program, and an agricultural sector program. We were not developing projects, per se.

In the agricultural sector, the concept was that we would set targets-policy targets-and we would support government programs in the country. We would then measure our success, and determine whether to continue the program, based on progress toward achieving those policy targets.

On that basis I designed the Zimbabwe Agricultural Sector Assistance program or ZASA. The program was quite unique at the time. It resembled some programs that had been implemented years earlier in Latin America where they had done agricultural sector programs. But it was also different.

Q: What were the chief characteristics; you said targets and what else?

WINTER: Basically we were trying to help the Government of Zimbabwe provide support and services to small farmers, the group that had received less assistance under the former white government. The sector targets were in areas such as the percentage of government resources in the ag sector going to "small holder" programs, the expansion of agricultural research activities focused on small holder problems, pricing policies for agricultural products, the amount of agricultural credit being directed to small holders. We established a series of rather broad objectives which, I will note, were not quantified in precise terms but more in terms of direction. We expected changes in the identified areas in the direction of additional resources and programs directed toward the needs of small holders. It was on that basis that we went forward.

Q: Was this done jointly with the Zimbabweans?

WINTER: Oh yes. The target areas were worked out and agreed upon with the Zimbabweans. I would mention that a majority of the resources were going to be spent on

local costs. Of the initial \$45 million agricultural sector program, a minimum of \$30 million was allocated for local costs; with up to \$15 million for foreign exchange costs. These foreign exchange costs could be for technical assistance, training, equipment or whatever the Zimbabweans and AID decided was needed. To generate the local currency for the local costs, we used a commodity import program or CIP which financed the importation and sale of commodities to be used by the agricultural sector.

Under the CIP, private sector companies in Zimbabwe were allocated foreign exchange on the basis of approved applications, purchased the agricultural sector related commodities from US suppliers, handled the importation and sale to their customers and deposited the equivalent value in Zimbabwean dollars into the a special account in the Central Bank. From this account allocations and disbursements were made for agreed-upon purposes. Using this mechanism allowed us to do two things with the AID funds being provided.

One, we were able to provide some support for the large, commercial farm community which was very important in overall agricultural production terms and very dominant in the production of certain export crops like tobacco and cotton. These farmers and the industries providing goods and services needed inputs. The commodity import program was a means of supporting that segment of the sector in a way through financing for imports which ranged from tractors to combines to lamp black for tire production to packaging materials for the sorghum brewery, a tremendous range of agricultural products were imported.

Two, we used the local currency generations to support a variety of programs that impacted on small holders. I'll talk more about those in a minute. But first let me elaborate a little on the agricultural CIP.

In general the foreign exchange allocation system and private sector importation system worked very well. Since we approved each foreign exchange allocation, it enabled us to be dialoging with the government on the needs of the large farm sector as well as on programs aimed at the small holders. We also interacted with the commercial farmers. There was a great deal of dialogue, a lot of discussion on what should receive a foreign exchange allocation. We didn't always agree. I remember one time the Ministry of Trade and Commerce proposed an allocation for the importation of "oats." And we said, "Why do you want to import oats? Oats is a feed grain and you have sufficient maize for feed. What do you want it for anyway?" They said, "We want it because we need oats to feed the race horses. The government makes money from the taxes on the racing industry." I said, "No. That doesn't sound like the type of agricultural product we should be financing. It is true that it is an agricultural commodity but that is not what we had in mind." And they agreed. In other instances I became convinced that some unusual allocations did make sense and were appropriate. It was the open and free dialogue that went on all the time about what should be imported that was so enjoyable.

Q: Who were you dialoging with?

WINTER: We were dialoging with the Ministry of Agriculture as well as the Ministry of Trade and Commerce which was actually making the foreign exchange allocations. But we also had almost daily contact with the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development and the Ministry of Finance. It was a very small government so we knew people at all levels and had tremendous access. You could literally pick up the phone and call the Minister and he might answer his own phone because his secretary was out to lunch. It was an easy place to work and things could happen very quickly because decisions could be made quickly.

One of the features I liked most about the ZASA program, although I had gotten some advice during the design phase to the contrary, was that we didn't need a lot of US experts there to get things done and to have an impact. There were local experts that knew what to do. If you looked at the large farm sector, they were producing at high levels and often using very sophisticated technology. If we needed expertise, it was probably already in Zimbabwe. So we did not need to make US technical experts a requirement. The only real technical program we financed was to expand the agricultural faculty at the University of Zimbabwe-where we did do a competitive procurement to bring in a contractor to work with the University on their faculty development. That did involve US staff-six professors-from...

Q: From a traditional university development program?

WINTER: Yes. Traditional university development focused on the Faculty of Agriculture which was part of the University of Zimbabwe. It was a very traditional program in that we provided, through a direct AID contract, six faculty members in selected areas from a Michigan State University and the Pennsylvania State University consortium. Each professor was there for two or three years with responsibilities in the areas of teaching, course development and research design. The assistance was part of a larger effort to double the enrollment in the agricultural faculty. As part of that effort we also funded and helped equip through the local currency element a large, multipurpose teaching, research and faculty building. We even, and I don't know if this has been done elsewhere, financed a farm: a research and teaching farm for the faculty of agriculture.

Q: You bought it?

WINTER: Well, it was purchased by the University using local currency generated by the CIP that was allocated for that purpose. By financing the farm we were seeking, in effect, to create something like a US land grant system where we had a University faculty and a research farm that would be used for both research and teaching. The farm was actually too large for only research and teaching purposes so the University farmed part of it commercially.

An underlying feature of the University program and all the programs was our intent, and this was before sustainability became a focus, to make sure these programs were Zimbabwean programs not US programs. So what did we do? We didn't design the programs and projects. We designed an agricultural sector mechanism that could provide

resources. And then we said to the Zimbabweans, "Okay, now the way it works is: you develop the development proposals, you plan and design what it is you want to do and we will cooperate with you in financing the activity. But it is your activity and it has to appear in your budget. It is not outside your budget and you have to obtain approval through your system, show that it is in your budget and that the recurrent costs are taken care of".

Q: The local currency portion, not the dollar portion.

WINTER: Yes and no. As part of the development activity the Zimbabweans could propose to use foreign exchange for say, heavy equipment. However, they needed to demonstrate how the recurrent costs of that project were going to be met. Even the local currency being provided from CIP generations was not to be initially used for recurrent costs or if that was the proposal, a plan to cover those costs in three years or less was needed. To make this work, we established a ZASA committee. I was an ex-officio member of this committee that was set up within the government of Zimbabwe and chaired by the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development. Proposals for the use of ZASA funds were reviewed and approved by this committee.

Q: Was this was a government program across all programs?

WINTER: We had a small, separate committee for the agricultural sector. There were similar committees in health and family planning and education.

Q: What was the problem you were trying to address with the sector program?

WINTER: An agricultural system that did not provide much support for the small holders who made up a majority of the rural population. Under the pre-independence government small holders had their own extension service. They had their own cooperative system. They had participated in the marketing system but were not really targeted. Under the post-independence government, small holders were going to receive more support and attention. So, what we were addressing was the development and implementation of programs that the Zimbabwean government decided were needed by small holders. I will admit that we did initiate some ideas and said that we would be very interested if something would be done in certain areas. However, I never took such an initiative without some indication that there was interest on their side to develop these ideas.

For example: making inputs available for use by small holders. How do you do that? The obvious method, and the method used by the commercial farms, was to buy the fertilizer directly from the fertilizer companies and to make the necessary applications. The problem was that the fertilizer companies sold at their front gate. They didn't have system of distribution. For large commercial farmers that wasn't a problem. They phoned in their order, and made arrangements for truckloads to be delivered. Small farmers-what do they do? They are not going to travel a hundred miles to get a bag or two of fertilizer. So through the cooperative system, we helped finance the development of a network of cooperative warehouses through a cooperative warehouse loan program. The cooperative warehouses were of various sizes depending upon the anticipated demand, rural

population and agricultural potential of the area. Construction was by a private company and was done very quickly. In a very short time we had 250 rural cooperative warehouses providing inputs. The same warehouses also served as collection points for the maize that was marketed. It wasn't our program. It was Zimbabwean planned, organized...

Q: And staffed?

WINTER: Yes, staffed also. We provided the local currency that enabled the program to be undertaken. The Zimbabweans were responsible for implementation and AID monitored the implementation. In the Agricultural Office we had one Zimbabwean whose job was to monitor the programs we were supporting. That meant receiving and reviewing implementation progress reports, but more importantly, it meant visiting the field sites where activities that had been allocated funds were to take place. So he traveled all over Zimbabwe comparing what was supposed to be happening with what was happening. In most cases, the Zimbabweans were superb in following plans developed. Activities were implemented on schedule.

One other strategy that I think helped was making the ZASA allocation committee a real part of the process. We arranged for the committee members to make field review visits. Seeing activities being implemented certainly encouraged the committee members to take an active interest in the allocation process. Over time the committee evolved into a pretty effective group.

Q: What was the make-up of the committee?

WINTER: Well, there was one representative from the Ministry of Trade and Commerce, the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development had two members, the Ministry of Agriculture had one member, the Ministry of Lands had one member, the Ministry of Finance had one member, and I was on there as an ex-officio member.

Q: Who chaired it?

WINTER: The Ministry of Economic Planning and Development.

Q: What level of people were on it?

WINTER: The Chairman was a Deputy Under Secretary. So he was...

Q: He was a political figure?

WINTER: No, he was a professional staff member who had been trained in Canada. He had a degree from a Canadian university and was very articulate.

Q: And the other representatives were...?

WINTER: Nominally, the committee was made up of Deputy or Under-Secretaries. However, except for the Ministry of Lands, normally a senior staff representative from the planning offices of the various ministries attended. The Under Secretary came from the Ministry of Lands. He always came.

Q: You mentioned that the committee evolved over time. In what way?

WINTER: Initially, brief proposals were developed, there was limited discussion by the committee members and small amounts of funds were allocated for various activities. But I don't think the committee members really expected things to happen. There was some reluctance to publicly discuss and analyze the proposals. So I would have to ask the leading questions about the proposals: What are we trying to achieve here? Is this a priority? How will this benefit small holders? Is the budget realistic? When will...

Q: Who put the proposals forward?

WINTER: A ministry. A ministry representative, either the regular committee member or another individual with greater knowledge and familiarity, would put the proposals forward. And I would say, "This proposal doesn't seem to address small holder issues or how does this proposal address what we know are the criteria for the ZASA program. We are trying to help small holders", and so on. In a short period of time, however, the committee members just took over the process. They would come prepared and have really reviewed and analyzed the proposals or reports being submitted. They would debate the pro's and con's of proposals. They didn't hold them up. It was a simply a review process that enabled a thorough understanding of what was expected to be accomplished at what cost and over what time period.

What I liked was how they really started asking the tough questions. I can remember one proposal dealing with a conservation activity that I thought was appropriate for support but that the committee turned down once. In so doing they said to the ministry representative, "You need to go back to your planners and if you address these issues and we will consider it again." At the next meeting the ministry had a revised proposal and the committee said, "We agree that this proposed activity would be of benefit to small holders in marginal areas. However, you still haven't adequately addressed the recurrent cost question. You want us to fund the operating costs for the new equipment now, but how are you going to pay for these costs two years from now? To operate this equipment? Where are the funds in your budget?" And the ministry staff said, "Oh we assume". "No, you can't assume that you are going to get an increase in budget to cover the additional costs," the committee said. And the committee turned it down. They just said, "No." To see the concern the committee had about sustainability and not wasting the money was really encouraging.

Q: You had some very talented people to work with, I guess?

WINTER: Yes, we did. But they were also keenly interested and that was perhaps equally important. As I noted before, I think the field trips that AID sponsored really added to the

enthusiasm and interest of the group. Seeing the projects they had approved and how they were being implemented gave them real ownership of the projects and the ZASA program itself. It also help create some bonds between committee members.

Q: Did they monitor implementation as well as approving new projects?

WINTER: Absolutely. Committee members made selected visits although my AID staff actually did most of the monitoring. As you would expect it was difficult for the staff of the ministries to be gone for more than a day or two at a time.

Q: But the committee itself did not review implementation?

WINTER: They did after we started making these field trips.

Q: What kind of activities were supported?

WINTER: Activities were funded in a wide range of areas. Some of the things that were funded and supported included: the cooperative warehouse program I already mentioned. We funded the expansion of agricultural training institutions that provided extension agents, including women extension agents. In fact the first women trained to be extension agents were a result of ZASA local currency allocations used for an expansion of the training facility including a dormitory exclusively for women. As a result, rather quickly the percentage of women extension agents being trained went from zero to a significant percentage which was important given that women were agriculturalists. I would emphasize that these were not home economics advisors. They were farmer extension agents. We financed the university. We financed grain storage. We financed cotton production training. We financed research on small holder crops. We financed extension information materials. We financed natural resources conservation education programs. We financed market information programs.

Q: Many of these ideas were initiated by you and put through their processes?

WINTER: Initiated only in the sense of an idea. I didn't develop the proposals. The Zimbabwean staff at the ministries also had a lot of good ideas of their own. Often, prior to the preparation of a proposal, I would have contact with people in the ministries and we would talk about problems and needs and then they would develop a proposal. Other times they would develop a proposal and I would not have discussed it at all prior to the committee meeting.

What made it really exciting was, although I was only in Zimbabwe for three plus years, that in that time so many activities went from a proposal to completed implementation. Facilities were built, training programs were completed, an impact was visible.

Q: Was there some recording system that recorded the progress?

WINTER: Oh yes. We had two types of reporting. One, of course was the Government of Zimbabwe system which required that the ministries provide regular reports on activities undertaken to the Ministry of Finance. This system was written into our Cooperative Agreement with the government which required the regular submission of reports. I would note that when the AID auditors came for the first time to look at the ZASA program the only thing they could find to suggest was that we needed to make sure the reports were received in a more timely manner. The requirement was that the Ministry of Finance should receive the reports within thirty days from the end of the month. On average, it was actually forty days before they received the monthly report. The auditors said, "That is all we can find." Of course we were very pleased. There no problems with disbursement and the use of funds for agreed upon purposes in a timely manner.

The second type of reporting related to whether or not we were meeting the policy requirements. To help us in that process we had an outside evaluation team come in once a year to review the program and the actions being taken by the Government of Zimbabwe.

Q: Were the Zimbabweans involved in that evaluation?

WINTER: The Zimbabweans were involved as members of the policy evaluation team. We always had a Ministry of Agriculture representative plus someone else. In addition the team would meet with the ZASA committee and ministry staff to look at how things were going. And the committee prepared a report for the team. Both years I was involved the evaluation team said everything looks fine. "There has been tremendous progress."

Interestingly, I do remember one policy element related to rural credit that we included which turned out to be a bad idea. There was a system of rural women's clubs that was working well. We included a policy target that the Zimbabweans should provide additional support to the women's club movement as a means of encouraging women agriculturalists and as a credit mechanism. However, it turned out that additional government support meant the informal clubs would have to be registered. Once they were registered a morass of requirements applied that would stifle these simple, unsophisticated clubs. An example was a requirement for an accountant to keep more detailed records. After getting a better understanding of what "additional support" might mean we decided that in the interest of those clubs it would be better if we didn't require additional government support. We dropped this particular policy element.

Q: This registration, was it simply a matter of being sure they were responsible or was it a political effort to capture them?

WINTER: Well, probably it was intended to make certain they were responsible. However, the legal requirements that came with formal registration made it very difficult for small groups. According to the law they needed to have a particular structure, follow certain financial procedures, submit reports in a certain manner. The law was really applicable to larger NGO's.

Q: Related to NGO's generally?

WINTER: Yes, I think that is correct. It was simply too complicated for these women's groups. So we dropped the requirement rather than undermine a system that was working. This flexibility on AID's part, being able to make changes quickly, helped make the program work. I remember another instance related to the project agreement we had with Zimbabwe where we made changes to reflect reality rather than take a hard line position. In this case, one of the requirements was a submission by the government initially on a yearly basis regarding resources to be allocated to various activities. But with some experience, we determined it wasn't working that way, it was working another way. And I can remember the REDSO lawyer saying, "Well, we have two choices. We can either say you've got to do it this way because this is the way we negotiated the agreement. Or we can change the agreement. What do you want to do?" I said, "Look, it is working this way. The other way, I don't know exactly at this point, why we thought that would work better but let's change the agreement." He said, "Fine, let's change the agreement." And we did.

Q: One of the big issues in Zimbabwe was the land distribution question. Did you get involved in that?

WINTER: Only to the extent that we decided, for US political reasons, that we would not provide funding for any resettlement or land distribution programs. Being seen as helping take land from the large farmers and distributing it by some method was judged to hold political risk for the entire assistance program. So we did not support land reform.. And we were up front with the Zimbabweans about that and said, "Look, it is just not politically feasible for us to assist in this area."

Q: But you were supporting farmers who had been involved in the distribution program, I suppose?

WINTER: Yes, to some extent. The small holder programs we supported did not discriminate against individuals who had received land under a government program. One of the items funded under the commodity import program was a cotton gin that went in an area where some of the land had been redistributed to small holders. This gave these small holders a place to deliver their cotton and it had quite an impact on cotton production. Similarly, the establishment of input supply centers and markets for maize had an impact on the quantities of maize produced by small holders. Again a small percentage of this increase came from areas where land redistribution had occurred.

Q: Were you there when the program had to be stopped?

WINTER: No, I had left. I was very disappointed, nevertheless, because the agricultural sector program was the one that suffered most immediately. As I indicated, as originally designed the ZASA program was funded at the \$45 million dollar level. Just before I left in December, 1994 we had completed an amendment to add more resources to the program because of its success. The amendment was being submitted early in 1995 for

Washington approval. At the time AID was also changing mission directors - Roy Stacy was being replaced by Allison Herrick. Well the additional funds were agreed upon and the project agreement amendment was ready to be signed by about March, 1997. However, the funds were not immediately needed and it was decided the actual obligation should wait until Allison Herrick arrived. Signing the amendment would be a nice entree action for her. Well, she came all right, but before she could sign the amendment the July 4th Carter flap occurred and the proposed ZASA amendment was cancelled. A big disappointment for me.

Q: I'll bet. That was the core of your program, I suppose?

WINTER: Yes, there wasn't much else. And because most of the resources under the original ZASA grant had been used, the opportunities to assist in new areas almost disappeared overnight. There were a few resources left so the program did continue but at a very reduced level.

Q: Was there any PL 480 activity?

WINTER: The only PL 480 activity related to the drought in I believe 1993 and to food needs in Zambia and Mozambique. We received various proposals for PL 480 activities, regular PL 480 activities such as child feeding, but we were skeptical of PL 480 in Zimbabwe because we were concerned that it would enable or serve as a detriment to local food production.

Our concern was based on the fact that in normal years Zimbabwe was able to produce nearly enough wheat to meet local demand, and a surplus of maize. They exported tobacco and cotton. On balance they were an agricultural exporter. So while some groups argued there were humanitarian or health reasons to allow NGO groups to bring in food aid to distribute through clinics, we weren't convinced.

Our position was that only in these years when there was a drought and Zimbabwe faced a food deficit or when a tripartite arrangement could be negotiated would we seek PL 480 resources. These tripartite arrangements (which we arranged a couple of times) involved the import of wheat into Zimbabwe in exchange for the export of Zimbabwean maize to Zambia or Mozambique. Such a program had two benefits from our perspective. One, the maize that went to Zambia and Mozambique was white maize which was preferable to the US yellow maize. Two, the wheat was needed by Zimbabwe because they were always only on the margin of self sufficiency and could always use some wheat.

Q: They didn't produce enough wheat for their own?

WINTER: As I said, in a good year, in a normal year they would be close to self sufficiency. They might be short ten, twenty or thirty thousand metric tons. But in a drought year...

Q: But that didn't prove to be a dis-incentive to local production?

WINTER: I don't think that it did. Because Zimbabwe operated a system of minimum prices for wheat and maize and other products that were announced at the time of planting, I don't think imports later in the year had much of a dis-incentive.

Q: They were subsidized were they?

WINTER: Not really. Prices were very close to market rates because they adjusted them upward and downward on an annual basis. An element of our policy agenda was that their market prices should be close to world market prices. However, one of the problems for Zimbabwe was its geographic location. It is a landlocked country and the transport costs to get things in and out are very high. So, a border price in Zimbabwe included quite a transport element.

Q: Anything done to try and address that problem?

WINTER: Well, there was not much you could do about their being landlocked. We did work with the maize marketing board on the programs where they were buying and selling maize and moving grains around the region. But the South Africans controlled the basic transportation routes because the route through Mozambique was not very secure. It was a touchy issue. Not one that people wanted to be in the headlines because no one really wanted to acknowledge how dependent they were on South Africa for transportation of commodities in and out. And the South Africans knew that they had that lever so that they could exert influence but were not doing it very overtly anyway. On the issue of grain prices we never tried to be involved.

Q: I understood that or remember that there were times when there was a great surplus of maize and there were times when it was in great shortage. This was a drought issue or...?

WINTER: I'd say that most of it was related to rainfall. Of course, pricing could have some effect in the sense that if there was a tremendous surplus the government was not likely to announce a substantial increase in price because they had a surplus on hand. But I think it was the weather more than anything else. Mostly because the rains are irregular.

Q: Were they trying to preserve a reserve stock situation?

WINTER: Yes. They had a buffer stock target. There was some debate over what the level of that buffer stock should be. Whether it should be 800,000 metric tons or 1.2 million metric tons or 1.7 million metric tons. At one time the Zimbabweans put forth a proposal that the donor community should finance a buffer stock that would be held in Zimbabwe and used as needed in other parts of the region. The donors weren't enthusiastic. Nobody likes to plan ahead that far. We assume droughts won't happen.

Q: Well, anything else about your experience in Zimbabwe?

WINTER: No. It was just very positive and I liked the sector support mechanism that...

Q: And you think it was effective and had an impact?

WINTER: It had an impact. An impact on the Zimbabweans and an impact on other donors.

Q: How was that?

WINTER: Because our program was, from the Zimbabwean point of view, very easy to work with. They were basically developing the program and we were funding their program within limits. Other donors came along and tried to do their what I would call a more "traditional approach"-come in, design a project and implement the project. The Zimbabweans said, "We like the US government-US AID model better. See how they are doing it." So there were soon a number of other programs, from the Europeans in particular, that strongly resembled our program because it was the one that the Zimbabweans said they wanted. It was working and other donors as well as the Zimbabweans could see that it was working.

Q: That was based on, partly because they had a capacity?

WINTER: Right. Zimbabwe had a good capacity to plan and implement programs. It wasn't a large government or a large civil service but it was a well trained government. There were a lot of Western-trained people. After independence the old civil service didn't leave "en masse". Consequently you had an old government structure that had worked and a new infusion of people. The "new" and the "old" got along well and I think worked well together. Obviously, there were some problems in some areas where they couldn't replace the people that were leaving or retiring quickly enough but generally the pool of civil service manpower was adequate with real competence.

There was also a good relationship between the government and the private sector. The private sector was able and willing to implement activities. This was true of both commercial activities like grain storage construction and activities carried out by groups such as the Private Farmers Association. The government didn't try to do everything itself.

Q: Anything else on Zimbabwe?

WINTER: Only to re-emphasize that I believe the Agricultural Sector Program was really an excellent program that was perfect for the Zimbabwean situation in the early 1980's. I think that is all.

ROY STACEY
Mission Director, USAID

Harare (1981-1986)

Mr. Stacey was raised in Hawaii and educated at the University of California and George Washington University. Joining USAID in 1963, he served first on the Somali desk in Washington and was subsequently assigned to Mogadishu as Assistant Program Officer. Continuing as an Africa specialist, Mr. Stacey served with USAID in Nairobi, Mbabane, Abidjan, Paris and Harare. From 1986 to 1988, he served as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs. Following retirement Mr. Stacey worked with the World Bank, also on Southern African Affairs. Mr. Stacey was interviewed by W. Haven North in 1999.

Q: We can come back to that. So you were there not too long and then you moved on to Zimbabwe I believe?

STACEY: I had a short stint as Office Director of Southern Africa. I had the opportunity to look at how to implement some of the things we had done in the Southern Africa study a couple of years earlier. I had only been the Office Director of Southern Africa for a relatively short period of time when the first AID Director to Zimbabwe, Chuck Grader, decided to leave and accept an offer in the private sector. I had been scheduled to go to Tunisia as a Director, but at the last moment I was offered the opportunity to go to Zimbabwe. This was an opportunity I certainly didn't want to pass up. From 1981-1986 I was in Harare, as the Director of both the bilateral program which was committed by the U.S. at Lancaster House, when the Rhodesian settlement was negotiated, and also the initial program for SADCC (the Southern Africa Development Coordination Conference).

Q: Just a tangent here, do you think your study and the reports that you did had any relationship to the formation of SADCC?

STACEY: Oh, yes; it contributed. I think SADCC would have been formed regardless of whether the study was done or not. But because of the working relationship I had established with the contact group, involving David Hood, the EC and the Commonwealth Secretariat, we were able to get some of our ideas into the briefing materials for the two presidents who really pushed SADCC.

Q: We can come back to that in a minute. What month in the year of 1981 was this?

STACEY: You know, I really can't remember. I think it was early in 1981 and I was there until 1986.

Q: What was the situation in Zimbabwe when you arrived there?

STACEY: The situation was really quite hopeful in that there were so many things to work with in Zimbabwe. There was still a technically competent civil service; you had a local currency that had some value that you could do things with. You had a private

sector that was functioning and an economy that was making hundreds of small-scale industrial products. You had a sophisticated agricultural sector, which had grown up around commercial farming that technologically had something to offer the small farmers, this new set of clients that were coming on strength. So there were a lot of positive things to work with. There was a sense of can-do that came out of the Lancaster House conference. The Zimbabweans organized a major meeting called ZIMCORD, which was their first major meeting of coordination of donors. There was a lot of good will towards Zimbabwe, to help them recover from the war, help them rebuild and get their agriculture going again. Everyone was reasonably confident of success except for one thing. Nobody knew how Socialist or Marxist the policies of these former guerillas really were, because when they were in the bush fighting they said some pretty strong things along Socialist lines. I do recall Chedzaro, at the first ZIMCORD conference saying something that has...

Q: He was the Minister?

STACEY: Yes, he was the Minister of Economy and Finance and had spent most of the war outside of the country. He was the Deputy Secretary General of UNCTAD, so he a pretty good indoctrination into Western thinking and nobody thought that he was a Marxist like some of the other leaders of ZANU and ZAPU. I remember him at the ZIMCORD conference saying something that I remembered a long time. He said "Growth without equity is unacceptable, but equity without growth is disaster." It was his way of trying to reassure the donors that the country was not going to pursue a policy of redistributing productive assets. If anything, in terms of the politics of redistribution, what the government focused on was trying to redistribute opportunity.

They did that through massive expansion of education, a modest program of land resettlement based on purchase of land on a "willing seller-willing buyer" basis. They changed some of the labor laws to try to give people a more stability in their employment. It certainly, aside from the modest land purchase program, it wasn't a redistribution kind of strategy at all.

Q: So what was your task?

STACEY: I was the Director. We had seventy-five million dollars a year, which had been promised at Lancaster House.

Q: And a pledge at the ZIMCORD meeting, I believe.

STACEY: And a pledge at the ZIMCORD meeting. Fortunately, because we were in a reconstruction period, we had very flexible authorities on how we could use these funds. There was an interest in terms of the senior management of AID, to really implement this program with a very small mission. The idea, which I completely agreed with, was to see what we could do with a very small bilateral mission, which was running the regional program as well. We had seven direct-hire staff total, including for the SADCC Program. We got the necessary support from Washington with the kind of authorities we needed to

approve projects in the field. One of the chief elements of the strategy at that time was to give support to the Zimbabwe private sector, which was really starved for foreign exchange. They had been living under very difficult import restrictions for a long time. They were awash in liquidity of local currency. The idea was to use our dollars to sop up the excess foreign currency of the private sector, letting them have access to foreign exchange. We, in turn, then would use the local currency for reconstruction, seed packs, rebuilding schools and bridges. We did the first land mine clearance program that I know of, that AID ever did in Zimbabwe in 1982-83. We had to do it in a rather...it took a little bit of creative styling of this project to do it legally.

Q: What were the main sectors or concerns?

STACEY: Aside from this significant commodity import program, because the country had been starved for many years for any imports, the farmers needed tractors, all kinds of industry needed raw materials. Aside from that, the major areas that we focused in and where I think we really made some contributions, was a major population program. There was a significant demand and a very strong group of women who were able to get through a major program. As a result, I think Zimbabwe's contraceptive prevalence rate has now gone over fifty percent. It's considered the outstanding family planning program in Africa now.

Q: What were you trying to do with the program then?

STACEY: The program had been largely run by private hands. It didn't have a lot of legitimacy in the new political leadership. What we had to do is to get the political blessings of the new leadership and basically transform it to one—because that was the best we were going to get from a private family planning organization—that had the right kind of support and hands-off philosophy from government. It was fortuitous timing that one of the women who was a key actor in this organization was the twin sister of Mrs. Mugabe. Both of them were from Ghana originally and they had a background in this field. So between Mrs. Mugabe and her sister, we got the political support we needed. The program was difficult because we were under in the period of the AID administration in 1981, when we were being pushed very hard to use only natural family planning methods by the then USAID/Africa Bureau Assistant Administrator at the time - Mr. Frank Ruddy.

Q: Assistant administrator.

STACEY: Assistant administrator for Africa. The Zimbabweans wanted a full range of services, including Depo-Provera, which was an injectable at that time, which had not been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, but it had been approved by the WHO. It had been used in Zimbabwe and had many social advantages for women. They wanted to continue with Depo-Provera and at that time it was against U.S. policy to finance the use of it, and even to finance organizations that were using it. So we had some difficult and awkward political issues with the headquarters on this program before we finally got it approved but it certainly is pulled off.

Q: We were the primary supporter of the program?

STACEY: Yes, we were the primary supporter of the program, and later on the World Bank and other donors came in, but this was clearly a program that we took the lead on and took a lot on heat on early on.

Q: Do you have any information on how it got started? How the interest in family planning began?

STACEY: There were various people who claimed credit for getting this interest. I decided that many of the women in Zimbabwe had become quite empowered during the war. They played an enormously important role in the fighting. They had political access after the war and this was right at the top of the women's agenda. It wasn't small business products or agricultural farm implements. It wasn't a change in the gender laws. It was family planning. They wanted to reduce family size and better education for their kids. That was the number one priority.

Q: What about the other sectors?

STACEY: Another major sector that was enormously challenging was education. Since the government's policy was to expand educational opportunity, they went from eight hundred thousand children in school, to over two million, in less than two years. They more than doubled the number of kids in school.

Q: What was our role?

STACEY: Our role was to try to keep them from collapsing under this influence. We had a major educational planning model that we had been creating in the Ministry of Education, with US technical assistance, through the AED - Academy for Educational Development. So we helped with a lot of the planning, and perhaps one of the most significant things we did was we built a teacher training college, entirely out of local currency. This project was exceptionally interesting, in that since it was funded with local currency, we didn't have the same review and approval process to go through, had we been constructing this institution with US dollar funds. So a lot of the contractor selection, architectural work and building were done by the Zimbabweans, which we signed off on. To make a long story short, they built this college on an old airstrip that had been used before as part of their sanctions busting effort during the Rhodesian war. We transformed this old airfield into a fully functioning teacher college in fourteen months.

Q: Where did the staff come from?

STACEY: The staff had been trained and put in place at another institution, during the time that the college was being built. So that when the physical construction was finished, they could transfer the staff right over from this other institution.

Q: These were all Zimbabwean staff?

STACEY: Mostly Zimbabwean, some were white Zimbabweans. It was a teacher training institute where all of the teachers who were going out to teach had to be able to teach not only science, English and math, but also they had to be able to teach one of three technical skills - either carpentry, electricity or agriculture. So they had a whole practical dimension to the curriculum.

Q: Was the curriculum developed by our people?

STACEY: We had some input into the curriculum through the contract with AED. Later we helped them on distance learning. But our strategy was generally built around employment. We said: "Look, we have to reduce the number of new entrants coming into the labor force. We have to improve the quality of those entrants coming into the labor force, in terms of the education they're getting. We have to get greater productivity out of the agricultural sector, so that more off farm employment could be created in the rural areas." In that regard, we invested in a series of marketing depots, again using local currency. Every farmer in the country had a marketing depot within fifty kilometers of his farm. At these marketing depots, they could bring in cotton, maize, a variety of produce, have it weighed, purchased and he could receive his check when he went out the door. He could also buy new seeds, fertilizers and other farm implements at the same time. So it was kind of a one-stop shop, in these farming depots, but the Agricultural Marketing Authority made sure that the farmers received their check on the spot. One of the keys to the small amount of agricultural success we saw after independence was not just that they had the technology of improved seeds and other things that had been developed by commercial farmers, but they had these marketing depots and they knew they were going to get paid immediately. When they got paid immediately, their incentive to produce was nailed down and they got a fair price.

Q: We also had a major role in the agricultural sector, didn't we, in this program?

STACEY: We had a major role in helping reintroduce seed packs and farm implements and imports that were absolutely essential to get agriculture reborn again.

Q: We had a local currency program there too?

STACEY: Yes, we had a large local currency program there for the ag center. We also financed three cotton gins. Cotton was the fastest growing crop among small holders, a cash crop. They grew the cotton in rotation with maize and it would be a major impediment if they couldn't get new ginning capacity. There was a very strong preference for American gins, so we had to make the case that the Zimbabwean cotton didn't compete with American cotton, in order to finance these cotton gins under the Commodity Import Program. This resulted in a significant expansion of cotton production.

Q: Were we involved in any of the overall planning and strategy for the agricultural sector?

STACEY: Yes, we worked with the Ministry, but we could only go so far with really influencing their strategies. We worked very closely with the British. We did help them with studies which tried to show them that land resettlement was not the answer for the population pressure in the so called “communal lands” — lands that had been occupied more by the traditional African farmers. They had thought prior to independence that by redistributing the land they could solve this problem, but it was impossible.

Q: Did we have any agricultural institutions that we were supporting?

STACEY: Yes, the agricultural faculty at the university was a major program. We not only reinforced their Bachelors Degree program, we helped them create a Masters program in agriculture - probably the best Masters program on the continent in agriculture. That was done through a contract with Michigan State University. We had Carl Eicher there as one of the leaders in the program. We bought a farm for the University. This farm supports itself, or the sale of the produce supports the farm. It was very close to the University, so the students could come out on the weekend to have practical classes in irrigation, poultry, beekeeping, dairy production, because it was a completely integrated farm. Again, we bought that out of local currency, with the government's concurrence.

We did some innovative food triangulars there as well. There were some serious maize deficits in both Malawi and Mozambique, largely as a result of the war that was continuing to wage over there. Large numbers of refugees were moving into Malawi. Zimbabwe had maize surpluses, so we were able to convince the USDA to ship wheat to Zimbabwe, which they normally imported, and Zimbabwe then shipped their surplus maize to Malawi and Mozambique. This was good in the sense that it helped facilitate regional commercial trade in food grants. It also recognized the fact that we were not competitive in exporting maize to this region, but since these countries couldn't produce adequate wheat, we were competitive.

Q: What about the transport sector? Were you working on that as well?

STACEY: Through the Commodity Import Program, eighty percent of the commodity imports was reserved for the private sector, and twenty percent was reserved for the public sector. Through the public sector parts of it, we did support transport. We financed GE locomotives for the railroads. That was at the top end of the spectrum. At the lower end of the spectrum, we were using local currency to repair bridges, repair roads, things that were damaged during the war. We also imported some D8 caterpillars for the Ministry of Rural Roads, for rural road repair and maintenance, but that was a bit of a subterfuge because the government had a very difficult land mine clearance program ahead of it. The kinds of mines that had been planted in Zimbabwe were these plastic anti-personnel mines, which often didn't kill people as much as maim them for life. What they wanted was D8 caterpillars with three inch steel reinforcing at the bottom, and then

they would just run over the mines and blow them up. So we put that kind of specification into the procurement documents for the D8 caterpillars, and then we just didn't notice when the Ministry for Rural Roads lent the caterpillars to the Ministry of Defense for land mine clearance. And when we did notice, we asked them to return them and they did, but it was a few years later, after a lot of mines had been cleared.

Q: Not a loss of our tractors in the process?

STACEY: Not a one.

Q: I had the impression that in all of these programs you're talking about that you were having a fairly innovative program strategy, programming arrangement and so on. What were you doing there that was so different from the typical AID program?

STACEY: AID had allowed us to do sector programs before sector programs really existed, as we know sector investment programs now. They had given us considerable authority to approve these projects in the field and considerable authority in the programming of the local currencies and the approval of local currency projects in the field. Some of this authority was concurrent with REDSO in Nairobi, helping us out, because we were committed to keeping a small mission so there were certain specialties that REDSO had: contracting officer, engineer, and so on. The fact that they would let us...for example, for an ag sector program, finance a lot of those activities with a commodity import program. So we were doing an ag sector program with a commodity import program element that went beyond the agriculture sector, but we were applying the local currency to agriculture. What we were trying to do on one hand was keep the private sector alive in Zimbabwe until more stable times prevailed, but make sure that this local currency, which we could do a lot of things with, was being applied in a strategic way to priorities we agreed on with the Zimbabwe government. Since most of these local currencies were country-owned, we had to work very carefully with them.

Q: How did you find working with the Zimbabwean government?

STACEY: There were some terrific people we worked with in the government who were highly trained, very clear thinking. People like Bernard Chedzaro, who was the Minister of Finance and Economic Development; Dennis Norman, who was the Minister of Agriculture, a white Zimbabwean; Robbie Buwuzi, who was the permanent secretary to the Minister of Agriculture. They were really excellent to work with. We had very frank sometimes a little bit fractious relationships. There was always a great deal of resentment on the part of the Prime Minister, President Mugabe, whenever there were conditions on any kind of aid. As far as he was concerned there were no conditions that were put up at Lancaster House when the seventy-five million dollars was promised.

There was a time when some of his military, the so-called Fifth Brigade, were really abusing civilians in Matabeleland. A lot of human rights organizations including Amnesty International, were quite concerned about these human rights violations, so we did suspend the program at one time. At least the ag sector program, until some of these

practices stopped. That created a rather tense period with the Zimbabweans. This was in 1984. One program I forgot to mention that we did which was quite successful was a housing program as well - Housing Investment Guarantee (HIG). You had sufficient number of people in urban areas with salaried employment that HIG could pay for itself. There was a large unmet demand for low cost housing. The building societies, which did lend for housing did not lend to that low-income strata. Thus, they would lend to medium income people for housing. What we did was we used our HIG in a way that got the building societies to lower their thresholds for lending, something in the range of two to three thousand dollars, so that they were reaching a different end of the market—lower income people. We started several housing programs there. The properties were bought and the loan repayments were quite good. As far as I know, these programs have succeeded.

Q: On this question of working with the Zimbabweans in this capacity, how do you compare that capacity with the Sahelian countries and whether this was a factor in what you were able to do?

STACEY: There was no comparison. The kinds of people you had in various government offices in 1981-82 were very high.

Q: Below the top level?

STACEY: Even below the top level you had people who knew what they were doing. I suspect that there's less capacity now than there was in '81-'82. You've had a lot of people who have left government and some of the people that they attracted back to government from overseas after the war was ended; they didn't stay too long. They found that working in government was in some cases difficult. In other cases, they weren't paid as well as they could be in the private sector. Even the university, where we had really built up an excellent ag faculty after South Africa became independent, they began recruiting black professors from neighboring countries and quite a number of Zimbabweans went down to South Africa. So they were lost to Zimbabwe.

Q: But you did see some brain drain into South Africa at some point?

STACEY: Oh, yes. Out of Zambia and Malawi as well. Out of all of the English speaking countries there's been a brain drain. Not a brain drain to the region, but it's been a brain drain from Zimbabwe. Again, the salaries and conditions that they were working under were not ideal. The government, in some cases, put a lot of restrictions on university professors as to what they could do and say and so on.

Q: What about your relationship with the embassy? Were they trying to steer you in various directions?

STACEY: We had a good relationship with the embassy. We had a series of ambassadors who were well informed. They saw AID as a strategic part of what we were trying to do there, and yet they had enough good sense to let us get on with the job and do what we

were doing. Ambassador Bob Keeley, was the first ambassador. He was later succeeded by David Miller, who had come up from Tanzania. The staff always appreciated Ambassador Miller. He would come over once a week to the AID office, have coffee with us, kick off his shoes and sort of ask us what was going on, what was it he needed to know, what kind of problems were we having that he could help us with. So we always appreciated the weekly visit from the ambassador.

Q: Anything else on the Zimbabwe program?

STACEY: We also had a rather novel situation in that I was not only the Director for the Zimbabwe Bilateral Program, but for SADCC as well. We set the initial parameters in that period for the U.S. regional program with SADCC. We began getting into Mozambique and into transportation in the SADCC program. During the period of the seventies, we had been very much in the New Directions mode of basic human needs, and we were not doing very much with infrastructure. I had the rather unusual situation in Zimbabwe where all of the seventy-five million dollars was Economic Support Funds (ESF), so I didn't have the same earmarks and restrictions that we had on the AID account. I was doing everything from railroads to population with ESF money. We always had to convince the State people that this was a good strategic use of ESF money, and that under this set of circumstances you didn't just want to write the government a check. In fact, we were spending the money twice: the first time through the private sector, and the second time through the local currency accounts. The fact that we could really get back into transport again with Zimbabwe being land locked, Botswana being land locked. Some of your potentially higher performing countries there were highly dependent on either Mozambique or South Africa for their egress. I think we really broke the ice there of getting back into major infrastructure.

Q: Your mission was to get involved in the infrastructure transport area with SADCC?

STACEY: When SADCC was formed, different countries were charged with taking the lead on a particular sector, and Mozambique was the lead country for transportation planning in all of Southern Africa. It was so important to the future of the region - to agriculture, to exports, to growth, to poverty strategies, to employment creation - you just couldn't walk away from transport. Because it had been severely disrupted during the war, these countries had a lot of things they needed to import, they had things they could export, but you had to work with Mozambique. The problem we had in those days was that the government of Mozambique was not very pro-American. We were still working out our relationships with the government, which a lot of people in Washington considered to be Marxist. It was really in the mid-eighties that we began to work that out. That's where the SADCC programming in Mozambique really helped to pave the way.

Q: Were you involved with the initiative for transport under SADCC?

STACEY: I was very much involved with the planning of the Beira corridor. There was a lot of opposition in Congress to getting involved in the Beira corridor because Zimbabwe had troops down there. The only pipeline, which provided fuel to Zimbabwe came up

through the Beira Corridor, and it had been blown up a few times by some guerillas, so Zimbabwe sent their troops across the border which they thought was in their own self interest. A lot of members of Congress didn't like that and they didn't particularly want us getting into Beira corridor transport project, which was aimed at rehabilitating the Port of Beira and the railway going down there when in fact Zimbabwe had a military operation underway. So we had to work through those issues.

Q: Did you work with SADCC as an institution? What was that phenomena?

STACEY: We worked with SADCC as an institution. SADCC had it's Regional Executive Secretary in Botswana. Our program with them wasn't just transport. We also, for instance, got into a major ag research program with them in sorghum and millet with ICRISAT as the implementing agency. We also began working with them on livestock possibilities, since two countries down there had EC quotas for fresh meat exports. It was thought that perhaps other countries could participate in that.

The SADCC program was hurt by two things at the end of my stay in Zimbabwe that probably should be noted. On the SADCC side, the decision was made by the Reagan Administration to increase the assistance to Savimbi. It was ironic that Savimbi was visiting the White House on the very day that SADCC was having its ministerial meeting in Harare. The lead minister for SADCC, who happened to be the Vice President of Botswana, Peter Mmusi, got up and read a resolution from the ministers condemning the U.S. regretting that on this day they were meeting that Mr. Savimbi had been invited into the White House, and been given assistance that they thought was counterproductive to the interests of the region. When this motion was read out from the floor of the meeting, the head of the U.S. delegation, who was the Assistant Administrator for Africa, Mark Edelman, instructed all of us to get up and walk out in protest, including the Zimbabwe Director. We all did, and that created a rather difficult working environment with SADCC for some time afterwards, as long as the U.S. was involved with Savimbi.

The thing that happened on the bilateral side, which came with terrible timing, was that Zimbabwe was elected in 1985 to the Security Council for the UN as one of the three Africa seats. I think it was in '85 or '84, I can't remember. It was just before the South Korean airliner was shot down by the Russians as it crossed over near Japan. As you'll recall, there were a series of efforts to condemn the Soviet Union, including a resolution in the Security Council. Despite all kinds of lobbying efforts by the United States, including George Schultz personally, the Zimbabweans decided to abstain rather than to vote in favor of the U.S. resolution. That abstention was taken as a real slap in the face to US interests. Our seventy-five million dollar per year program was dramatically cut right after that. We were in the last year of our commitment to the Lancaster House. We received a very substantial cut in our obligation authority as a result of that one abstention. A vote history will little remember nor long record.

Q: And this was long before President Carter fiasco, which cut off the aid all together later on.

STACEY: That's right. Later on was when President Carter had to walk out of a meeting and that was the end of it.

Q: Did you meet with President Mugabe?

STACEY: Yes, I met with him a few times. He was a very insular type of man. You always got the impression that he was not listening very carefully. I do recall one discussion with him on the merits of capitalism versus socialism. He said that for him, he recognized the ability of capitalism to create wealth, no question about it. But for him the danger of capitalism was individualism: that the kind of individualism that our capitalist system spawned created a predatory individual. This was a threat to the family and society, this kind of individualism. So he said he wasn't afraid of capitalism, he was afraid of individualism. I do remember another discussion with him. This goes back to earlier days in the late seventies when Henry Kissinger discovered Rhodesia, and was going around the world making speeches about mobilizing billions of dollars to settle the Rhodesia question. During the time that I was there, Henry Kissinger came through, this time as a private citizen. There was a meeting with Mr. Mugabe and the American ambassador. At the meeting, Mugabe asked Mr. Kissinger where all these billions were that he had been talking about. Kissinger answered with almost a straight face. He said "Oh, Mr. President, the billions are out there. All you have to do is borrow them. Nobody will make you pay them back." That said a lot about the view of third world debt that Mr. Kissinger held.

Q: Anything more on SADCC and the Zimbabwe experience?

STACEY: That is perhaps the highlights of the time. I do know that while we were convinced we were doing good projects and that many of these projects would stand up to the test of time, and from what I know many of them have, such as the Teacher Training College, and the agricultural faculty at the university, and the Marketing Depots. They're all still functioning. But we had a little impact on overall policy. We had an impact on population policy; we had an impact on housing policy. We had a limited impact on agricultural pricing policy. But overall in terms of the macro policies, I think we were in a situation where there was a risk. We see it today with the declining value of the Zimbabwe currency, rising budget deficits, the fact that there was never a peace dividend. In other words, the ending of the Rhodesian War never resulted in any reduction in military spending. The government still kept increasing its military spending. All of these factors meant that the optimum results possible from the kind of AID investment program we were making, we weren't getting; that was the real dilemma. We really were doing some good projects, but we weren't sure they would stand the test of time, because of the macro-economic policy and because in those days they really didn't want to have a great deal to do with the World Bank, either. We had a situation where we and the British were doing as well as anyone anywhere with policy dialogue with the Zimbabweans, because they were rather impervious to outside policy advice in those days.

DAVID C. MILLER, JR.
Ambassador
Zimbabwe (1984-1986)

Ambassador Miller was born in Cleveland Ohio in 1942 and graduated from Harvard and the University of Michigan Law School. He was appointed ambassador to Tanzania and Zimbabwe. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2003.

Q: You left there when?

MILLER: Sometime in '84. I went down to Zimbabwe?

Q: You were in Zimbabwe from when to when?

MILLER: I think 1984 to 1986.

Q: How did your Zimbabwe appointment come about?

MILLER: This wonderful man here, Bob Fraser, who's picture is sitting on the table next to me, was one of the Crocker cohort of five or so key advisors who were Chet's kitchen cabinet in implementing Constructive Engagement. He later died. That's why his picture's here. He worked for me at the NSC before his death. At the point that I was being considered for Zimbabwe, he was in the embassy in London running the African account for us. So, I would see him all the time transiting London. He was a very competent officer and a wonderful personal friend. One evening in Dar es Salaam there was a party going on when the phone rang. The staff said it was Secretary Crocker. When I got on the phone, Chet said, "How would you like to go to Zimbabwe?" I sort of said, "Well, that would be fine. Why do you want me to do that?" He said, "Well, I can't go into all of it here, but I want you to get back here and talk to me a little bit about the problems with Robert Mugabe and so on." So, I said, "Fine." Shortly thereafter, I arranged to get back to Washington and talk to Chet and I transited London. I sat down and talked to my dear friend, Fraser, and he said, "You really want to be ambassador to Zimbabwe?" I said, "I think so. I think that would be fun." He said, "Now you understand that Dr. Crocker hasn't a clue about how the Foreign Service works or how people really get appointed to anything. If you want the job, I'll get you the job, but remember, Chet should not know anything about what I am doing." I said, "Jeez, Bob, that's okay with me." He said, "By the way, you've got four more hours before you've got to catch your plane. I've always wanted to introduce you to the DCM here, Ray Sykes." I said, "Great." So, we walked down the hallway and walked into Mr. Sykes' office. We had a wonderful conversation. And Mr. Sykes said, "I understand you're in Tanzania." We talked about Africa. I walked out of the office and Bob said, "Now, I want you to understand why I did that." I said, "Why?" He said, "Mr. Sykes is the career officer that they're considering to go to Zimbabwe." I said, "Oh. So why did you set me up with him?" He said, "Mr. Sykes has a heart problem. He's not going to go to Zimbabwe. But I wanted

him to know that you're a good guy and that you understand Africa so the career side of the shop doesn't say, Miller? What is this all about? Political appointees aren't supposed to go to two posts." So, Fraser set out to assure those who would have stood in my way. While it was Chet that made the critical decision to send me on to Zimbabwe, it was Fraser along with some help from Frank Wisner who really greased the skids for the appointment.

Q: Before you went to Zimbabwe, what were you hearing?

MILLER: That it was awful, terrible. I visited Harare once with Ambassador Wisner, who was at that point either the ambassador in Zambia or had gone back to be Crocker's principal deputy. But we had a fine career officer in Zimbabwe, Bob Keeley, who was sent out as our first ambassador to Zimbabwe after independence. Bob went to Princeton and was a Greek major. He was really an EUR kind of player and ended up as our ambassador in Greece. Keeley took all that intellectual competence and ran head on into Bob Mugabe. As you might suspect... Frank and I had Keeley alone at his residency saying, "I'm going to kill the man if you leave me here another six months. Robert Mugabe is going to be strangled by the American ambassador." So I had a fairly good sense of the fact that this was going to be a pretty grim assignment. That said, I thought that the theory made sense. That was, Ambassador Keeley and I are just about anti-matter to each other. Keeley was a straight protocol conscious very intellectually competent career officer who did everything right. I don't want to contrast myself with all those characteristics, but generally I was a bon vivant political appointee close to the political powers in Washington, a great deal less formal than Ambassador Keeley. The theory was that if Bob didn't work, maybe Dave would work. That proved to be fallacious. That was really a dumb idea. But we all set out with high hopes that if you approached Mugabe as a friend and as somebody who would listen carefully to the likes of Julius Nyerere, I could listen to a lot of Bob Mugabe. That's what happened.

Q: You mentioned your political connections. Did you ever use them or did they ever come into play while you were in Tanzania?

MILLER: They did not in Tanzania. They came in more to play during the tour in Zimbabwe. About halfway through Zimbabwe, Dr. Crocker asked me to come back and run what was then called the South Africa Working Group, which was an effort to explain constructive engagement both on the Hill and among White House types that were skeptical. So there, my political ties were of help. But not really at post. Any ambassador who's in Dar es Salaam or Harare that thinks he ought to be in touch with any person of political stature sufficient to be of any use to you at post ought to have his or her head cut off because that ain't how the system works. It is dangerous to launch little forays into Washington without understanding what's going on. When you're at post, that's not your assignment.

Q: Where did things stand in Zimbabwe?

MILLER: Lancaster House had set the terms of independence. What was going on?

Q: Yes.

MILLER: Things were a mess.

Q: But there had already been the settlement?

MILLER: Yes. We were four years into the integration of the armed forces. We were four years into ZANU and ZAPU trying to get along. Ian Smith was in parliament so you had this sort of old Rhodesian group still quite active in there. Joshua Nkomo was still working out of Bulawayo and was still Mugabe's political enemy. They really didn't like each other. Most importantly from our standpoint the internal war between ZANU and ZAPU, which is to say the Shona and the N'Debele, was still quite active. We had three young American tourists who were kidnaped and murdered by an unnamed group of terrorists in the south on the road going to Victoria Falls. We had many of the schools that we built burned by one side or the other. So, if you look at the domestic side of what I was trying to do there, I spent a great deal of time trying to rebuild schools that had been burned. I spent a good deal of time on television there, which was different than Tanzania, trying to make the point that the United States did not approve of violence by any party or any group. Because of television, I got to do a great deal of speaking once the television network figured out that I would give speeches or ask them to come along to a burned out school where you appeared to give a school district money to rebuild. I was deeply involved in all of the stuff that has now, frankly, failed.

Q: How well has the Mugabe government taken hold?

MILLER: Pretty firmly. But he had two critical appointees in the cabinet that were white. The secretary of agriculture, Dennis Norman, was white. The head of the Civil Service Commission, Anderson, was white. The head of his internal intelligence service, Dan Stannard, was white, as was a holdover from the Ian Smith government, quite remarkable. He had some N'Debele around him but not many.

Q: This was one of the tribal groups.

MILLER: Yes. Zimbabwe basically has two tribal groups. The predominant group, Robert Mugabe's group, the ZANU, was the Shona. The N'Debele are in the south from Bulawayo toward the South African border and they are related to the Zulu. It's a wonderful place. Cecil Rhodes is buried in the Motopos wilderness area down there in N'Debele territory.

Q: How about Mugabe? Still today, he's considered one of the premier disasters of Africa.

MILLER: That is correct. He is one of the premier disasters of Africa. He's earned that title by pure hard work and dedication to horrible national leadership.

Q: How was he viewed at that time?

MILLER: As an impending premier disaster of Africa. He showed all of the characteristics that really led to the disaster that occurred. He was very arrogant, very isolated in many ways, did not know how to use the diplomats that were stationed there, was just an outrageous critic of the United States. We were the largest aid donor to Zimbabwe at that time. I'm pleased to say that I recommended that we terminate the aid program, which we did shortly after President Carter visited and walked out on a national day speech in which the United States was vilified. You could see the beginning of the end coming even then. But it was very hard to convince people of that. I really failed to carry the message of how bad it was going to get.

Q: You were put there to be the antithesis of Keeley.

MILLER: Right.

Q: Did you go out with a shoeshine and a smile on your face and ready to deal with this guy?

MILLER: Sure.

Q: How did it work?

MILLER: Terribly. He had no interest in working with anybody from the United States, let alone an American diplomat. He just had no idea really what ambassadors did. He didn't really know how to use his own ambassadors. He didn't know how to relate to us as a diplomatic corps. We literally got together and talked about this among all of us in the diplomatic corps. He would launch off on commentary about somebody's country or without calling an ambassador in. It was just absolute diplomatic chaos. Maybe that shouldn't be surprising because these guys did not inherit a functioning government. They really went through the civil war with the Smith government. Many of the people then who had worked for the Smith government left. This was not much more than four years away from the end of a revolutionary war.

Q: We are going to stop at this point. We're in 1984, just beginning to talk about Mugabe. I take it you didn't want to strangle Mugabe like Keeley did.

MILLER: I didn't strangle him either, but I only lasted two years. Keeley lasted four. If I had gone four, I probably would have strangled him, too. Keeley was a great ambassador. There was absolutely nothing wrong with him. I had foolish hopes, as did Dr. Crocker that maybe there was some way to work with this guy.

Q: We'll talk about dealing with Mugabe and the situation during the time you were there and also your relationship with other ambassadors, the international community dealing with Mugabe's coterie, and the whites and the white farmers.

Today is May 5, 2003. What was the situation when you arrived in Zimbabwe and what did you set yourself out to do?

MILLER: The situation was still one of some optimism that a civil war had come to an end, that the Lancaster House accords had produced an agreement that seemed pretty reasonable. There was a functioning parliament in which sat some different parties and some powerful people. Joshua Nkomo was still very active with ZAPU primarily an N'Debele or southern-based group. And we, the United States, were the largest aid donors. We had a very well run AID program that was doing quite a good job. So, there was at that point some cause for optimism for the country. With regard to my assignment, there was some hope that perhaps a change of face or a change of style or whatever would ease Robert Mugabe's concerns about the United States and allow us to work more constructively with him. As will come out over the length of this conversation, that failed but I certainly approached him with my usual enthusiasm and hopes that overwhelming friendliness would overcome a man who fought his way to power from the bush.

Q: This does show something that goes on from time to time within the assignment process. That is, to try to get the right person into the job, sometimes particularly if the country is important, to get a relationship, and particularly some of the countries the relationship is important, I don't think it makes a hell of a lot of difference who is ambassador in London or Paris because that's taken care of at a higher level. But when you're talking about a Zimbabwe or a Korea, you're talking about a different element.

MILLER: Absolutely. That's a key observation and it's one that, for example, Secretary Kissinger tends to have missed his entire life. It is indeed feasible to work with the government in Bonn or in London directly from Washington so that the personality of the ambassador is less important. For medium-to-smaller countries, the personal relationship between the ambassador and the head of government and then in the larger sense among the leadership community in a country as small as Zimbabwe and the ambassador's personality is important. During my tenure, there were five or ten key leaders under Mugabe that were very important to us. I managed to get along with most of them. Whether they agreed with us ideologically or not... But frankly in a personal sense I never got along with Mugabe. That inability to work with him as far as I know has been maintained by all the succeeding American ambassadors.

Q: If Mugabe was turning out to be a problem for you, sometimes one can deal with the equivalent to a chief of staff or key figures within somebody's administration. Were you searching around to do that?

MILLER: Oh, quite. When I got there, the key players were Bernard Chidzaro who was Minister of Finance and an outstanding individual who went on to assume a senior position in the UN structure. There was another chap named Dennis Norman who was the minister of agriculture. Bernard was black. Dennis was white. Then we had a chap named Anderson who was the head of the civil service. He was white. The head of the internal

security service, Dan Stannard, was an old Irish cop who stayed on. That was important for us because we did have some Americans killed. The leadership in the private sector at that point was equally good. C.G. Tracey was head of one of the major banks in Zimbabwe. John Lorrie was head of the Commercial Farmers Union. All were part of a collection of national leadership that if Bob Mugabe had not proved to be so effectively stubborn would have guided Zimbabwe through quite a nice transition from inequitable land ownership and a history of discrimination against blacks through a 20-or-30 year process where Zimbabwe today would be quite prosperous and successful and multiracial.

Q: How did you see the black-white divide in the country at that time?

MILLER: I thought quite good. There is a great advantage to having had an armed struggle. We arrived four years after the end of the armed conflict. Both blacks and whites had stories about being on different sides of the conflict. I think the fact that they went through that violence helped them appreciate the peace. I think it led both sides to say, "We really ought to work together because we don't want to do this again." I had this conversation with lots of blacks and lots of whites, which is the advantage of really being an outsider that people want to talk to. I thought the race relations were quite good. Frankly, I suspect that the race relations in Zimbabwe still are quite good, leaving out the organized thuggery of the executive branch of the government. Blacks and whites in Zim got along quite well.

Q: One of the key elements even today is the white industrial farmers.

MILLER: The white industrial farmers are organized into a commercial farmers union. That is the organization of predominantly white large farmers. As I left, there were an increasing number of blacks who were qualified – so many hectares and so forth – but quite small in terms of the total membership of the CFU. That must have been something in the range of 3,000 people. Very sophisticated farming. The world's second highest output of maize or corn per hectare attracted an investment from H.J. Heinz in edible oils. There was research done in one of the U.S. corn manufacturing companies in hybrid corns. It was a sophisticated, well-run system but it had what is in hindsight, the fatal flaw...land distribution. Indeed when Cecil Rhodes arrived and the whites began to seize land, they seized the most productive land and left the indigenous black population on poorer lands scattered around the country in marginal areas.

Q: Was there any effort to rationalize this during the time you were there?

MILLER: Well, I think the whites knew that this was a situation that couldn't stand. That said, I believe that they felt that the rational approach was over time training black farmers to acquire the skills necessary to administer what are really large agribusinesses. Some of that went well. Some of that did not do well. But if you had pushed the Commercial Farmer Union members, they would say they tried to reach out and it was going slowly. Viewed from the perspective of the blacks, it was going too slowly. Had you waited for this process to occur in natural evolution, it would have taken a very long

period of time. What the Mugabe government failed to do was to produce a compromise that could have been endorsed by the Commercial Farmers Union and by leading black farmers to produce a more rapid transfer of land ownership without jeopardizing the export of tobacco and edible oils and many other items that the Zimbabweans grew that produced the great bulk of their balance of payments.

Q: Was the Mugabe government doing anything in this field while you were there?

MILLER: Not much really. There was not much movement in that area. It is unclear to me why they could not focus on that more. Our AID program focused on that quite aggressively. That is, training black farmers, making sure that black farmers were paid fairly for their grain output every year. We developed and funded a way to weigh grain bags in an autonomous system, thus avoiding corruption. Then the payments to the farmers were made through the commercial banking system. This is just one example of a lot of things we did to encourage output from the black areas, to get more capital in the black areas, which would then presumably allow them to prosper in the agricultural area and ultimately solve this issue.

Q: Was there an agreement to let you do this or was there interference?

MILLER: No interference at all. Presumably there was an agreement because the AID programs had to be discussed. I presume that Dennis Norman, Minister of Agriculture, thought it was a smashing idea.

Q: It sounds like the Mugabe government at the core had these qualified people who were doing their thing, but the core was in stasis?

MILLER: The core was Robert Mugabe. That's the problem. But there were of course, a coterie of actors that weren't very helpful. There was a chief of staff in the army that was probably not the best military leader in Africa. There was an attorney general that was a self-professed Marxist. There were some others who already evidenced some signs of sufficient corruption and dishonesty to be troublesome. They were both stars in the Mugabe administration and there were already signs of some dry rot in the ship that ultimately led to the mess we're in.

Q: How about your relations with Washington? Were they saying, "Okay, Mr. Congeniality, we want this and that?"

MILLER: Yes. That's a fair question. The hopes that Washington had and the hopes that I had were simply not realized. That's a fair statement. We had Mugabe coming in to be the head of the Non-Aligned Movement. We really did want to get along with him. The difficulties really stem from the following. First of all, Robert Mugabe was a guerilla leader from the bush. When he was head of government, he wore nice suits, but he pursued a brutal path to power which either left him scarred or he brought to the table the skills necessary to succeed in that kind of a struggle, which means he was a pretty tough fellow. And he was treated pretty badly by the forces of Ian Smith during that struggle.

Secondly, because he had no experience running any government of any size, he had no concept of how to use an ambassador. In fact, I found myself, when I had the opportunity, trying to discuss with him not a particular issue but a procedure of how you work with other countries and what you might tell an ambassador to try to get a positive reaction from his or her country. Then I think that frankly Mugabe was sufficiently intellectually isolated for whatever reason that what you see today was a man who was already showing signs of isolation from any other reasonable outside force and when you tried to talk to him about issues he saw the world in fairly rigid ideological terms. He had no sense of humor, which is a terrible thing.

Q: Oh, a terrible thing.

What were the influences on him? What was his view then?

MILLER: I think he thought that the United States was unhelpful to put it most politely, that constructive engagement was a sham and would not achieve what it professed, which was Namibian independence and an end to apartheid. I think he was deeply skeptical of President Reagan and whether we weren't simply a racist government. He saw that manifested in some of our policies in Central America. And of course, he never got over the lack of support from the United States during his struggle for majority rule in Zimbabwe. So, his view of me and the society that I represented was one of fairly profound skepticism and hostility.

Q: Did Ian Smith play any role at this point?

MILLER: He was there. I had the opportunity to chat with him. I think he's a terribly nice man if you accept his world view, which was not acceptable. He was a brave fellow. He stayed in the country, he stayed in the parliament, he remained a critic of the government that was pretty hard nosed at times with its critics. He deeply loved Rhodesia and its people. Frankly, he deeply loved Zimbabwe. He is a true African who is accidentally Caucasian. That said, he wasn't particularly relevant to anything that was going on.

Q: Were there any overt or covert groups in the country that were evident that wanted to succeed Mugabe or put him out or something?

MILLER: No, none that I could determine. We had some continued ZANU-ZAPU tensions on the fault line down around Bulawayo. We had schools burned and we had the army killing occasional insurgents in that area, which was sort of the leftover of the ZANU-ZAPU struggle for who was going to control the government. But I would see Joshua Nkomo in my office, tried to get Nkomo and Mugabe together on occasion under our tutelage in hopes of producing a bit more of the reconciliation there. But no, there were no groups dedicated to overthrowing the government. To elucidate a bit on that, we did worry about South African incursions. The SADF [South African Defense Forces] had a pretty robust covert capability that we tried to be mindful of and to let the South Africans know that using that capability was not in anybody's interest. We succeeded

pretty well with that.

Q: You mentioned some Americans were killed.

MILLER: Yes.

Q: What was that about?

MILLER: We had three American tourists who were on the road from Bulawayo to Victoria Falls. They were taken hostage by a group of these armed bandits left running around in the ZAPU area. That occurred right at the end of Ambassador Keeley's tour. As Ambassador Keeley was leaving the country, we had not been able to locate these three youngsters after what was then three or four months of imprisonment. So, I met with the parents here. If I remember correctly, they were from the West Coast, either Washington or Oregon. As it turned out, we discovered their bodies roughly eight months after I had been at post. They had been killed very quickly after they had been taken. The rebel group was being pursued aggressively by government troops and apparently they didn't think the risk was sufficient to justify keeping the kids alive and shot them in the bush not too far off the road going to Victoria Falls. It took us a good while to find them, but we did and talked to the parents.

Q: Did this have an effect on dampening tourism?

MILLER: Not that we noticed. We maintained a travel advisory on that road. We did not think Americans should be out hitchhiking between Bulawayo and Victoria Falls. It was an area where you occasionally ran into rebel groups who were not well organized and just sort of in the last throes of trying to oppose the victorious Shona led coalition. But for the major locations in Zimbabwe we had no tourism problem. For Victoria Falls and the Zambezi and so on, the tourism business was fine.

Q: How about the British embassy? Were they influential?

MILLER: Yes, they were influential and they were excellent. The British were doing the military training for the integration of the army which was really a remarkable challenge. You had ZAPU fighters and ZANU fighters and then you had Rhodesian army regulars. You had a chap who went on to become the commanding general of the British Army on the Rhine responsible for training, which led to a number of hysterically funny conversations. But they did it. The Brits have a fine capability to train Third World military. There is a little bit of European military strategies that probably aren't completely appropriate, but that's what they were teaching. I thought they did a terrific job. I spent a lot of time working with my British colleagues. Of course, we had a contact group going over 435, African policy, so I saw a lot of them.

Q: What would you do when you'd get together with the contact group and the British ambassador? Would you sit around and wring your hands about Mugabe and try to figure out...

MILLER: No. There wasn't the perception that Mugabe was going to be able to overwhelm the whole situation. At that point, Zimbabwe was such a successful multi-layered society that I think we all thought would ultimately prosper... Bernard Chidzero, Dennis Norman, Anderson, Dan Stannard, a robust private sector and just an immense number of competent blacks emerging in the private sector. Everybody wanted to make this country work. I think our sense at that time was that at some point Robert Mugabe would step down and would be credited with having led the struggle to independence, and then having served as head of government for X number of years, and then having gratefully retired to some African-wide position. So, we were very interested in getting to know a very wide-range of leadership and influencing that leadership and working with that leadership and so on. While I eventually recommended that we terminate the AID program to Zimbabwe because of Mugabe's behavior, for most of the time, we just thought Mugabe was an excess in a system that had enough self-correcting weight that it would work.

Q: How about high-level visits while you were there?

MILLER: Frankly the most interesting high-level visit was the H.J. Heinz board. Tony O'Reilly was running H.J. Heinz and they acquired an edible oils company in Zimbabwe.

Q: You might explain H.J. Heinz.

MILLER: H.J. Heinz makes soups and edible oils - ketchups and so on. Based in Pittsburgh. It is a large publicly traded U.S. corporation. They bought a company called Oliveen, which made edible oils. Heinz was very high on Zimbabwe. I think that they had started also looking at the production of tomatoes in Zimbabwe to make tomato paste for their ketchup. So, Tony, who was chairman and CEO of Heinz at that time and had been a neighbor of mine in Pittsburgh, brought his whole board out to Zimbabwe. I thought that was the most interesting opportunity I had to show off Zimbabwe to an interesting group of people.

From the U.S. Government side, the most interesting player was probably Congressman Steve Solarz, who is a liberal Democrat but who did a fine job on a CODEL that he was on. He didn't shop. He didn't shoot animals. He didn't waste my time. Every moment we were together he was trying to learn something. He asked me what points he should make to the head of government to be of assistance to Chester Crocker and George Shultz. This was a side of Steve Solarz for which he never got enough credit.

Q: I've interviewed him.

MILLER: I like him.

Q: Everywhere he went, he was a workaholic, but a workaholic on target all the time.

MILLER: You bet.

Q: He knew his brief and he was a source. He'd go back to Congress and people would ask him and he knew and he wasn't off on a particularly ideological thing.

MILLER: I was very impressed with him. Then unlike some other visitors, when he was through with meetings, he would come back and make certain that you knew what happened. He was a most responsible visitor.

Q: You were there from when to when?

MILLER: Most of '84 and most of '85. Then I left in '86.

Q: How did you find life there?

MILLER: Just about perfect. It's a lovely place to live. The people are nice, the country is nice. It's hard to beat. Someday it will get back on its feet and it will continue to be just a wonderful place.

Q: While you were there, were there troubles with connections with neighbors in the area?

MILLER: We had a struggle going on in Mozambique between the government of Samora Machel and a group of insurgents that were notionally anti-communist, pro-Christian. We had some Americans involved in that as volunteers. Zimbabwe had a good number of Zimbabwean troops across the border supporting Machel. I occasionally got involved in going down to Maputo to work with the mission down there in terms of how they saw that struggle. Of course, we would go to South Africa on and off because we wanted to be in touch with our mission down there. There were officials in the South African government who were interested in how we saw things, so there was a fairly active dialogue down the Capetown/J'berg/Zim path and the Maputo/Zim path.

Q: Is there anything else we should cover in this Zimbabwe thing?

MILLER: I think Zim was a frustrating assignment. I spent probably six months back here working on something called the South Africa Working Group trying to work on policy here in the capital. I think Dr. Crocker and I pretty rapidly after 12 or 18 months reached a conclusion that I was wasting my time there. And I was.

SCOTT E. SMITH
Deputy Mission Director, USAID
Harare (1986-1987)

Scott E. Smith was born in Indiana but graduated from high school in Brazil. He spent three years at Johns Hopkins University in Maryland and

then transferred to the School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) in Washington, DC, earning a B.A. and an M.A. Mr. Smith joined USAID in 1974 and served in Bolivia, Haiti, Swaziland, Zimbabwe, Ecuador, and Washington, DC. He retired in May 1996 and was interviewed by W. Haven North on January 14, 1997.

SMITH: I mentioned earlier that the mission in Harare had responsibility for both the bilateral program in Zimbabwe as well as the SADCC regional program. Up to that point, the regional program had basically been handled by Roy as the director and Dale Pfeiffer, who was the regional development officer. But, in 1985 it looked like the SADCC program had become more established--I think about \$50 million a year was earmarked in appropriation legislation for the regional program--so the mission in Zimbabwe was reorganized to create two deputy directors, one for the regional program and one for the bilateral program, with still one director and separate regional and bilateral staffs. So the regional program would have a deputy director and staff that corresponded to the programs which they had, which were largely construction and engineering, whereas the bilateral program was more agriculture, human resources and training, so had a program officer, an agricultural and human resources staff. I went there to oversee the bilateral program.

While Swaziland was the country we enjoyed living in the most, Zimbabwe is and remains my favorite country, which is actually saying something because I grew up and liked Bolivia, and we also enjoyed Ecuador quite a bit, but Zimbabwe stands apart from that; it was a case all its own. There were the physical attributes, just the natural beauty and the wildlife, etc., which we very much got involved in and enjoyed during our time in southern Africa, and especially Zimbabwe. But the other thing that made it stand apart was that I felt we had the most appropriate, innovative and best AID program that I saw in my career. In large measure, that was what motivated my interests in going there in the first place and to have an opportunity to be associated with that program was a great opportunity.

Zimbabwe became independent in 1980 following 15 years of war after Rhodesia issued its "Unilateral Declaration of Independence" from Britain. In 1980-81, with the coming of the Reagan administration, there were not a lot of funds for staff or for expensive programs in Africa. The "more with less" theme was being sounded, as I mentioned before. Both the portfolio of projects and the structure of the mission in Zimbabwe were designed from the outset to be streamlined and to economize on the staff needed to implement it. I have thought a lot about this, and don't really know how much of the success or nature of that program was due to the fact that Zimbabwe had, as a legacy of both the British colonial period and 15 years as Rhodesia in the UDI period, very well established, public administration structures and procedures and generally very well trained government employees. In that respect, it was much more like Latin America than probably any place else in Africa, in terms of the quality and capabilities of the public administration.

In addition to that, following Zimbabwe's independence there was a huge return of people, Zimbabweans who had been living in Europe or North America, who made a personal commitment, sometimes at great costs to themselves and their careers, to come back to their country and try to make independence work. To try to realize the ideals of independence and the struggles that many people had fought and died for. So, there was a dynamic there, an enthusiasm, a commitment of people, many of whom had come there at substantial cost to themselves to try to make things work.

And, the priorities that the government had were the priorities that AID had in terms of agricultural development, health care, education and the basic human needs efforts. To a unique extent, I think, in my experience, there was a coincidence of views on the development priorities and development programs and development approaches at that time. Those factors allowed the design of a program which was substantial in size. The commitments that were made as part of the Zimbabwe independence negotiations and agreements were for \$75 million a year for three years, a package of \$225 million over the early years of 1980s. Substantial resources, on a par with what was happening in most of the Latin American countries. And yet, the programs were designed as a combination of non-project and project assistance in a way that allowed flexibility to respond to local circumstances when they came up.

The key programs were a commodity import program that provided machinery and capital equipment that was very much needed by Zimbabwe because of restrictions that had been in place throughout the Rhodesia period and were still in place because foreign exchange was rationed and controlled. There was an agricultural sector program, a human resources or education sector program, and a family planning program. Those were the four key programs through which this \$75 million a year was channeled.

Both of the sector programs had a combination of non-project and project assistance. There was a large CIP (commodity import program) portion, which generated local currencies. In the agriculture program, the CIP was limited to commodities for the agricultural sector. The "project" portion funded technical assistance that which was available to complement the local currency generations. Project funds also financed some commodity purchases that were directly related to program activities.

The agricultural program, I think, was the most interesting, but was similar to the other ones as well. There was a coordinating committee chaired by the ministry of finance, on which the ministry of agriculture and a whole range of government agencies that were involved in the agricultural sector were represented. AID was involved as an observer, a participant but not a full voting member. There was a \$45 million program, \$30 million of which was the commodity import program that generated local currencies, and \$15 million was for technical assistance and other dollar costs. Those resources, in effect, were all put on the table and government agencies, mostly, but some private ones as well, could put together proposals for the use of those funds. These proposals had to be designed to achieve goals that were set within the context of the program for the whole sector. So, the design of the program identified, I don't remember exactly how many, but let's say five different areas, different subsectors, or outcomes or goals, that the program

had, that were Zimbabwean goals as well as our own. A process was designed for agencies to propose individual project activities that would make progress towards those goals or be in those sectors. This committee then reviewed the proposals and allocated the resources to them based on whether they needed local currency or dollars or a combination.

Q: What was the over all goal?

SMITH: The focus was on agricultural development and within that, as I recall, to develop commercial agriculture by African farmers, to diversify crop production, to expand the research and extension activities in agriculture aimed at African farmers. The vast majority of commercial agricultural output in Zimbabwe was, and I think still is, produced by a relative handful, about 100,000, white commercial farmers--maybe not even that many. Of course, the vast majority of the population historically had been disenfranchised and put on the least productive land. So the real focus of the program was to try to expand agricultural opportunities to the majority of farmers in the country. The Commercial Farmers Union, the white farmers union, and other groups were also partners in that process. So, there was a real attempt to try to bring into the process the experience and resources of the white commercial farmers as well. Our focus was on improving research and extension, crop diversification, commercial crop production, training programs at the university.

The vehicle for the grant funds, the technical assistance funds, was a large contract with Michigan State University, but it wasn't the traditional project with a contract that funded a team of advisors that was identified from the beginning. The contract was more of a mechanism that was put into place to allow Zimbabwe to access US expertise as it related to the support of its program.

That was essentially the structure of the agricultural program, a \$45 million project. There were a couple of other smaller, more traditional projects in the agriculture sector, but this was the principal one. Because of the way the program was set up, the leadership and direction of the program came from the Zimbabwean government and involved all organizations, public and private, in the sector in defining and approving activities, a combination of local and dollar funds managed very flexibly and openly. Our agriculture staff in Zimbabwe--which was three people, one US direct hire, one Zimbabwean professional and one secretary--were able to manage a portfolio well in excess of \$50 million because of the way the program was set up.

The human resources program and the CIP were set up in a similar way. The CIP, itself, generated local currency which was programmed through a similar but different group in the ministry of finance. The education program was a little different, but basically was a similar structure. It had some non-project funds, some project funds. They were programmed through a process like the one for the agriculture program. There was a substantial training component to the project. That whole program was managed by one direct hire and one Zimbabwean professional and one secretary/administrative assistant who handled a lot of the paperwork for the participant training program. There was a

large technical assistance contract for that program as well, which was with the Academy for Educational Development. In addition to being the channel for all technical assistance and direct dollar costs for education programs, this contract was actually the vehicle for implementing all of the overseas training activities financed by the entire portfolio.

The family planning was then, and remains, one of the most successful family planning programs in Africa, if not the world. It had the personal attention of and was led by the sister-in-law of President Mugabe, who gave it very dynamic leadership. The program was very innovative in reaching a lot of rural people, combining both traditional and modern methods.

Q: You had a fair amount of technical support from REDSO didn't you?

SMITH: We had some, a lot of which was in the project design and in the legal and contracting areas. But the staff of the bilateral program in Zimbabwe was, if you include the director and the deputy director, eight US direct hires and a similar number of Zimbabwean professionals and a small support staff. The entire staff of the mission, including the regional program, was 45 people, for a program that was in size equivalent to the one in Ecuador, where the staff was 135. That was 45 people for both the bilateral and regional program. There was some support from REDSO, but the day-to-day technical support was managed by that mission because from the outset it was designed to be a "more with less" kind of program.

Q: What were some of the key considerations that made that possible?

SMITH: Well, as I mentioned before, I think a lot of the public administration's capacity and the integrity of the systems that existed in Zimbabwe account for that. And, I think too, that the coincidence of interests, the commitment to do the kind of things that we typically try to promote, was by and large there. There were policy dialogue issues, but nowhere that I had been before or since was there the notion of a true partnership, an equal relationship, between AID and a recipient country as I felt in Zimbabwe.

Actually that was not always comfortable because you kind of get used to saying, "Well, if I am paying for this then I can call the shots and have my way." There was a very memorable deputy or assistant secretary of education who was usually a thorn in our side, but I think was motivated by a real concern, a real commitment to doing the kinds of things that we agreed on doing, but had an anti-American or anti-Western edge to him. He was very clear on a number of occasions that just because we were giving the money or providing it on a grant basis, that didn't mean that we could decide or direct them how to use it. And I think that is right. So often AID is able to use its position as the grantor to get people, at least on the surface, to do things that they may not be persuaded are the right things to do. What this did in Zimbabwe was make us have to persuade them of our point of view intellectually, so they were committed to it; we were not about to say to them to do something because we are bankrolling it. That was a different role and a more difficult role in some cases, but I think it was the right role and the only role to be successful in these kinds of efforts.

Q: Did the program have, in the context of today's interests in results, very specific benchmarks?

SMITH: No. In terms of today's world they probably would not have measured up in terms of the degree of specificity of the goals, strategic objectives of those kinds of things. But they were in that direction, and, again, like the health project in Swaziland, I think they were precursors of the kinds of programs that AID is looking at today. If you look at the concept of the re-engineered AID system, the absence of projects and instead programs built around strategic objectives, in the language of the early to mid '80s, that is what those programs in Zimbabwe were. They were sector programs--they identified a number of constraints, identified a number of areas of focus--that began to identify some sort of proto-goals, not in specific terms, but provided the structure around which individual tactics and activities could be chosen, in this case by a group of people headed by the ministry of finance and involving a variety of organizations from the sector to program and to use those resources.

Q: How could you be sure that all of these components and different interests added up to something that was going to achieve what you are trying to accomplish as opposed to a sort of political process with everybody getting a piece of the action?

SMITH: Well, that was a concern. We did do some evaluations of the program. I think because we were in the middle of the implementation of the program, they focused more on how the activities were going. The question you raise is a valid one of "what does it all add up to?" I didn't have the sense that there was a mentality of "I'll approve your project if you approve mine and we will allocate this and make everybody happy." I think it was a serious effort. Activities were turned down and I think the review process focused on the merits of an activity. That doesn't respond to the concern about how do you know that this all adds up to something. Was there a large strategic vision behind this and people went out looking for pieces to fill in gaps from things that just naturally surfaced? There wasn't that. Not that there couldn't have been, but I don't have the sense that there was, but then that wasn't really the spirit of the times, anyway. This was, I think, several years ahead of its time in terms of what AID was doing elsewhere. But, it wouldn't be fair to say that in the early and mid '80s in Zimbabwe, AID was already carrying out exactly the kinds of programs that were envisioned by the re-engineering of the mid '90s.

Q: But the proof is in the results regardless. What were the results of these programs? Were they being effective? Did they achieve the broad goals?

SMITH: Yes, the programs, themselves, were very effective. In these kinds of programs, one is often measuring their success by national level changes and impact. Certainly in terms of those kinds of indicators the agricultural sector and the education sector, and especially the family planning program, were very successful in the early and mid '80s in Zimbabwe.

What contributions could be attributed to the monies and the roles that we played? I think that is a different question. The activities, themselves, sort of anecdotally, seemed to be by and large quite successful in achieving the objectives that they set up, and the overall macro trends in terms of agriculture production, the increases in agricultural production by African farmers, the number of people enrolled in universities were positive. But those were things that the government was emphasizing across the board, so it is really hard to isolate what the impact of our resources was on that, except that we were part of that effort and supportive of that effort and that effort was being very successful.

That is the positive side and this part of my Zimbabwe experience stands as the best and highest point of my AID career and, in some respects, my life. But, there was a negative side, and it came to take over. As I've said, there was a tremendous coincidence of views that the US and AID had with the Zimbabwe government on development issues, and we had an excellent and constructive relationship with the government. In addition, the government of Zimbabwe pursued very pragmatic policies on economic issues, particularly vis-a-vis its dependence on South Africa. This was not at all predictable, given the fact that they had just won their independence after 15 years of war with a regime similar to the one that was in South Africa. But they took a very pragmatic approach to their situation. They didn't expropriate all the white businesses and farms and didn't kick everybody out, but were constructive about trying to build a new nation that took advantage of those people, incorporated those people.

On the other hand, Zimbabwe's foreign policy was at right angles to ours. These were the days of "constructive engagement", when the Reagan administration was trying to take a more engaged approach with South Africa and pursue that as a way of resolving the apartheid situation. That was perceived in Zimbabwe as being very much in favor of apartheid, because we were not condemning it and if you are dealing with the South Africans then you are not with us.

I personally feel, and this is not necessarily the result of any profound political analysis, that Mugabe and the government had come to power after a long revolutionary war with a lot of expectations and a lot of promises to people that things were going to be different. They weren't really that different. They were taking a very pragmatic approach in terms of economics and that sort of things, were not expropriating the rich commercial farms and handing them out in small parcels to Zimbabwean African farmers. However, they needed an outlet rhetorically for their leftist ideology and for their promises and the expectations that had been raised in the people, and that was their foreign policy position. So, in the United Nations and in speeches and those kinds of things, they were vehemently and very outspokenly anti-American, even to the extent of being one of the two countries that voted with the Russians against the United Nations resolution that condemned the shooting down of the Korean airliner by the Soviet Union.

But, my view was that this essentially was harmless in terms of our interests because what was happening on the ground was very positive. It was not only that our program itself was a success, but the kinds of things that we were advocating in terms of development programs and economic pragmatism were what they were doing. But the

State Department didn't quite see it that way, and in those days it liked to get its way and liked people to say that they liked us and appreciated us. So, by the time I got to Zimbabwe in January, 1986, there already had been a real roller coaster relationship for several years. Probably only because of the commitments that Jimmy Carter had made at the Lancaster House negotiations leading to Zimbabwe's independence was the whole \$225 million actually provided, because if it had not been protected by that I think the funds would have been cut back. But, by the time I got to Zimbabwe it was at the end of that, the commitment having been already made, and we were a little more vulnerable to funding scrutiny. But, more importantly, there was this real love/hate relationship between Zimbabwe and the United States. When it came to speeches at the UN and other kinds of things, then everybody in the embassy and the State Department would go ballistic and start threatening to cut the AID program and that sort of thing.

One of the interesting things we did and that I got involved in was how to orchestrate some good public relations, how to set up circumstances where we could get government ministers to say nice things about the United States that would then get printed in the newspaper and could then get put into a cable back to Washington saying, "Look, here are some nice things they have said about us." Probably the most ridiculous extreme of that that I recall involved the very good housing guarantee program there (I forgot to mention it earlier), a part of which was that we purchased a couple of trucks for the housing ministry. They arrived and we had a ceremony to turnover the keys to these two new trucks to the ministry of housing. We orchestrated an event to which the minister or deputy minister of housing came to receive the trucks from AID. There were a series of speeches where the minister was scripted to say nice things about all the collaboration Zimbabwe and the United States have had. Then, that was put into the newspapers and we sent it back in a cable to Washington. After events like this, things would get better for a while, but then there would be a speech made at the UN or somewhere else and relations would nose dive.

As all of this was going on, Roy Stacy departed in May, 1986, to come back to Washington as, I think, an assistant secretary of State. This was only four months after I arrived in Zimbabwe. His successor, Allison Herrick, wasn't scheduled to get there until August. At the same time, Dale Pfeiffer, who had been in Zimbabwe for four years although he had just become deputy director for the regional program, left to become deputy director in India, and his replacement also was not expected to arrive until August. So, from May until August, not only was I the deputy director for the bilateral program, I became the acting deputy director for the regional program and the acting mission director, because there weren't that many people there. The regional staff had just begun building up. In fact, they had five positions on the organizational chart, but only one or two of those people were actually there, so I got to wear that hat as well. So, it was kind of a busy summer. When I went to Zimbabwe in January, this was the first senior management job I had had, and by May I was the acting mission director and acting regional director as well.

That would have been okay. I didn't necessarily enjoy this political back and forth process (and this is where the politics of foreign aid were again beginning to rear its head

in my career), but I think we were being creative in dealing with that, as I was saying with the turning over of the trucks' keys and those kinds of things, but trying to respond to that and trying to get in front of people in Washington some of the successes that we were having, trying to reinforce the view that there was a partnership here, that we see eye to eye on these things and there is more to it than the surface reaction to these kind of crazy foreign policy speeches. And, we were moderately successful along that zig zag path.

But, on the Fourth of July, Jimmy Carter happened to be in Harare on a private visit having to do, I think, with his work with Habitat for Humanity. Since he was viewed as having been a key figure in Zimbabwe's independence given his support for the Lancaster House process and agreements, he was a fairly revered person in Zimbabwe and a very popular ex-president. It was really just coincidental that he was there on the Fourth of July. The embassy invited him to the traditional Fourth of July mid-day events. It had been agreed, because this was during another time of difficulties in terms of the foreign policy speech making, between the embassy and the government that there wouldn't be long speeches. The Zimbabwean government representative would say a few nice things and particularly welcome President Carter, and then the chargé d'affaires (we were also without an ambassador at the time), would say a few things and President Carter would say a few things. All together that would be maybe ten minutes and then we would go on with the toasts and cut the cake and that sort of thing.

So, the chargé, Gib Lanpher, who ten years later became ambassador to Zimbabwe, did his little part and Jimmy Carter did his little speech saying nice things about Zimbabwe and the AID program and those kinds of things, and then the government representative started to talk.

Q: Who was the government representative?

SMITH: It was the minister of youth, sport and culture. He probably had been setup for this, I think. I'm not even sure he knew what he was going to say because certainly the speech was not about youth, sport and culture. The first few minutes of the speech were aimed at Great Britain and its policy vis-a-vis South Africa, which under the Thatcher government was similar policy to ours, and, of course, Britain being the original colonial power in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe easily came in for special criticism, even ahead of the United States. I first thought this was going to be an astute political, sort of between the lines thing, and that some parallels were going to be drawn--and they were--between the fact that both the United States and Zimbabwe had gained their independence from Britain, what we stood for and all those kinds of things. But, after a little bit of ranting and raving about British policy towards South Africa, the speech slipped into the familiar refrain of criticizing the US and the double standards and how could we do this, etc.

Q: This was all written text?

SMITH: Yes, it was, he was reading it. That went on for about 20 minutes and I don't really remember at what egregious point in the speech that the chargé and President

Carter walked out in the middle of the speech. And with them went two-thirds of the room, including most of the rest of the diplomatic corps and other official representatives. I don't even think the minister of youth, sport and culture knew what was happening until he looked up from the paper and saw his audience had disappeared. But, with President Carter being there there was a lot of press around covering this and instantly it was beamed around the world, and the BBC and the Voice of America reported that this speech had been made and that the chargé and President Carter had walked out in protest over this and hadn't even cut the cake at the Fourth of July party. In fact, by the time I got home a couple of hours later, on the BBC was the news that this had happened in Harare.

That night the AID program to Zimbabwe was suspended indefinitely. As it turned out it was suspended for about three years, but at the time it was an indefinite suspension.

Q: Were you consulted at that time that that was happening?

SMITH: I was advised that that was going to be the recommendation of the embassy and I tried to argue, obviously ineffectively, that staying engaged was a better way to influence the government than cutting off relationships. I made all of the arguments that I could muster. I was out of my league at that point. I couldn't think of anything I could do to change that and probably there was nothing that could have been to change that particular outcome. The program was indeed frozen, suspended.

Q: That was all activities or only new commitments?

SMITH: It was only new commitments, although we fought for a while over what was already in the pipeline, because we had actually signed in the month or two prior to that a substantial amount of money. There was a time when there was serious consideration being given in Washington, I understood, to deobligating those funds. I took the position that if they did that then I would resign and someone else would have to come and take away unilaterally money that was signed in agreements in good faith. I don't know if I would have resigned, but it didn't happen so I didn't have to make that final decision. The pipeline was allowed to remain, but any new agreements were gone.

Q: Did you have any new agreements pending?

SMITH: Yes, we probably had obligated about half of our funds for that year at that point. Because of the roller coaster situation we had some clear sailing days in which we quickly readied some things to sign and had done what we could to do the groundwork for those in terms of congressional notifications and those kinds of things, but not everything was in that situation. About half of the program, which may have been \$20-30 million of funds that were envisioned for that year, were not signed at that point.

The exception to that was the population program and because it was viewed as a very successful program, we were able to work out an arrangement with the population office in Washington to fund that program centrally through one of the international population PVOs, who then in turn would make the funds available to the Zimbabwe family

planning program, but not through a bilateral agreement. So, that program was able to survive the suspension through that detour.

Q: Was that your idea?

SMITH: Well, I participated in that, but I don't know that I can claim ownership. It was something we came up with--the program officer, who was Lucretia Taylor, who is now director some place in Africa, and Duff Gillespie, who was then and still is the head of the population office in Washington. The agriculture sector program, the human resources program, the CIP, those programs were gone, at least the funding for them was gone. The regional program remained, in fact remained a major program for many years.

Q: Before we talk about the regional program, do you have any insight, understanding, of what was behind this action of the Zimbabwe government and who was the one who promoted this effort?

SMITH: I have none. I am sure there was no understanding of the implications. In the immediate aftermath there was this whole big thing about apologizing because the speech had been really, literally, insulting, even to President Carter. So, there was this sort of tug and pull between Robert Mugabe and Ronald Reagan, with Mugabe saying, "I will apologize to Carter because he is a decent person and someone we respect, but I don't have anything to apologize to Ronald Reagan for." I don't think it was intentional.

Q: Was it a Mugabe initiative?

SMITH: I don't think so. I think it was that the foreign ministry and a couple of other ministries were sort of the radical wing of the party and the ones that were instigating these kinds of speeches in the UN and other places. It wasn't any different from that and I think they just saw one more opportunity to do another "in your face" kind of thing. I don't know that it was a calculated campaign. I certainly don't think that there was any weighing of the possible consequences.

Q: Do you think by responding the way we did that we played into their hand?

SMITH: Absolutely. It was among one of the more ridiculous and childish things that I have seen happen in my career. It was really the epitome of "we will take our marbles and go home if you don't say nice things about us." The speech was not diplomatic and not an appropriate thing to do, but it had nothing to do with our relationship with Zimbabwe on the ground and their development programs and our cooperation with them. And it had no impact on anything that mattered, in my view. Yet it was an extremely childish and arrogant attitude on our part to say, "If this is all of the appreciation you can give us, then too bad," without looking below the surface at the that actions were being taken, not just the words that were being spoken, in our joint efforts.

Q: Did it have any affect on our policy at the time?

SMITH: No, except for the AID program. It wasn't only the AID program, I think that had an effect on our ability to engage a whole range of influential people in the government in areas where we had been partners and colleagues--agriculture and education, and labor and finance.

Q: So, you think it alienated those who were friendly to us?

SMITH: It made it much more difficult for us to keep up a relationship with them and for us to have an influence on their programs and activities, because the medium for that relationship was cut off. The only thing that we had to talk to them about any more was how to close down some of the programs, instead of how to continue to help support what they were trying to do. It was totally shortsighted in terms of any longer term interests in the development of the country or our interest in the country in anything else.

Q: Or, its political role within the region?

SMITH: Right. It had no effect on what happened in South Africa.

Q: Or our policy towards South Africa?

SMITH: No. It took another ten years and some very special circumstances down there to evolve. This remains the darkest moment of my life really, not just my career, but my life.

Q: You were going to talk about the regional program.

SMITH: I was only going to say that the bilateral program, although stopped short in its tracks, had a certain pipeline and in some cases was able to fund activities for another couple of years, but on a phasing down level, and the family planning program was kind of rescued and saved. However, the regional program was definitely on the way up. Funding continued to be earmarked in appropriations legislation for SADCC. The regional side of the mission was just getting staffed that summer. The new regional deputy director had been selected. A new mission director had been selected. After the suspension, there was some question as to whether she would come or not, but since the regional program was in Zimbabwe, they decided she should come. But, what happened was the dynamics in terms of what dominated the time and attention of the mission shifted from the bilateral program to the regional program.

Q: Was Zimbabwe included in the regional program?

SMITH: Yes. In fact, Zimbabwe was the lead country on the food security and a couple of others things and continued to get funds through the regional program for those regional efforts.

Q: Which we didn't provide through bilateral programs.

SMITH: Right. And, of course, the regional office continued to remain there, even while the bilateral program was closing down.

As I mentioned before, the staff of the two sides of the mission were highly complementary. The regional program had the engineering and the project development staff, the bilateral program had agriculture and human resources and the program office. So, after Allison Herrick got there, and after Pamela Hussey got there (she was the new deputy for the regional program), and after it looked like the suspension was going to last a while, we had a number of discussions of how to address the problem from a staffing standpoint. Again sole authorship is not relevant here, but I will take credit for the initiative of the idea of basically combining the two staffs into one, in a more traditional mission fashion, by having the formerly bilateral agricultural and human resources office take care of those issues on the regional side and having the project development office and engineering take care of whatever residual issues there were having to do with the bilateral program. It meshed together quite well, so that it would give some more forward looking things for the bilateral staff to be working on related to the regional program, and also would allow sufficient coverage for the remaining activities under the bilateral program.

But, there was one area where that combination wouldn't work: it didn't make sense to have two deputy directors. One of the things that I had done in addition, or as part of, the deputy director role for the bilateral program was to handle all of the administrative responsibilities in the mission. We did not have an AID direct hire administrative officer. We participated in a joint administrative office in the embassy for most of the time, although one of the things we did was to separate from that while I was there. I handled as deputy director a lot of the traditional administrative officer functions and had a couple of people working with me in that role. As time passed and as Allison and Pamela came, and as we began to put the mission together, more and more what I ended up doing was the administrative role. A little bit of that was okay, in fact one of the attractions for me in coming to Harare in the first place had been to get that kind of exposure, the operation of a mission program, but it became more and more of what I did and that was not the turn I had envisioned my career taking. I wasn't that interested in the regional program, although there may have been theoretically a point in time where I could have said maybe I would stay there as regional deputy and Pamela wouldn't come, but I wasn't that interested and didn't want to do that anyway to her.

So, by the last part of 1986, I felt increasingly marginal to what was going on there. Not that relations were bad at all within the mission, but there was just less and less for me to do. I began to make phone calls around to different people, first to the African bureau, as to what positions might be available. By that point in the game, the fall of 1986, there weren't that many, because for most of the deputy director positions elsewhere in Africa candidates were already identified and there wasn't much that was available. So, drawing on the contacts I had had in my Latin America days, particularly ones related to the work I did on staffing issues for project development officers, I got back in touch with the Latin America bureau and the management office there, as well as, indirectly, with Buster

Brown, who at that point was deputy or acting assistant administrator for Latin America. Out of those discussions I learned that there was going to be an opening for a deputy director in Ecuador. After several calls back and forth, in December I was offered that position and agreed that I would finish out my tour in Zimbabwe in the summer and then go to Quito at the end of the summer.

ALLISON BUTLER HERRICK
Mission Director, USAID
Harare (1986-1990)

Allison Butler Herrick grew up in Minnesota and graduated from Smith College and Yale. She has served in USAID projects in Kenya and Zimbabwe. She was interviewed by W. Haven North in 1996.

HERRICK: After two years in PPC, I was appointed as Mission Director for Zimbabwe, and for the Regional Program in Southern Africa.

Q: *What year would this have been?*

HERRICK: This was in June of 1986. Then there was a political event in Zimbabwe which caused some concern in Washington. At the annual celebration of our Independence Day in Harare, on the 4th of July, the United States reception was held in a hotel. The relationship between the United States Mission and the Zimbabwe Government had not been easy in recent times and there was very little communication. It had been very difficult for the Embassy to find somebody in the Foreign Ministry to talk to about how they were going to organize this particular reception. There finally were meetings, and it was agreed that the Minister of Foreign Affairs would come to the reception and that both he and the American Ambassador would make very short remarks. They knew that former President Carter, who was on a trip to Africa to promote the river blindness and agricultural programs of the Carter Center would be in Zimbabwe on the 4th of July. He would be invited to the reception but not to speak. This was all very much at the last minute.

As it turned out, the Foreign Minister did not come but sent a Junior Minister of Government, a younger man who was then Minister of Sports and Culture, to represent the Government and to present the Government speech. That speech went on and on, for a total of about 40 minutes, and it was rife with insults to the United States. At this time the Congress had not yet passed any anti-apartheid legislation, and the United States had not condemned apartheid in South Africa. President Mugabe of Zimbabwe was very upset with the United States and Margaret Thatcher and the British Government for not taking steps to isolate South Africa. The speech condemned the United States; it was pejorative and contained personal references--all-in-all a nasty speech.

President Carter walked out of the reception. The American Chargé d'Affaires and the British, French, German and other Western Ambassadors walked out with him. The young Minister of Government continued his speech to an almost empty room. After this event the Chargé d'Affaires, Gib Lanpher, spent several days awaiting an apology from the Zimbabwe Government, which of course did not come. The speech had been given deliberately. So, for a while, the United States decided to delay the appointment of a new Ambassador in Zimbabwe, to have a Chargé only. My departure for Zimbabwe was delayed for a few weeks.

For a few years the program for Zimbabwe was continued only to spend out the "pipeline", with no new commitments except for funds brought in from a combination of 10 to 15 centrally-funded projects supporting family planning. Later the a program of new commitments was reinstated, but only at four, five, or six million dollars annually.

Q: Compared to what?

HERRICK: The United States had made much larger commitments to Zimbabwe in the past. This was an interesting story. The black majority people of Rhodesia had had a long war of independence against the regime of Ian Smith, who had proclaimed a unilateral declaration independence from Britain in 1965 and ran a country that was, in my view, well on the way to being worse than South Africa in terms of segregation and tension between the white colonial type rulers and the majority of the population. Independence came finally in 1980. Unlike many countries which have participated in consultative groups organized by the World Bank, Zimbabwe organized its own donor conference. The United States was there, and was the first donor country to make a commitment. We pledged \$75 million a year for five years, and did live up to that pledge.

The AID Mission in Zimbabwe, first under Chuck Grader who was there less than a year before going off to manage the bauxite mines in Guinea, and then under Roy Stacy whom I succeeded, established a program that was intended to be managed by a small staff. The country was sufficiently well developed economically; many things could be done by the Zimbabweans. But they had been isolated by the world under economic sanctions and they needed certain kinds of help: updated technology and financing to bring new machinery into the country. This was an excellent place to demonstrate the kind of sector program that Peter McPherson had been promoting around the world.

I will use the agriculture program as an example. The total commitment in the agriculture program was, I think, \$75 million. Fifteen million dollars were intended for a technical transfer program to develop the Agriculture Department of the University of Zimbabwe into a viable degree-granting Faculty and to develop a graduate program. This program was carried out by two U.S. universities: Louisiana State University and Michigan State University. Professors came from the United States to teach at the University of Zimbabwe while Zimbabweans received training in the United States. There were some funds in the \$15 million to finance development of laboratories. The veterinary faculty was also assisted with equipment that had to be purchased abroad.

The other \$60 million was made available through the Zimbabwe Government to the private sector of Zimbabwe for purchase of American goods. The private firms, farmers and farmers' associations of Zimbabwe had to borrow money from their bankers and deposit the equivalent of the cost of the American machinery, in Zimbabwe dollars, into a special account held by the Zimbabwe Government. The American machinery included farm machinery and processing machinery. For grain storage silos all around the country, Danish aid provided machinery and the Government provided the local funds (generated through our import program) for the cement and for the construction. The local funds had been paid to the government by private sector importers of the U.S. goods we had financed. About 90 percent of the value of the import permits went to the private sector, but 10 percent was reserved for the Cotton Board, a quasi-governmental organization which had the monopoly right to purchase all cotton grown in the country. That exception to the private sector policy was justified because of the changes that were underway in the cotton growing sector in Zimbabwe. Whereas about five percent of all cotton had been grown by small holders at the start of independence, four years later the small grower share of all cotton production was 65 percent. The cotton, very high in quality, is sold to loyal buyers in Asia. Thus, the United States could support the program in spite of legislation prohibiting support for agricultural products that will compete with our own production.

At the University of Zimbabwe, construction of a new building for the Faculty of Agriculture was carried out completely by Zimbabweans with monies raised from this program. The architects were Zimbabweans and the construction firms were Zimbabwean. This in contrast to Edgerton College in Kenya, where we provided a full time supervisor for procurement of goods and supervision of the construction.

Zimbabwe, in its isolation from the world under sanctions, had developed a manufacturing industry. When you went through the supermarket it was like going to a market in England in about the 1930's. There were all sorts of custard powders and tinned fruits and sweets. They had developed their agriculture to earn money from exports (mainly tobacco and cotton, and in some years also maize) and to provide the kind of foods that the European sector wanted to eat. The country had business skills in addition to its well developed agricultural skills. The commercial agriculture sector was dominated by white growers, who used labor intensive methods to produce high quality goods.

As the years went on, however, Zimbabwe was having difficulty competing in the world because its manufacturing industries had been protected. The clothing industry, for example, was manufacturing shirts for Zimbabweans but could not sell shirts in competition with other world producers. That kind of problem still faces Zimbabwe. The Government is still reluctant to release controls on prices, although some major steps have been taken with encouragement and finally financial assistance from the World Bank.

When I arrived in Zimbabwe in 1986, the World Bank, in its indicative country program, in its internal planning, was prepared to make \$120 million available to Zimbabwe almost

immediately if the country was willing to make some policy changes about the way the economy was run. I left Zimbabwe in 1990, at that time the Government was preparing its final draft of an economic adjustment program--one which they insisted must be their program, not a program imposed by the World Bank. That program was not fully adopted until 1991 or 1992, but then some major changes were made. Although I saw an article in the *Economist* just last week indicating that the marketing of grains is not yet completely free, that some of the major agricultural boards like the Cotton Board are only now being commercialized to the extent that they are supposed to making a profit. The Cotton Board itself was ready to operate on a commercial basis back in 1988, but could not do so under the government's price control system. Full steps to privatization apparently have yet to be implemented. The President of the country basically does not agree with a market approach to the economy, although personally he is very strongly committed to helping individuals. His early Jesuit education gave him a very powerful sense of the value of individual human beings.

Q: This is Robert Mugabe?

HERRICK: This is Robert Mugabe. He's a committed socialist, though he would understand market oriented economic principals, if he really tried. One time an advisor whom we had financed to help organize some tax reform, and later to prepare proposals for reducing controls on the parastatal bodies, told me of a series of informal seminars he had prepared for the President. He and the Chief Secretary in government were talking about a question that was vexing the President--why is it that no one seems to want to invest in Zimbabwe? There was a telephone call; the President wanted a briefing. There followed a series of briefings about economic principles and what kinds of change would promote a positive response on the part of the private sector, both internal and external. Mugabe didn't trust the private sector, partly because of his fundamentally strong socialist commitment, and partly because it consisted mostly of Whites, and he had had a long part in a war against a very repressive White regime. So the story continues.

Q: Did you meet with Mugabe yourself?

HERRICK: Yes, I met with Mugabe, accompanying the Ambassador a few times. There were also times on public occasions when I was the acting Ambassador, when he came down the reception line. On occasions like that he was a person totally withdrawn. Zimbabwe is still one of those countries that requires the diplomatic community to be present when a Head of State comes in and out of the airport. So you stand in line, and he comes along with his Chief of Protocol and his eyes completely glazed over. On occasions when I really saw him talking, he seemed to be a very shy person. He seemed to have very few cronies, or none. He didn't have a kitchen cabinet, he didn't sit down and drink beer at the end of the day and talk about what was going on in the country. People found it difficult to tell him what was going on. In 1990, a new American Ambassador, an African American, was able to make personal contact with him. Both of their fathers had worked as carpenters, they had both gone to Jesuit schools and there were other things like that. He could open up, but he needed something to help him open up. He's a

withdrawn person. He isn't a scary person like Daniel Arap Moi, who is tall and impressive and uses his mien to intimidate people.

Q: What were you as Mission Director trying to accomplish during that time, given that there was a cut in aid but you had a fairly large pipeline of resources?

HERRICK: We did, we had a very large program to continue implementing. The \$90 million education sector program continued until about 1990, and the agriculture sector program was about completed in 1989. We had an interesting time with the family planning program because it was supported by a number of world-wide programs that were operating in several countries, including Zimbabwe. We did bring in several millions of dollars a year in technical assistance in family planning programs. I've spoken of the private enterprise family planning program. There were programs to train midwives, there was continued support for the family planning operation of the Ministry of Health which had been nationalized after independence. Zimbabwe, like Kenya, was already showing the statistical effects of education for females and the availability of family planning services. The numbers of women evincing a desire for a smaller family was growing, the number of women using modern contraceptive methods was increasing, and the population growth rate was beginning to go down.

In the last two years I was in Zimbabwe, the United States saw enough change in the Zimbabwe Government's ability to work with us to come to the conclusion that we could have a small AID Program of four to five million dollars a year of new money. Since the two major sector programs were coming to an end and since we were deeply concerned about the continuing controls on pricing and the monopoly controls in most sectors of the economy, we wanted to use our new funds for purposes of policy change. Therefore, we used the funds to bring in expertise that was acceptable to the Zimbabweans, including a professor who was still a Zimbabwean citizen but had been teaching at the University of Washington.

We also financed studies carried out totally by Zimbabweans who might be influential in the government. Some of these individuals had been abroad as long as 17 and 18 years during the struggle for independence. They had gone overseas, or to other countries in Africa to finish their secondary education, sponsored by missionaries or by an AID project administered by the African American Institute to educate Africans of countries that were not yet majority ruled. As sponsorship continued, many of the students managed to earn university degrees and were teaching in the United States and in Canada. They returned home after independence. There were tensions between those who had spent the years of war against Rhodesia in Zambia or Mozambique or carrying on the internal guerilla war and those whose families and churches had helped them get out of the country. Most of the appointees to the highest level in government were individuals with a guerilla war history. But there were others, at other levels, particularly in the Ministry of Finance and at the University who were influential. One of the places of influence was the golf course. Golf seems to be one of the first sports in which Africans participated on a desegregated basis--of course there is no body contact in golf.

Q: What were the results of these initiatives on the policy and reform?

HERRICK: We were beginning to see some slow results. The country did establish its own Economic Structural Adjustment Program. Since 1990 (since my departure), they have devalued the currency several times and freed up the controls on the currency. They have reduced the government deficit. They have commercialized some operations and generally freed up grain marketing. There is one large remaining political question, and that is whether the government will take agricultural land from the commercial white farmers for purposes of resettlement. The history of resettlement after the independence war was not very positive. The lands were subdivided too far, so that the amount of land (especially if it was a semi arid area) was insufficient to support a family. The persons who had been resettled on the land were not farmers, did not come from a good strong farming tradition. Furthermore, the government had not actually used all the funds made available by the British to settle people on all the acreage that it had acquired after the war. This whole subject is a continuing controversy, with the result that the commercial farmers are not investing in their operations.

Q: Were we involved at all in the small farmer tribal trust lands issue in that aspect of development?

HERRICK: Not with the formal resettlement program--that was the realm of the British. But we were involved in helping small farmers through the programs made possible by the government's acquisition of local currencies under our sector assistance program. For example, with a very small amount of foreign exchange we brought over an individual through the Volunteers in Cooperative Assistance, our agricultural Peace Corps, to help improve the operations of producer cooperatives whose members are small farmers. It was fabulously successful. The American individual who came over established excellent working contacts in the government of Zimbabwe and with the White commercial farmers, who committed themselves to teach local cooperative organizations how to manage wholesale purchases of fertilizer, and distribution systems, and accounting systems, and how to manage distribution of pesticides, even how to establish a small retail store that members of the cooperative could use. It was a remarkable program.

We also helped finance, with the Canadians, a training institute where the small farmers could be trained in growing cotton. For example, one of the things they have to do in Zimbabwe, is to control pests; that includes burning the entire cotton crop at the end of the production year, every year. We also supported the farmer training institutes, the ones that train people up to the certificate level or diploma level. The change in the role of the small farmer in agricultural production in the ten years following independence was tremendous. The United States program had a large amount to do with it, but not because we brought Americans over. Except for that one instance of a volunteer whose hotel and airfare were paid by the government from local currencies generated by our program.

Q: Through the local currency program?

HERRICK: Yes, through the local currency program.

Q: We had a say in that program, I suppose.

HERRICK: We did, as advisers, but we did not have formal sign-off privileges as AID Missions have had in some countries, under which the AID Mission literally signs off on every small project. The Zimbabweans had the capacity to implement their own programs. If we had ideas we would go to the people in the appropriate Ministry to offer our suggestions. I don't recall a good idea ever being turned down, or stone-walled.

Q: So essentially we were supporting programs that they had developed?

HERRICK: Yes, and that they were ready to develop themselves. Sometimes we could help finance their studies through local consulting firms or their own consultant from the University as to whether something would work or not. It was a very interesting experience, and remarkable. The country was so young as an independent country that it was not remarkable in economic terms in comparison with the "tigers" of Asia, or some countries of Latin America...but its history was entirely different.

Q: They had a lot of talent?

HERRICK: They did.

Q: Compared to other African countries?

HERRICK: Yes, but there remains a problem, in that many of the White citizens who remained in the country have been slow to recognize the amount of talent that the Africans have. They have, after all, a very strong history of prejudice to overcome. None of them had ever worked side by side with an African, as many White Kenyans had. The commercial farmers in general are the most liberal that way. The small shop keepers are the least liberal.

Q: What about working with the Zimbabwean Government people? You obviously had good relations with many of them.

HERRICK: Excellent relations with individuals. As in Kenya we had an excellent working relationships in the Ministry of Finance, with the second level in the Ministry, and at the top.

Q: Who was that?

HERRICK: The Minister was Bernard Chidzero. He had worked for the UN, as head of UNIDO at one time. He was one in government who had not been in the guerilla war. He was a fine economist and he had the respect of the President. He had to find the line between what he believed might be done economically and what he thought would be acceptable. Our observation was, however, that when he had found it, he did not pursue it very aggressively. He was not a highly political person and he had perhaps been stung on

occasions when he tried to go farther than the political consensus would allow. Things had to move relatively slowly.

Zimbabwe was a place where the ethnic situation was very different from that of East Africa, which is subdivided into many linguistic groups. In Zimbabwe 80 percent of the people speak Shona, a Bantu language, and consider themselves one people, although different large clans appear to have varying degrees of political influence, and 20 percent of the people speak Ndebele, which is a Zulu language. The languages are not mutually intelligible. There were rivalries among the pre-independence groups that continued after independence. Joshua Nkomo was the leader of the Ndebele group and was kicked out of government by Mugabe after a cache of arms was found on his farm, until about 1988, when Mugabe brought him back into government and engineered a union of his party, the Popular Front, with Mugabe's ZANU (Zimbabwe African National Union). There had been some insecurity in the Western part of the country where the Ndebele lived, and that insecurity--occasional killings of tourists, murders of White farmers, burning of villages--was attributed through the years to South Africa. However, after Mugabe made his deal with Joshua Nkomo and brought him into government as the second of two Vice Presidents and offered amnesty to guerrillas who wanted to turn in their arms, the troubles stopped instantly.

Mugabe is absolutely dedicated to one-party rule, though under pressure he has permitted formation of alternate parties--and then has harassed them. It is very difficult for other parties to secure meeting rooms or gain permission for gatherings, and it does no good locally, in terms of small economic advantages and disadvantages, for an individual to be a member of an opposition party.

Q: Do you have understanding of why he had this view? Or was it just personal power and control?

HERRICK: I don't know. It's hard to guess about him. But I think it's only partly a question of personal power, for Mugabe. It is not totally the situation that Africans describe, saying, "We don't know what happens. We have this 'big man' thing that happens in our countries. After somebody has been head of government for awhile he wants to remain head of government forever and to be the single leader of the country."

I think with Mugabe, it started with a very strong conscientious view that he is responsible for the good of his people who had had a struggle and needed things done for them. He believes that he can do it and that the best way to do it is through a party that he can control. Because then he can control the way that people are helped out in the regions. Zimbabwe has very isolated areas, but it relatively good distribution systems. The road system is better than that of most African countries, and the independent government was organized to get relief to the disabled and the needy veterans of the struggle. (Furthermore, the first U.S. program grant, before the sector programs, was dedicated to rebuilding schools and clinics destroyed during the war and building new ones for villages that had never had them.)

The capabilities of Zimbabwe were demonstrated in their response to a major regional drought of 1991. I was involved in an evaluation of the United States response to that severe drought, a relatively rare occurrence in Southern Africa. The Disaster Relief Office and the Humanitarian Assistance people of AID in Washington were very surprised, and in fact upset, when the then Mission Director in Zimbabwe recommended that the relief foods sent from the United States should be distributed through Zimbabwe's own system. Usually such a program would go through non-government organizations, the major international non-government organizations and perhaps some local ones. The representatives of those international organizations in Zimbabwe were not interested in doing food distribution; they didn't have the infrastructure and they were involved in developmental activities. And local organizations were not capable of doing much more than to help distribute from the government's depots to the most isolated communities. In fact, Zimbabwe managed very well in response to that drought. Once more, that's a difference about the country.

Q: Did you find working with the Zimbabweans at the political level difficult?

HERRICK: Yes. In many ways the Zimbabweans were still fighting their guerrilla war--the Shona people in particular. They are not easy yet with outsiders, not easy with Caucasians and not easy with donor representatives. The World Bank Representative who arrived there in 1986 did a tremendous job of improving the deteriorated relations between the Bank and the Government. There is still a sense of reserve, however, especially among the Shona. It's hard to make personal friends with them; at least that's what I found. The White people in Zimbabwe don't have African friends--they never did have African friends. Whereas in Kenya you might have prejudices, or you might get remarks that show lack of understanding, there were always people who had worked together. The Ndebele people I found to be more open, easier to talk to. When I went each year to the big industrial fair held in Bulawayo, the second largest city and the capital in Ndebele region, I always found the people easy to talk to and politically very open. They were willing to talk about politics in a way that the Shona were not.

The Shona were apt to get behind the wagons--I know, that's an Afrikaans term. An American couple who had been at the University since before independence had a very hard time. They were committed socialists who believed they were part of the local scene. But, came the time when the husband, who was teaching at the law school, or the wife, who was an economist, were heckled at their seminars, and they were no longer welcomed socially. They were hurt because they thought they were working for the same goals as the people at the University. In the end, they left the country. There was another instance, of a professor who had studied at Colorado College and was enlisted to help organize a presentation by a USIA-sponsored visitor. At the preliminary session, all was friendly and positive, but at the evening presentation at the University, there was an organized "clack" of criticism, not controlled by our "friend". The visitor was not able to finish his presentation.

Q: This was not so much the ideas, but the fact that it was an outsider?

HERRICK: The USIA sponsor didn't know what was going on, except that a vituperative anti-American attitude had burst forth. Somehow, the sense of political oppression lingers among the Shona people.

Q: This was against the visitors for being White or being foreigners?

HERRICK: I don't know.

Q: But not so much the political ideas or concepts that were being taught?

HERRICK: The form it took was criticism of our political concepts, but the objectionable part was the way it was done. Many at the University held socialist views. That's often true in a developing country University, and that's why we want to talk with them, to share our differing views. In Zimbabwe, the departments of government and political science, the law school and the economics department were particularly doctrinaire in their socialism. But the people we worked with in agriculture and veterinary science and health were not as politically oriented.

Q: Looking back over that period, this is a very formative period in Zimbabwe, how do you see the Foreign Assistance Program that you managed affecting our U.S. interests or our interest in Zimbabwe? Our development interest as well as our political interests?

HERRICK: I think our presence in Zimbabwe needs to be considered in the context of our Regional Program as well as our bilateral program.

Q: Then let's go on to the Regional Program and come back to this.

HERRICK: Our Southern Africa Regional Program was designed to help the nine majority-ruled countries of the Southern African Development Coordination Council, SADCC, which consisted of the more recently independent countries of Mozambique, Angola and Zimbabwe, the three countries still in the customs and monetary realms of the Republic of South Africa, Botswana, Swaziland, and Lesotho, and Zambia and Tanzania which had helped in the recent struggles for independence; the ninth was Malawi, which was a bit of a pariah because of its close friendship with South Africa and its reputed hospitality to the Renamo rebels of Mozambique. SADCC was established originally to promote the development of these majority rule countries in cooperation with each other and as a buffer against the economic giant of South Africa to the south. SADCC now, since the end of apartheid, includes South Africa as a member and has slightly changed its name.

In those days SADCC had its own internal political dynamics. There were those who were dedicated to a political struggle against South Africa and sought donor assistance for counter measures against what were seen as the "de-stabilization efforts" of South Africa. There were others, as for example, the President of Botswana, who were committed to promoting change in South Africa quietly. Of course he was practical in recognizing the necessity to continue to cooperate with South Africa for things that were

important to life--such as electricity, water and transport, all of which came to Botswana from South Africa. Robert Mugabe was actually the "hold out" on many of these things. There was one question, whether SADCC member countries should ban all flights to and from South Africa, on which Mugabe was adamant, but he was the only one. Even his own African businessmen could not persuade him that such a move would be economically disastrous. Finally President Kaunda of Zambia organized a meeting with Mugabe to tell him, "We really must cooperate on this particular thing. We cannot live without flights from South Africa, and we can't live if South African Airways doesn't bring our necessities to us." In fact, South African Airways did continue to come into Zimbabwe but they parked down at the end of the field. [laughter] They weren't nearly as visible as the weekly American cargo plane that came in.

It was important to Mugabe that the United States was supporting the efforts of SADCC. Therefore, I think Mugabe was willing to see a continuing presence of the United States in his country. Our financial assistance to the country was not large enough to be persuasive and at the time the World Bank assistance (before the structural adjustment was finally organized) was more than ours, but was not large in comparison with most countries of Africa. I think Mugabe thought it was important to continue, relations on, shall we say, a barely even keel with the United States, but that did not involve much courtesy. If we became too friendly he always had a little dagger to throw out. For instance, the time he went to the annual meeting of economists at Davos, Switzerland, and managed to answer an American journalist, "Yes, I am a Marxist." Other times he snubbed an American visitor or otherwise made unwelcome comments when he was visiting the United States. At the same time, he resented our trying to give him advice, or to influence his vote on a candidate for a UN post. He maintained a "prickly" exterior but I don't think he wanted to kick us out.

Q: So do you think that foreign assistance had its direct developmental contribution but also it preserved the political linkage despite the disruption?

HERRICK: I think so.

Q: You said that you were also in charge of the Regional Program, what was your role in that?

HERRICK: That was really our growth program there. Following presentation of a "New Initiative for Southern Africa" developed on a visit of Peter McPherson to the region shortly after I got there, the Congress provided a special appropriation of \$50 million in new funds each year to support the programs sponsored by SADCC. The program was very heavily concentrated in transport projects, some of which were carried out relatively promptly and easily, and some of which required a lot of coddling and supervision. Railroad projects were a major part of the program, and there were road projects. The road between Zimbabwe and Zambia was one of the first. Open economic relationships between Zimbabwe and Zambia had been cut off during the Ian Smith regime in Rhodesia, so the road had deteriorated. On the Zimbabwe side the road was built very

promptly, under Zimbabwean contractor using imported U.S. equipment. On the Zambian side it was much slower.

As it happened, all of the railroads in Southern Africa were of the same gauge, the only exception being the internal National Railways of Tanzania. All the locomotive equipment in Southern Africa was of American design, although not necessarily American-built, as some locomotives of General Motors design had been built in Brazil. This was an area in which we could provide assistance upgrade transport capabilities and at the same time give business to the United States. In addition to new locomotive projects and projects to bring in parts for repairs, we had one to rehabilitate steam locomotives owned by the rail systems of Mozambique. That one was implemented in Zimbabwe, where the highly skilled people of a shop in Bulawayo were able to take the locomotives apart, analyze their structure, and put them back together. There was a continuing issue about maintenance of locomotives in Mozambique; our project included maintenance training programs in Bulawayo and rehabilitation of repair shops in Mozambique. Unfortunately, I think some of those newly refurbished locomotives were lost pretty quickly. At the time, Mozambique was not at peace. All of the railways were not all open because of internal warfare and disruption by the South Africans. But land-locked Zimbabwe committed itself, at great cost in military personnel and railway staff, to keep open its lifeline, its shortest way out through Mozambique to the port of Beira. There was also a cost in health, as the commitment of personnel to the corridor promoted the spread of AIDS.

We supported several regional agricultural research efforts, but one of singular success. That was a project to promote varieties of small grains--millets and sorghums--that could substitute for imported wheat in the diets of the region and would survive drought conditions better than maize. Those small grains were the original staple grains of the region; maize came from the New World, and wheat was the staple of the north, around the Mediterranean. The project was carried out by one of the international dry lands agricultural research centers, under the guidance of an American scientist, on a site in Zimbabwe. They were adapting the grains to the conditions in the Southern African countries, developing varieties that matured in shorter growing seasons, and testing programs to persuade householders to use the grains. Indeed when the severe drought came in 1991, affecting crop yields in 1992, that facility was able to produce seeds for distribution to the countries of the region--those that were ready to use them--for quick planting so that the next year, after the rains began again, there would be food. The challenge in agricultural research always is to get the results out to the national research agencies and then the next challenge is to get them from the national research agencies out into the field. That part of the program was beginning to go very well.

At the request of SADCC, we became interested in agricultural education. The post-secondary institutions of the countries wanted to develop degree programs and graduate programs in agriculture. I was very leery of an effort that would emphasize graduate degrees for institutions that were not yet, except in Zimbabwe, granting a first degree in agriculture. Some of the countries did not even yet have a university. At the same time, a number of American universities were interested in helping Southern African institutions

to develop graduate agricultural education. This is something they've done world-wide and they were interested in doing so in this region. They believe that an individual is not well trained until he's been through the rigors of a graduate degree program.

We tried to analyze the demand for agricultural training in the region; this was something that the institutions of SADCC didn't understand, but it was part of our market approach. Why should we spend money if there wasn't a demand for graduate degrees in agriculture? My sense was that employers of the graduates were not looking for the more advanced degrees, and it was clear that the governments did not have the budgets to employ agricultural researchers in the public sector. Our survey's confirmed this expectation in some countries, but in other countries it was not possible to conduct a useful survey. For example, in Tanzania the survey team couldn't get anything except some very general statistics from the Ministry of Agriculture; the country was still so socialist that anyone trained in agriculture would work in a government position.

The private sector respondents, where they were available, wanted only a certificate holder, a person whom they could train in their own milieu. In Zimbabwe we found that the producers of high quality tobacco were negative about the idea of a person with a new graduate degree coming out to tell them how to do what they were already doing very successfully. We finally made a proposal for a regional program in agricultural education, but during my time in the field it was not approved in Washington. I'm not sure SADCC would have been able to sell a program of lower level agricultural education to its members, either. I know that Botswana, for one, wanted to establish a university by developing an agriculture department first and then a few other departments. They wanted the old fashioned, very expensive, American technical assistance program--but then, they could afford to pay for it if they wanted it badly enough.

Q: The private sector?

HERRICK: Yes. The next thing we tried to do was to develop a program to promote private sector development and private sector trade among the countries of SADCC. That too was very difficult to do on a regional level. And the pay-off was elusive, because at the time the trade among the countries of SADCC represented only about five percent of the total trade of the country members. If we had raised inter-country trade by 20 percent we would have raised it to all of six percent of the grand total. On the other hand, there were other aspects to the question. We wanted to promote cooperation among private sector people and improve their ability to communicate with their governments on business issues. The business people of Zimbabwe, for example, should have been able to cite examples of the benefits of the freer economic regime in Botswana when they talked with their own government.

At the annual SADCC meeting in 1987, we made private sector development an important theme. It was in Administrator McPherson's speech and was raised in his private meetings. SADCC did begin to urge its member countries to establish business associations that could then be joined in a regional business association. The question then became political within SADCC. Could SADCC dictate what kind of a business

association would be established in one country or another. There was a tremendous difference between the more socialist countries and the more market oriented countries as to how they were going to go about this. In Zimbabwe, for example, after feeling out the government, the private sector representatives were convinced that they had to invite the government to be a member of their SADCC-related business association. In Swaziland the government designated as the SADCC association the weaker of two relatively weak associations. In Zambia and Lesotho existing chambers of commerce, the only thing going, were moribund from lack of member support.

We found also that it was difficult to design a project of technical assistance that could be deemed regional and yet would have to take place in the separate countries. We did not, in my time, succeed in developing a private sector or trade project that was acceptable to SADCC. One of the questions my successor was puzzling with after the end of apartheid in South Africa was how much the regional program should continue to be tied, as it was in the Congressional mandate, to programs of SADCC, and how much we should continue to consult with SADCC on activities we were proposing.

At the time I was there, the Executive Secretary of SADCC, Simba Makoni, had good credibility with the United States Congress. He managed to assure that the appropriation came through every year, but also managed to express his criticisms of things he thought we had done without his personal approval. He ran his Secretariat very tightly; all decisions were made at the top. We managed to find our way through most of those things. On one occasion the Africa Bureau proposed that the regional program should finance a range management sector program in Lesotho that could hardly be considered regional in its intent. In my next quarterly meeting with the Secretariat of SADCC, it was my role to sell this U.S. commitment to SADCC as a regional program. I couldn't find anything in their program list under which I could put this program. But I made a kind of wild suggestion as to where it might fit. To my surprise, Makoni went along with the suggestion, apparently because Lesotho, being completely inside South Africa, was, for him too, a difficult country to include in regional programs. However, the next year Makoni complained on the Hill, and representatives from the Africa Bureau were called in to explain how they had allowed regional funds to be allocated to a bilateral program.

Q: Even though he had approved it?

HERRICK: Oh yes. He had been very friendly at that meeting. I was so relieved, as I had thought I would have a real battle to get our point of view across.

Q: Why did he switch?

HERRICK: Well, one political game does not call for the same tactic as another.

Q: I see. Did he have any particular strategy or view?

HERRICK: Makoni was strong on the socialist, "We must fight South Africa", side in SADCC. He sponsored studies to estimate the costs of de-stabilization efforts by South

Africa. He was a young man, a Zimbabwean, ambitious, who had become Minister of Industry shortly after independence. But when the Zimbabwean who had been appointed as Executive Secretary of SADCC died suddenly, the Zimbabweans were invited to replace him. So they sent this young man over there to SADCC headquarters in Botswana. His staff was recruited from the member countries but he worked most closely with one Botswana citizen of his staff and, in the early years, with one of the expatriate advisers financed by the British. All details had to be approved by Makoni.

Q: And institutional development?

SADCC was organized in such a way that each of the member countries was responsible for coordination in a particular sector. For example, for Angola it was mining, for Mozambique it was transport, for Malawi it was forestry, wildlife and tourism, for Botswana it was agricultural research. Zimbabwe had agricultural production as well as the Secretariat for early warning on drought and the food security program.

My predecessor had organized some technical assistance for the SADCC operations in Malawi, Lesotho, Swaziland and the central Secretariat, in addition to assistance to the agricultural research group in Botswana and the food security group in Zimbabwe. The last two went well, but the other sector secretariats were not ready to use our assistance. After I got to Zimbabwe, my Deputy went down to Lesotho to see what was going on, as there had been no expenditures. She found there was another project, described in almost exactly the same language as ours, but financed by one of the Scandinavian donors, and it wasn't moving either. We terminated that one. In Malawi the project had moved slowly and hadn't been very effective, but it was winding down. We found another way, later, to try to help Malawi manage the wildlife sector, through our regional resource management project. In Swaziland the project just dragged; there was always another proposal for to keep it alive, but it seemed to go nowhere. The people who were given regional assignments had regular jobs in government and really didn't have the time to work on regional matters. The AID Director there was reluctant to let the program go, and so while I was in the region it continued to drag. The funds in the project for the Secretariat were still available, as AID had not yet been asked to provide expertise.

We made good use of those funds to finance studies related to our new program ideas: one on private sector revolving funds, one on the outlook for expanded intra-regional trade, and another on regional agricultural education. It was useful for us to have the studies, and also to have a resource for cooperation with Makoni. He liked to keep our relations on the prickly side, here and there, in the Shona manner, but in general they were positive.

Q: There were some issues with the AID Missions in the country because they had bilateral programs and regional money, how did that go?

HERRICK: There is always an issue when you have both regional and bilateral programs. In Southern Africa the issue never became as keen as it was for 30 years with ROCAP in Central America. But there was always the matter of who was going to implement a

program, and the question whether the Mission Director in a country with a bilateral mission was going to be responsible for a regional project which he or she may or may not have helped design. Of course, we always tried to involve the Missions of the region as we developed new regional programs. They may or may not have had the interest and the staff resources to participate in the design, but ultimately the project was going to take place in their country, and problems could become their diplomatic or administrative headaches. We had formal meetings a few times a year. Many questions revolved around issues of visibility and resources--"...so much money has gone to Zambia...why isn't more money going to Botswana"--things of that sort. Yet often we were able to concentrate as a group on questions of real substance.

In the transport program there was no absolute rule as to how things would be administered. The Zimbabwe-Zambia road project for example, was administered entirely by the Zimbabwe staff. For the Zambia railway project there was a project manager in the Zambia Mission, in accordance with the desire of the Mission Director there, who was very interested in the project, and its importance for the economy of Zambia. Once a month an engineer from the Zimbabwe staff spent three or four days in Zambia on the technical aspects of the project. In Malawi, under one Mission Director the management of the railway project was entirely the responsibility of the Zimbabwe Mission. Under the next, the responsibility became more divided, because the Director wanted greater involvement, even though the country program strategy for Malawi didn't accommodate transport as such. Food security was, of course, more likely to be of interest to all the Mission Directors, but the food security program was run mainly by the Africans. Much of the success of that program (which Michigan State University was involved in) stemmed from the international seminars which promoted interaction among the nationals of the region and from their being able to go back home and talk about lessons that they had learned in one place or another.

Q: Let's go back to the question, both in terms of Zimbabwe assistance and also in terms of the larger regional program, was this effective in supporting U.S. interests in the area? Was it effective in helping this regions deal with the South Africa issue?

HERRICK: I think the programs served our interests in assuring the viability of developing economies in Africa, in the world. Particularly helpful were the transport projects, but also the agricultural projects. I think the Southern Africans would say, "We couldn't have done it without the United States."

Q: You're talking specifically about development issues?

HERRICK: Yes. They respected us for our interest. Politically, some people of the region actually feared that South Africa could cause overthrow of their governments if their economies were not stable. It is political fact that we are a country to whom the educated people of these countries look at as a model. They may sometimes resent our advising them to imitate our political institutions, but as a general economic model and a model of a place where people are educated and where skills are developed, I think its been very important for us to have had a development presence in Southern Africa.

Q: At the political level it was a presence that through the program sort of reflected that presence, and this therefore is that the U.S. was with them.

HERRICK: In the confrontation with South Africa, definitely. And particularly, though, after we passed the Anti Apartheid Act. I think Southern Africans were more aware than Americans, who were not aware in general, of the fact that the Anti-Apartheid Act included \$30 million that first year, and in later years a lot more, of assistance to non-government organizations and private sector and community groups in South Africa itself. I think they were aware that we were helping people who were working toward democratic change in South Africa. Even though they had before that time, resented us for not taking stronger measures against South Africa.

Q: In program or developmental terms, what would you say were the most significant results as far as your time there?

HERRICK: An important aspect of the program in Zimbabwe was the demonstration of what can be done with a small staff in a country that is sufficiently developed economically and educationally to implement large elements of the program on its own. From the regional program, I think the experience illustrates the continuing challenge to develop something that has a truly regional effect. Except for something that's infrastructure, like transport, the experience is problematic. For example, we developed in my last year there, a regional natural resources management project. The project was to involve four countries and, after its independence, we hoped that Namibia would be added. The project included technical assistance for the sectoral Secretariat in Malawi so that it could organize ways in which both participating and non-participating members of SADCC could learn from what was going on in the field to program viable community management of natural resources. The project was administered at the country level. In Zimbabwe it was administered by the Department of Parks, the Center for Applied Social Sciences at the University and a non-government organization called the Zimbabwe Trust. In Zambia, where the project under the aegis of the Park Service, it was overseen at first by the Zimbabwe Mission, but I think that changed later. In Botswana, the sub-project design did not illustrate the principles of the project as much as we had hoped it would. In fact, a colleague has recently spent a few weeks in Botswana at the request of the Mission to help identify ways in which the sub-project there can have significance for the region. When I suggested that I thought probably very little, he said, "Yes, probably less than my report would imply."

Similarly, if we had actually developed an agricultural education project, it would have taken place in a country, in a country university, and in a countries educational system, and so there is always the puzzle of what the real significance is, in regional terms. Ultimately, the Southern Africa Regional program will have to stand on its transport projects and its role in signaling U.S. support for SADCC.

HELEN WEINLAND
Analyst, Bureau of Intelligence and Research
Zimbabwe (1987-1989)

Ms. Weinland was born and raised in New York and educated at Mount Holyoke College and Ohio State University. Entering the Foreign Service in 1974, she served in Zurich, Berlin and Prague and at a number of African posts, including Lagos, Nigeria; Kigali, Rwanda as Deputy Chief of Mission and Kaduna, Nigeria, where she served as Consul General. She also served in Washington as Desk Officer for the Philippines, Nigeria and Zimbabwe as well as Officer for United Nations Affairs. Ms. Weinland was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2009.

Q: Where did you go?

WEINLAND: Well, again I was in a position of having to find a job in the off bidding season and so I was offered a job in INR, on the Africa desk of INR. It sounded interesting. They said they wanted me to come in to work on some special projects, and I went and started reading in. I kept saying, "What special project do you want me to work on? Give me some assignments." They all sort of just dissolved into nothing so unfortunately, it was a year when I didn't have much substantive work. They were very nice people and I liked working there, it was a pretty happy office after the horrors of the previous year, so I just sort of floated around and did this and that. But it didn't get me an OER that did much for me.

Q: OER is an Officer Efficiency Report.

WEINLAND: And so I was finally in a bidding cycle, I was back on the regular bidding cycle and I applied for a job on the Zimbabwe desk. I still couldn't get a medical clearance to go back overseas.

Q: And so you were on the Zimbabwe desk from when to when?

WEINLAND: From summer of '87 to the summer of '89.

Q: What was the situation in Zimbabwe at the time?

WEINLAND: We were still pretty friendly with Robert Mugabe. We were supporting his government, trying to build up our trade and our USAID operations and all this kind of activity there. There were straws in the wind pointing to the future, but as is very often the case, they didn't appear to us to be serious ones.

Q: Could you give any examples?

WEINLAND: There was a man who had been in the freedom movement under Robert Mugabe named Sithole. He had requested asylum in the United States, or he had come to

the United States and stayed here and he was applying for asylum or else for permanent residence and we were saying he did not have any basis of fear of persecution should he return. In all of this back and forth, we were reciting all this documentation of the fact that the people who were in the opposition political party were not persecuted and so on and so forth. There was still a second political party in Zimbabwe at the time and Sithole was active in that party. I don't remember if he ever actually did go back. I think he did and I think at least for a while he went back unmolested.

Mugabe won the election in 1980, that was when I was in Nigeria, I remember the Nigerians were very happy and excited about that. So he had been in office seven to eight years, was still considered by many Zimbabweans to be the man who was the father of his country, he had brought them independence, the country was doing well economically. They still had a very strong, largely white, commercial farming sector in their economy that was earning a lot of foreign exchange. They had a tourist industry that was doing better and better all the time. All these were initiatives we were supporting.

We had a political ambassador there who was actually was one who was very good, was an experienced manager, ran an effective embassy with I think pretty upbeat morale and was solid on the issues, knew how to go to talk to Mugabe.

I will talk about two or three issues that came up during the time I was on the desk.

One had to do with the fact there was something in the State Department authorization legislation the year I arrived called the Pressler Amendment, introduced by Senator Larry Pressler, that said that no country that condoned "necklacing" could receive U.S. assistance. "Necklacing" was this business of putting a tire around somebody's body and then filling it with gasoline., and setting it on fire; it was a brutal form of assassination.

Q: They did it in Haiti and in a couple of countries in Africa.

WEINLAND: Yes, and, they did it a lot in South Africa. Under the Pressler Amendment, we were therefore required, as desk officers, to instruct our ambassadors to go in and get the assurance of whatever head of state that they were talking to that they did not condone necklacing. Most of the ambassadors went in and said, "Look, just tell me your country doesn't condone necklacing." And the president would say, "No, we don't condone necklacing" and that would be the end of it.

In Zimbabwe, Robert Mugabe, being Robert Mugabe, said, "How dare you ask such a question? Be gone, be gone. I will not deign to answer such a question." So the poor ambassador couldn't get him to answer the question. I think we must have spent about three or four months thinking up every kind of formula to get him to say it without saying it. Ultimately, there was some kind of formulation that where we could put together two different statements in some way that it met the requirement. It was not easy.

Q: Such is diplomacy.

WEINLAND: Such is diplomacy. You got a little to gain; we got a little to gain. We finally got it done but it was pretty dreadful. That was one.

Another was even worse; I think this next one went on for about six months. It had to do with a diplomat who was assigned to the United Nations in a fairly mid-ranking role, first secretary at their UN mission, who lived somewhere in Queens I think. His son went to school in Queens and claimed to his teacher that he had been beaten by his father and strung up by the wrists to some pipes in the basement of their house. He apparently showed some marks on his body. By then all these regulations had started to come into effect, whereby if the school heard such a story, they immediately sent the social services around.

The social services and the police arrived on the doorstep of the UN diplomat and took all three of his children into custody before anyone from the UN could say, "You can't do that, they have diplomatic immunity." So we now had three small, Zimbabwean children in the custody of social services of the city of New York and an enraged Zimbabwean mission to the UN, a president of Zimbabwe who was beside himself. We kept trying to say to the police "You can't do this," and they said they had to, not the police but the social services. "You cannot hold these children. Their father is a Zimbabwean diplomat."

It was unbelievable. They did return the two children who did not claim to be abused relatively quickly, like within three or four days, but they placed this young boy, who was the oldest of the children, in some sort of foster arrangement, whether it was an institutional foster arrangement or an actual separate family I can't remember. Of course, the newspapers got hold of the thing, so it was all over the press and it was an incredible mess.

I can remember having a phone conversation of about 20 or 30 minutes with Charles Rangel whose district it was in.

Q: Congressman Rangel.

WEINLAND: I don't think I said it but I almost said it: what future does this child have as a foster child, as a black, foster child in New York City as compared with being in his own country as a free citizen? I didn't say that obviously, but that's what I was thinking.

By this time we had an NGO, a children's protection society in Zimbabwe, that was brought into the act and they gave all kinds of assurances that they would supervise the family if the boy were returned to Zimbabwe. We had PNGed (declared *persona non grata*) the father, so he was gone and I think also the rest of the family, so only this child was in the United States, all on his own. The child protective society said we will supervise the situation here. If the child returns to Zimbabwe, we will keep an eye on it.

We kept going to Congress and to all the authorities, the social services' authorities, trying to get them to agree that the child should be accompanied back to Zimbabwe and

allowed to rejoin his family.

Ultimately, we did prevail but as I say, it was about six months of incredible struggle over this kid. I don't know, I assume he had been beaten by his father. Whether the child protective people back in Zimbabwe were able to make sure it didn't happen again, I do not know. We stopped keeping track of it after a while. One can only hope that the kid did OK.

I personally believed, and I still believe, we were doing the right thing because I did not think the child had anything like a decent future in the United States under those circumstances. Weighing the two options, I felt it was better for him to go back to Zimbabwe.

We had to bring former Congressman Andy Young to get involved in it, talking to somebody. I think maybe he had to call Mugabe personally, I can't remember exactly what he did. It just went on and on and on. But finally the child did go home.

So that was another big thing that we did.

During the time I was on the desk, Mugabe got some sort of international prize for developing agriculture in his country and came to the States to receive the prize. The good side of that particular visit was he brought a whole bunch of people with him in the entourage and among them the heads of the three different farmers' organizations in Zimbabwe and I had a delightful weekend running them around upstate New York visiting all a group of different farms and going to Niagara Falls. We had a good time. It is horribly ironic to look back of course, and realize that Robert Mugabe has destroyed the agricultural sector of his country with his ruinous policies.

Mugabe came to New York another time, to address the UN General Assembly I believe, and I went to New York as notetaker with some State Department folks who met with him. So he's one of two people whose hands I have shaken that I do not look back on with any pleasure, the other being Mobutu (former dictatorial ruler of Zaire).

Q: Was anybody looking at Mugabe and saying, "Oh, my God. This is going to be a disaster?"

WEINLAND: Not at that point.

First of all, he's very old now. I think one of the things that sent him over the edge was the death of his first wife. I think was quite devoted to her and she had some kind of kidney ailment, I think, and she ultimately died, I believe in the early '90s, of kidney failure. He remarried and I think the second wife has been one of these African madames, working behind the scenes, very grasping, with a big family that's all out for what they can milk out of the place. I don't think that was so true of his first wife and I think the second wife has been a malignant influence on him.

When that war in the Congo happened and the Zimbabweans were involved, this would have been in the late '90s or the early 2000s, the Zimbabweans got into that whole struggle on the side of the Congo government, not on the side of the rebels who were up toward Rwanda and Uganda. I think a lot of what was behind the decision to go into that war was the sons of this woman who wanted to get hold of mineral contracts and rape the country. I think I have read newspaper accounts that that was one of the things that was going on in that whole business. They didn't stay in the fight very long, as I recall. The Angolans were in on it, the Zimbabweans, everybody sort of jumped in.

Q: So you left that desk. Were you looking to serve in Zimbabwe?

WEINLAND: No, I went out to bid and looked around at what was available. I decided I would like to go back to Europe and I bid on a job that was coming open at the Berlin mission, the U.S. military mission in West Berlin. We weren't allowed to call it West Berlin but I wasn't at the embassy in East Berlin, I was on the western side.

DONALD PETTERSON
Ambassador
Zimbabwe (1990-1991)

Ambassador Donald Petterson was born in California in 1930. Petterson served in the US Navy for four years before graduating from the University of California Santa Barbara. Petterson joined the Foreign Service in 1960 and has served overseas in Mexico, Tanzania, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, South Africa and as ambassador to Somalia, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, and Sudan. In Washington, DC Petterson served on the Policy Planning Staff and as a deputy assistant secretary in the African Bureau. Ambassador Petterson was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy and Lambert Heyniger in 1996.

PETTERSON: When I returned to Washington, Hank Cohen asked me if I would go to Zimbabwe. The American ambassador in Harare, a political appointee, had had to leave there abruptly. Because of the nature of his personal problem...

Q: [Laughter] We'll have to go into this a little bit more.

PETTERSON: I really can't-

Q: Okay. Wasn't Carlos Baker, was it?

PETTERSON: No. This man's name was, of all things, Rhodes. He was an African-American lawyer from California who, because of the nature of his personal difficulty, was recalled by the State Department and had to go back to private life.

The embassy had gotten used to this flamboyant character, and suddenly he left, and nobody was told why, which left some perplexed and others irate. The DCM, who took over, did not have good leadership qualities. Embassy morale was very low. The president of Zimbabwe, Robert Mugabe, believed that the ambassador had been removed because he was too well disposed toward the Zimbabwean government. I was asked to go to Harare to restore morale in the embassy and do what I could to repair the relationship with Mugabe. The assignment was for an unspecified time but, I was told, could be as long as a year, until the Foreign Service officer who was in the pipeline to become ambassador could complete the nomination and confirmation process and get out there.

Q: Did Julie go with you?

PETTERSON: Oh, yes. She and Brian went with me.

Q: Okay. So this is Zimbabwe in 1990-

PETTERSON: November 1990, and we stayed there until the late summer of '91.

Q: Ninety-one. Well, there's two aspects to this. One is the internal aspect of getting the embassy back on an even keel, and the other one is establishing a more correct relationship with Mugabe?

PETTERSON: Yes. It turned out to be easy to achieve both objectives. First, all that the embassy needed was an experienced officer to give them leadership, which I was able to do. I made it a point to meet everyone individually. And I brought them together as a group to tell them as much as I could, without revealing the exact circumstances, about why the ambassador had left. This seemed to work. I formed a close association with the AID director and worked very cooperatively with him on the large AID program, doing what I could to avoid the kind of "we, they" situation that sometimes exists between AID missions and the embassy. I just did the things that anybody with common sense would do. I believed it important to show people that you appreciate what they're doing and that you care about their welfare. Anyway, morale, by all accounts I was told, improved, and-

Q: Don, it's kind of a funny situation because you don't think of Zimbabwe as a place for a political appointee, particularly. In the second place, normally when you send out a political appointee to a fairly small, remote country, you usually also have there a DCM who really is a strong officer.

PETTERSON: I can't account for what happened. Incidentally, Zimbabwe was a plum assignment. Most FSO Africanists would give their right arm to be ambassador to Zimbabwe. Or at least they would have in the days before the current mess got so bad. Harare has one of the most delightful climates in the world. It is a modern city with good infrastructure and all the things that make up good city life. It was an African post that was attractive to political appointees, and in 1991, three of the four American ambassadors to Zimbabwe since it became independent in 1980 had been political appointees.

I met with Mugabe and gave him a letter from President Bush, explained as much as I could about what had happened, and assured him that the ambassador's departure had no political motivation.

Q: Or U.S. relations with Zimbabwe?

PETTERSON: Yes, and he accepted that. Coincidentally, at about this time, the Gulf crisis was in full flower and the war was soon to start. Mugabe was one Africa leader who agreed with us enthusiastically, without reservation, that something had to be done to stop Saddam Hussein. In a meeting I had with Mugabe, he commented to me that Saddam was, in his view, insane.

So, things were going well, and it was a pleasant assignment. Before the nine months or so that we were in Zimbabwe ended, I had a phone call for deputy assistant secretary Jeff Davidow of the African Bureau. He asked me if I would like to have my name placed on the list of candidates for ambassador to Sudan.

Q: Okay, before we get to that-

PETTERSON: Yes?

Q: I'd like to ask you a question. Zimbabwe now, what, 10 years later, is going through some extremely difficult times. Mugabe, for reasons that you're going to explain to us, has allowed this movement of, sort of, African veterans taking over the white farms. There's a great deal of tension and strain.

PETTERSON: Yes.

Q: How did all that happen? Is this Mugabe clinging to power?

PETTERSON: Yes. There was a lot of hope for Zimbabwe. Many whites had stayed on. They were a distinct minority in the country, but they had a lot of economic power, and some of them were in the political system. Zimbabwe's multiraciality was far from perfect, but in many ways it was working. There were, though, underlying tensions. One problem was that there was rapidly growing African population, comprised mainly of subsistence farmers, and not enough good land to go around. The best farms in the country were in the hands of whites, who had created them and made them into the most productive farms perhaps in all of Africa, certainly in most of Africa. With growing pressures for land redistribution, while I was there the some people in the parliament and in the government began agitating for expropriating whites' farms, taking them away without providing adequate, if any, compensation. At that time, though, Mugabe didn't want to move too fast because he knew that this would have a devastating effect on the economy. So the call for seizing the lands was not heeded at that time, but the beginning of a growing movement for that was definitely underway. Mugabe now has given in to the extremists of this effort, has allowed the veterans, so-called, to seize farms, has

allowed white farmers to be murdered, and not punished the murderers. Why? He wants to stay in power. His grip on power has been weakened by corruption in the government, by his dictatorial ways, by the growing poverty arising in part from his disastrous economic policies, and by the desire of many Zimbabweans for a true democracy and consequent growth of a strong political opposition to him. He's using demagogic tactics and strong-arm measures to stay in power, pure and simple. It's a shame.

Q: In effect, he's, to some extent, damaging the economy of his own country in order to preserve his personal position?

PETTERSON: Yes.

Q: Okay, thank you.

EDWARD GIBSON LANPHER
Ambassador
Zimbabwe (1991-1995)

Ambassador Lanpher was Born in Richmond, Virginia in 1942 and graduated from Brown. He entered the Foreign Service in 1966. He served in numerous posts including Tel Aviv, Libreville, London, Harare and Canberra. He was named Ambassador to Zimbabwe in 1991. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2002.

Q: Whither?

LANPHER: It was sort of funny. After a year in Australia, it would have been September 1990. I got a phone call about 2:00AM from Washington. Nobody in Washington knows that Australia is 12 time zones away, so this was a regular routine, being woken up at 2:00AM. A fellow called me from the Africa Bureau at the State Department. It was Jeff Davidow, who was the Deputy Assistant Secretary. He said, "Gib." I said, "Jeff, do you know what time it is here?" He said, "No." I said, "It's 2:00AM. This better be important." He said, "Well, it sort of is. How would you like to be ambassador to Zimbabwe?" I said, "Hey, it's 2:00AM. Your new ambassador just got out there four or five months ago." He said, "But he be gone real soon." I said, "What do you mean?" He said, "You're right. He's been there four or five months and he'll be resigning for personal reasons very shortly and I just wanted to know if you'd be interested in going to Zimbabwe." I said, "Of course I would." It took a couple of months to formalize this and move it through the White House. But by December, I was getting all the papers to fill out to be ambassador to Zimbabwe. I left Australia in June of the following year to come back, I thought, for confirmation hearings. I guess my appointment had been announced. But I got back to Washington and everybody in the Senate was too busy to have a hearing in July. Then they went on vacation in August. Then the Clarence Thomas hearings held things up.

Q: This was a nominee for Supreme Court Justice who was purported to be sexually harassing... He was the subject of a rather sexy set of hearings which went on and on and on.

LANPHER: Yes. Anyway, so there I was with a wife, two kids, both in diapers, in a rented apartment from July until I was finally confirmed and sworn in about the first week of November. Off we went to Zimbabwe.

Q: You were in Zimbabwe from when to when?

LANPHER: November '91 until March '95.

Q: A good solid period. What had happened to the previous ambassador?

LANPHER: The one who had a short tour?

Q: Yes.

LANPHER: I never asked because I didn't want to address the issue in a hearing. Nobody wanted to tell me. I subsequently learned that he had been caught having cocaine shipped to himself through the diplomatic pouch. That's why he was asked to resign.

Q: Talk about no-nos. It's almost unbelievable.

LANPHER: I pieced it together later that that's what it was. He also in his brief four or five months made quite a local splash.

Q: We're talking about '91. You had to bring yourself up to speed again on the area. What was the situation in Zimbabwe at that time and what were the issues that you had on your plate?

LANPHER: I got to Zimbabwe in November. There had been some concern back in Washington in connection with my prospective nomination to be ambassador to Zimbabwe, that somehow I might have problems getting agrément from the government of Zimbabwe, agreement to my assignment, as a result of that July 4th party in 1986. The State Department raised this with me and I said, "I don't think that will be a problem." I said to them that that incident was caused by the foreign minister and that we had heard indirectly that the president was mightily embarrassed by the whole thing. In fact, there was no problem. As soon as the agreement request went in, it came back. I arrived on a Saturday morning in Harare with my family from London. On Monday morning, I was told by the government that President Mugabe would accept my credentials on the Tuesday. This was extraordinary. Most ambassadors wait two or three months in Zimbabwe to present their credentials. We hadn't leaned on the government or anything like that. When I went in, I presented my credentials and we went through the usual little ceremony. Then the two of us went into a private little room, me with my DCM and

Mugabe with somebody from the foreign ministry or the presidency. There were just four of us in the room. He beamed at me and said, "Mr. Lanpher, welcome back. It's nice to have a familiar face." We'd known each other off and on since 1977. He said, "And the reason I'm accepting your credentials today is that I wanted you to get right to work." So, he couldn't have been more gracious and welcoming. There was no reference to the July 4th thing.

Q: Could you quickly reprise what had happened on July 4th?

LANPHER: The July 4th thing happened two weeks, 10 days, before I was to leave after four years as DCM in 1986. I had a July 4th reception. Former President Carter was there and in violation of a no-speech agreement, a Zimbabwean minister stood up and gave a diatribe against the United States and Britain and Jimmy Carter and I walked out of our own July 4th party, setting a diplomatic precedent that will probably stand for all time.

In any case, Mugabe and I had a nice talk. He said, "We have good relations. Let's keep it that way." I, of course, said that was my intention. At the time, Zimbabwe was beginning to launch on an economic reform program, one that we were very much encouraging, one that the World Bank and the IMF were very much encouraging. Relations were quite good. They were quite good to the point where shortly after I presented my credentials, probably early December of that year, late 1991, we were having tremendous problems up in Somalia. The UN hadn't gotten involved. Washington was determined to put together a multinational force even prior to formal UN involvement in Somalia. I had a phone call from Washington in early December saying, "We've had this military training program with the Zimbabweans for almost 10 years. You know all about it. Our guys think that Zimbabweans are pretty good soldiers. Do you think there's any chance we could encourage the Zimbabweans to join with us in Somalia?" I thought about it for a couple of seconds and said, "I think our relations at this point have reached the level of maturity that it would be worth a try to ask them." They said, "Do you have any ideas?" I said, "I think President Bush ought to call him (Mugabe) and outline his concerns, our concerns." Bush I, who was a terribly good diplomat and had met Mugabe in the fall 1982 when I was there as DCM, had visited Zimbabwe, thought he had a personal relationship of sorts with Mugabe. Mugabe certainly thought he had a personal relationship with Bush as a result of that visit. Well, Bush called and Mugabe said, "Yes, because Somalia is an embarrassment for us Africans and we ought to be participating in doing something about it." I thought that was quite incredible and sophisticated and we were obviously very pleased. The decision having been taken at that level, we all had to get to work to implement it. This took about a month. I'll never forget the day out at Harare Airport - and I've got photographs to prove it - we had two C5 Galaxies and a C141 come in to pick up the advance elements of a Zimbabwe battalion to fly them up with their gear to Somalia. On the morning that these planes came in, I called up the Zimbabwe minister of defense and said, "A plane is coming in this morning. Your guys are all ready to go. Wouldn't it be nice if you and the president were out there on the tarmac to see your guys off? I'll be out there." He said, "That's a good idea." So, he got the president and there I had the president and the minister of defense going in and out of these C5s out on the tarmac at the airport. I was

there with my two little boys. I've got photographs of this. It was quite a sight.

Q: These are the largest cargo planes, the C5s.

LANPHER: Yes. So, off they went. The Zimbabweans did a terribly good job up there. I had phone calls from Somalia from whoever the Marine general in charge was saying, "Do you think we could get some more Zimbabweans? They're doing a hell of a good job up here and we'd like to send some of these Europeans home." The Zimbabweans did do a good job. They deserve a lot of credit for their professionalism. They did some neat work up there.

Q: Just for the record, please give a brief summary of what the situation was in Somalia.

LANPHER: There had been a complete breakdown of law and order. We were on the verge of that tragic thing where we lost the 18 Special Forces guys. We were trying to restore order and decency in Somalia.

Q: There had been mass starvation which had brought the UN and everybody in because of the breakdown.

LANPHER: Yes. And it was kind of a mess. As Mugabe said to Bush, "It's an embarrassment to us Africans." And it was.

Q: Mugabe right now in 2002 has stayed on in power too long and is not a name that has much positive resonance in today's world. How did we see Mugabe in '91-'95?

LANPHER: I think we saw him pretty positively. He was behaving internationally and regionally much more responsibly. Domestically, he was at least giving grudging support to the economic reforms that his finance minister and others were pushing. The human rights situation was improving over what it had been in the early to mid-'80s. The country was at peace with itself. It was behaving pretty responsibly in the neighborhood. Things were getting better, were headed in the right direction in South Africa. Mandela had been released. Negotiations to end apartheid were underway. Tragically, in January 1992, southern Africa was afflicted by a cataclysmic drought, which, believe it or not, the American embassy was the first to recognize even before the farmers in Zimbabwe, that the rain stopped around Christmastime of 1991. I saw it. I could feel it. I could watch the corn wilting. This was in the height of their growing season. It was a devastating drought. We called on January 5th and gave Washington an early warning, sent a message from the embassy, "Watch out. There's going to be a severe drought here in southern Africa. We're going to have to start lining up food aid." We made the point from our embassy that it was absolutely imperative to be ahead of the game and not have dying kids on CNN, let's do it right this time and not have an Ethiopia or a Somalia. Well, it took a little persuading on our part. I made a lot of phone calls. But I had some allies in the Department of Agriculture that I cultivated before I went out as ambassador. Indeed, there was a devastating drought, so we lined up food aid, we got it on ships, and we got PL480, we got GSM102 (a commercial sale financed on long-term low interest rate debt

by the Commodity Credit Corporation, which is a subsidiary of the Department of Agriculture). We got literally hundreds and hundreds of thousands of tons of maize into Zimbabwe and throughout the region. It wasn't just Zimbabwe that was suffering. They had a nil crop that year. They only harvested about 25,000 tons of maize in the whole country versus a usual harvest of 1.5 million tons. It was just a wipeout. But we got a lot of credit for that from the Zimbabweans. It was a dreadful situation. Our embassy got extra people in and worked with the NGOs. Nobody starved. It was a dreadful situation but satisfying to see our response to it. And the Zimbabweans were very pleased. But it did set back the economy a bit. Looking ahead to '93, '94, the Zimbabwe economy came back from the effects of this drought. They had good rains. The economy by the time I left had opened up and liberalized considerably to the point where, for instance, you could go into a grocery store in Harare and buy American whiskey or a new car in an automobile showroom, you could buy South African wine. It was bubbling along. Real growth in the economy was running between six and seven percent by the time I left. It was a pretty darn happy country that was looking up. The region was looking up. There was peace in South Africa. Apartheid was over. I was so happy with Zimbabwe when I left I was considering buying a retirement property there. I didn't, but things were very positive.

Q: How were relations? What was the political situation of the white farmers?

LANPHER: It was terrific. They had never made more money in all their lives, driven newer Mercedes in all their lives. I suggested in an earlier tape, in many ways, they were the fair haired guys in Zimbabwe. Mugabe at that stage in his life had not except occasionally rhetorically pushed land reform for reasons I've talked about before. In fact, Mugabe was wise enough to understand that the commercial farmers were really the geese that laid the golden eggs. They were the backbone of the economy. It was their \$500 million worth of tobacco exports that gave Zimbabwe the money to do things that they wanted to do. So, nobody was really rocking the boat during those years. That came later after I left.

Q: How about the Congo or Zaire at that time? There had been incursions in the Shaba. Was anything going on there?

LANPHER: No. Put it this way: as of the time I left in March '95, Zimbabwe was in no way involved in the Congo. Yes, there was traffic, commercial road traffic, that ran from South African ports through South Africa, Zimbabwe, Zambia, and into Shaba province in the Congo. But there was no government involvement. As far as I was aware, they were transporters that were making money. It was commercial in nature and that was it. All the bad things in Zimbabwe and its involvement in the Congo didn't begin until the end of 1997/1998. But up until that point, things were looking very promising. I remember as I was leaving in March 1995, I wrote a series of "end of tour" cables prognosticating about where Zimbabwe was headed. I remember one of them addressed the politics of Zimbabwe. I observed that Mugabe had been president at that point for 15 years. I thought his leadership was getting a little tired. There wasn't any visible opposition to it. I could see four or five contenders to succeed him within his own party. I

said in that cable that Zimbabwe was a de facto single party state. It had a patina of democracy. But I used the phrase “managed democracy” to describe it, not real democracy. The cabinet was basically the same faces for 15 years. I said what I thought Zimbabwe desperately needed in the near future, putting it diplomatically, was “generational change,” that there was an upcoming post-independence generation of middle class, educated blacks in their late 30s to 50s that ought to have their chance at running the country and that, sadly, without generational change (i.e., some of these old boys kicking the bucket), I didn’t see much hope for them because the old boys didn’t want to share or give up power. I think my observation was right and, sadly, here we are in 2002, the old boys are clinging desperately to power and ruining the country.

Q: Was there a group of discontented former freedom fighters or people without jobs... These are the ones who had been handed over who sort of are taking over the white property and not really maintaining it today. Did you see this as a group?

LANPHER: I’m not sure I’d agree with your description of who’s taking over what today. There were war veterans from the liberation struggle. A lot of people claimed to be veterans who weren’t. The number of real veterans was actually quite small. But they were supposed to get state funded pensions. They didn’t cause any trouble during the years I was in Zimbabwe. They began to cause problems. First of all, it was a small number. Their pension funds in the late 1990s after I left were basically looted by corrupt administrators and politicians. The whole system of pensions and a support mechanism for the war veterans was corrupted mightily. They got angry. But the “war veterans” that raised their head late in 1997 were much more political and less war veterans. And this coincided with a change in Mugabe’s outlook. I don’t know exactly what triggered it. But the so-called war veterans who are occupying white farms and not doing anything with them today are not real war veterans. They’re urban, unemployed thugs who’ve been recruited into Mugabe’s political party, promised everything. But the real objective is to keep Mugabe in power. It’s not genuine land reform. As people repeatedly say today, not just whites but the black opposition party in Zimbabwe, the issue is not land: it’s power. Mugabe doesn’t want to give it up and he’s corrupted the society, he’s corrupted the war veterans, he’s corrupted the justice system as to the law and order, the police, the army, all recruited into the cause of staying in power. And it’s ruining the country. In contrast to when I left economic growth at six to seven percent, the last two years’ GDP has gone down 10% a year.

Q: You were there on the arrival of Nelson Mandela in South Africa and the peaceful takeover and change into South Africa. Did that have any effect in Zimbabwe?

LANPHER: Yes. I talked about this transition in South Africa with three or four members of the Zimbabwe cabinet who were sort of friends of mine or people I could talk to and some members of the senior civil service and the intelligence outfit in Zimbabwe. I said, “How is this transition and Mandela going to affect Zimbabwe?” Two or three of them wisely said to me, “Gib, if we thought our situation was difficult with a white ruled South Africa, it’s going to be even more difficult with a black ruled South Africa.” I said, “Why do you say that?” They said, in effect, “If the white ruled South

Africa twisted our tail, we could always go to the UN or the West and say, 'The South Africans are beating up on us. You've got to do something about it.' You guys would. You'd get the South Africans off our case. If a black ruled South Africa wants to twist our tail, nobody's going to pay any attention." This was quite interesting. More importantly was what Mandela's ascendance to power did to Mugabe psychologically. I worried about this at the time, but my worries were confirmed to me after I retired and went back as a consultant to Zimbabwe twice in 2000. I tried to get to the bottom of the change in Mugabe. Three of my good black contacts said, "This change in Mugabe, much of it goes back to Nelson Mandela coming to power in South Africa." I said, "What do you mean?" They said, "While Mandela was in prison and apartheid was on in South Africa, Mugabe was, in effect, the coq of the walk in this part of the world. He was the hero. He was the person who the world looked to as the spokesman for southern Africa. He had liberated his country. Once Mandela got out, people forgot about Mugabe. Mugabe was president of a country of 10-12 million people of little real worldwide consequence. South Africa is a country of 40-50 million people and Nelson Mandela... This really got to Mugabe. He had gotten used to being feted around the world. The spotlight went off him. Psychologically, he couldn't take it. He had to do something to get back in the spotlight." Two or three of these fellows attributed the Zimbabwe entanglement, intervention, whatever you want to call it, in the Congo to this, that this was his way of getting back in the spotlight. There were other factors - corruption and profits. But I think the psychological thing can't be underestimated. And I believe these black friends of mine who were talking discreetly and one on one.

Q: Were there any other issues while you were there? Were there any presidential visits?

LANPHER: Aside from that drought of '92-'93 and its consequences, things were pretty darn smooth. We didn't have any major blowups in U.S.-Zimbabwe relations. I thought my so-called stewardship of the embassy had been pretty successful. I remember saying to one of my two assistant secretaries for Africa at the time... We had had a couple of regional ambassadors meetings, one back in Washington, one at my residence in Zimbabwe. I said to the Assistant Secretary, "I never get any instructions from you guys about Zimbabwe. I kind of address the small problems that we have out here on my own and tell you what we are doing, but I'm just wondering." The Assistant Secretary said, "Gib, you know more about Zimbabwe than anybody back here in Washington. As far as we're concerned, everything's going fine and just keep us informed of what you're doing." I said, "Thank you very much." That was pretty much the way it was.

Q: About the food distribution, were there any problems? Did it work fairly well?

LANPHER: It worked splendidly. Nobody died. The food got around the country. And the government bureaucracy at that time - they had a grain marketing board and a distribution system and they used commercial channels as well as government channels - worked very well. The nice thing about that drought is that we never had a starving kid on CNN, no pot bellies. This was quite a remarkable achievement.

Q: This had been a staple whenever there was something and caused us often to-

LANPHER: And AID, which deals with this sort of disaster around the world all the time, kept pointing to their response and the U.S. government response to that southern Africa drought that year as being remarkable. And they learned a lot of lessons from it in terms of early warning.

Q: What about AIDS?

LANPHER: AIDS got progressively worse. By the time I got back in 1991, it was very, very apparent to me almost overnight how serious the AIDS problem was in Zimbabwe. People I had known, contacts of mine from the '82-'86 period, had died in my absence at very early ages. People were dying. The biggest growth industry in Zimbabwe in a way was the morticians business and they were running out of space in cemeteries. It was clear that it was going up and up and up. Within a week or two of my arrival in '91, I got together with my AID director and said, "We have to have as a component of our AID program an AIDS program. I don't care how you do it, whether you build it onto our family planning program or what, but we're going to have an AIDS program or we're not going to have an AID program." He got my message. We had an AIDS program. We had some very good contractors working on it from Johns Hopkins and elsewhere. We tried to do innovative things. We didn't have a lot of support from Mugabe. He stayed silent, as so many Africans did, on AIDS. We had positive opposition from the vice president, Joshua Nkomo, who would get up on national television where we were sponsoring and paying for ads on television for condoms and recruiting the national soccer team as role models and me going out and giving press conferences around the country (some of them fairly graphic) and say, "Condoms are not part of our culture." I went and saw him privately about this. I had known him a long time. I said, "Mr. Vice President, you and I have known each other a long time. I don't like to hear what I'm hearing you say about condoms not being part of your culture." He huffed and puffed and said, "Well, they aren't." I said, "I know they're not part of your culture, but neither was AIDS." But I can't say we made a lot of progress. By that time, sadly, AIDS had reached that critical mass in terms of percentage of people infected that it's going to probably take another generation. We were doing surreptitious studies in ante-natal clinics showing pregnant women were showing up as high as 43% positive for HIV. It's only gotten worse since I left. Probably the most difficult thing in the world is to change people's behavior. I lost any number of good black friends in Zimbabwe to AIDS. Perhaps my closest friend I lost to AIDS. He died of AIDS six months after he became minister of finance in 1995 just as I was leaving. It's terribly difficult. You've got to have an all-out campaign. Even in places like Uganda, which are pointed to as a model, it's very tough. I spent a lot of time. I did press conferences that were graphic, putting condoms on my thumb. I had great support from Washington and encouragement. People like the Under Secretary for Humanitarian Affairs kept patting me on the back saying, "You're my kind of ambassador." This was Tim Wirth. But there's only so much you can do. We were as imaginative as we could be. We hired playwrights to write skits that could be played in villages. We hired the national soccer team and put them on television and championed condoms. But Joshua Nkomo was kind of right. And there was one part of the culture and men were the problem. Men didn't like condoms and women had no voice. It was the

same on birth control. We had the best family planning program in all of Africa, the highest contraceptive prevalence rate in all of Africa. But we couldn't nudge that prevalence rate above about 45% because of the non-cooperation of men.

Q: Did AIDS cause a problem in the embassy? I would think people would be nervous about being in an accident because of the blood and intermingling and things like that.

LANPHER: Let me answer two ways. There was some anxiety but less so in Zimbabwe - and this is up until the time I left - than in some of the neighboring countries because Zimbabwe had a reputation for having a very good national blood service. Our medical people would come in from State and say, "These guys are doing a darn good job on their blood," unlike a lot of other countries in Africa. Number two, people in our embassy had the confidence that if they had a problem, we would evacuate them as quickly as possible to South Africa where we had access to excellent medical facilities or we would evacuate them to the Army hospitals in Europe. I never ran into a real morale problem. I don't know what it is today. But as of '95, I didn't sense it. What I did sense fairly acutely is that AIDS didn't stop at the embassy door and I was losing local employees; they were dying.

Q: Did we have a Peace Corps there?

LANPHER: We did. They have been withdrawn in the last year and a half. The first Peace Corps volunteers arrived in Zimbabwe shortly after I arrived as ambassador. It had taken 10 years to negotiate a Peace Corps agreement with Zimbabwe because they had bought the line that Peace Corps were spies. It took a lot of time to overcome that. Our program wasn't very large. We had 60-70. But they did splendid work. My wife and I supported them wholeheartedly. They were mostly teaching math and sciences in high schools in rural areas. They just were a terrific bunch of people. I had them of all ages. I had all the Peace Corps to Thanksgiving dinner at my house every year I was there. The first batch came to my house two weeks after I arrived before they had actually gone out on their assignments. But they were terrific and did good work. With this downturn in security over the last two years, they were recalled, which is very sad.

MARY JO FURGAL
Cultural Affairs Officer
Harare, Zimbabwe (1997-2000)

Ms. Furgal was born and raised in Illinois. She attended a number of colleges and universities in the US and Austria, including the University of Chicago, where she pursued Library Science Studies. She entered the USIA Foreign Service in 1978 and served as Cultural Affairs Officer in Colombo, Madras, Katmandu, Dhaka, Bucharest and Harare as well as in Washington, DC. Her assignments were primarily tandem assignments with her Foreign Service Officer husband. Ms. Furgal was interviewed by

Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2008.

FURGAL: Well, after home leave, to Zimbabwe, our only African assignment.

Q: That must have been quite a change, wasn't it?

FURGAL: Oh, yes, in a variety of ways. Romania was the only country where we had blended in. In India, if you dressed in Indian clothes and had a good tan, you could "pass" as an Indian. In Madras, we had many Indian friends and didn't socialize with the American crowd. The consulate there was very small, only a dozen staff in all, so we separated business from pleasure... And in Zimbabwe, a much bigger place, we joined the local bird watching club otherwise you get sucked up in embassy social functions and you never meet any local people at all.

Q: How were- I mean, did you get any feel was the government- of course, we're going now through a very difficult time in Zimbabwe; Mugabe has just destroyed the country practically. But did you feel any particular effects or how were things there?

FURGAL: Well, we were there at the end of the good times. We went there in the fall of '97 and I think early in '98, President Mugabe gave a big bonus to the war veterans, an act which is blamed for starting the economic downturn. At that time he still had a lot of military in the Congo, a variety of reasons; these soldiers were sending money back and building big houses. People weren't being told how many people were being killed; at nighttime they'd hear the planes coming in because the government didn't want them to know the numbers of the dead and injured. It kind of reminded me when the U.S. Government wouldn't let the media take pictures of the coffins of soldiers killed in Iraq, out of respect for the families. I absolutely had no worry about walking in the street; at lunch I'd go to a local little shop and pick up something. But the longer we were there, the worse it got; white farms began to be invaded. During the first parliamentary elections in February of 2000, my colleague and I were election observers. We didn't know until that very morning if we were going to be allowed to participate. That is when Morgan Tsvangirai got his first real boost in popularity. We traveled to the north of the country, around the city of Mutare, to observe the proceedings of the two-day election. I was so impressed with how hard they worked to make those elections be honest. Some of them were in school buildings where there was no electricity. When it got close to night, they were voting by candlelight. Because the election had to be run over two days, local political workers would sleep with the ballot boxes at night so they couldn't be stolen and stuffed. It was just one of the most amazing experiences; it still gives me the goose bumps just thinking about it.

Q: How did the election come out?

FURGAL: Well, Tsvangirai did very well but of course, President Mugabe wouldn't concede. It depends on who you believe whether or not it was out and out stolen.. This time he wasn't quite able to get away with it, the same way he did in 2000. After we left, the situation got worse and worse. But it was never like Rwanda or Congo or Kenya;

there weren't the riots in the streets. If you were just in Harare or Bulawayo, you wouldn't really know how bad things were economically. You would if you went into the stores, of course, and it is very obvious now, compared when we visited in 2004. There was a 22 aisle cash register supermarket walking distance from the house where we lived. At that time, Harare was really kind of a jewel of a posting. When we lived there, only 4,000 white farmers controlled 60 percent of the arable land or 80 percent of the total land. So the system was vastly inequitable and, consequently, Mugabe has had honest to God support from a lot of people because of that. It was not a good system but the way he went around trying to change it, created more problems. I don't know if the Brits made it any better because they're seen as former colonists, you know. After going to South Africa for an Elderhostel, we flew to Harare to see our staff and friends up there. The Zimbabweans were very friendly; we were invited to more black homes than we were to white homes.

Q: Well how was your program? How were your programs there?

FURGAL: We kept the library open. We had active Fulbright and Hubert Humphrey programs, plus the short and the long term exchange programs. But no East West Center programs, of course, because the country wasn't a part of Asia. But it was very similar to all the other programs I've managed, not much difference.

Q: Did you feel any sort of political pressure on you, what you were doing or anything like that?

FURGAL: No, Americans at that time were well-regarded and we never felt any unease. A unique feature of that posting was that, by and large, there was more interest on the part of the embassy there in the IV program. In Madras, the consulate wasn't terribly interested... We just picked who we thought fit the parameters, were young enough and so on, but in Romania and in Zimbabwe, we had very active input from other sections of the embassy. That to me was quite a surprise and consequently US.I.S didn't always get the people we considered more appropriate. Zimbabwe was a rewarding posting, our only one in Africa so we're glad we did it...

Q: Was there a, at that time a pretty good educational system to supply the educated elite?

FURGAL: It was starting to go down like everything else. But the university in Zimbabwe had been an all white institution and then in the '60s and the '70s, leading up to independence, a few black students started enrolling. Before Independence, a lot of them were sent to the United States for education by missionaries because they couldn't attend university locally. And while they were here they met Americans, both black and white, and after independence, they went back to Zimbabwe and were very active professionally I feel sorry for them now because they made a life decision; they could have stayed here but they went back to help. The university did have computers and a decent library; it was a lovely campus... We did a lot of programs over there, especially in political science and rule of law. I had a girlfriend who was a librarian come over on

vacation; I brought her to campus where she gave a lecture and subsequently hosted a librarian from there at her university in Towson, Maryland. It was a good university but it's been closed off and on so much in the last 10 years that it's not what it once was.

A. ELLEN SHIPPY
Ambassador
Malawi (1998-2000)

Ambassador Shippy was born in Colorado and raised in New Mexico. She was educated at the University of New Mexico and the George Washington School of Law. After a tour with the Peace Corps in El Salvador, Ms. Shippy joined the Foreign Service, where she served first in positions dealing with Latin America and later in with those concerning Asian and African affairs. She served as Political Counselor in Bangladesh, Deputy Chief of Mission in Uganda and she served as Ambassador to Malawi from 1998 to 2000. Ambassador Shippy was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2001.

Q: Well, was there any spillover from Mugabe's beginning to get rid of the white settlers and the consequent decline in Zimbabwe's productivity?

SHIPPY: Malawi traditionally imports a lot of foodstuffs from Zimbabwe as well as other items, soaps and such. So the Zimbabwe situation affected things in Malawi. Goods weren't coming over like they would normally. The other Malawi concern was there are about a million people whose families originally came from Malawi who live in Zimbabwe. These people don't have Zimbabwe citizenship and have lost Malawi citizenship. There was a concern then, and there probably still is, about that group of people. If they were ever forced out of Zimbabwe, they would obviously go to Malawi. The Malawi Government had to start thinking about what it would do in that situation

Q: Would you say the people of Malawi were sort of content with what you are describing, didn't have any vast resources, but hadn't been torn by tribalism or war or something. Do people learn to live a good solid life do you think?

SHIPPY: I think so. For one thing most people were very happy that the dictatorship was no longer around, that they were free to express their opinions and vote. But people want better things for their children, so education is a major issue there. Most people are not happy with the education because the public schools are often not very good; they lack materials, equipment and qualified teachers.

JOSEPH G. SULLIVAN
Ambassador

Zimbabwe (2001-2004)

Ambassador Sullivan was born and raised in Massachusetts and educated at Tufts, Georgetown and Yale Universities. Entering the Foreign Service in 1970, he served in the Department of State in Washington, D.C. as well as in posts abroad. His foreign posts include Mexico City, Lisbon, Tel Aviv and Havana. Mr. Sullivan served as US Ambassador to Angola from 1998 to 2001 and as Ambassador to Zimbabwe from 2001 to 2004. Ambassador Sullivan was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2009.

Q: Well then you are off to Zimbabwe.

SULLIVAN: Exactly, yep.

Q: You were there from when to when?

SULLIVAN: I think October of 2001 until about August of 2004.

Q: Well now who did you know that was handing out these choice assignments? I mean obviously you were living in sort of luxury on fun places, nice people, Mugabe and all.

SULLIVAN: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Well Zimbabwe used to be considered a luxury post...

Q: Oh yeah.

SULLIVAN: For one of the first times in its history, Zimbabwe actually had a political appointee as ambassador by the Clinton administration prior to me. Now he was somebody, who when the Bush administration came in, who resigned his position. Yet the post was considered sufficiently delicate and important at the time that the department sent out several senior former ambassadors out there to hold the fort until a permanent ambassador could get there; that always takes time. So I was nominated probably about April or May and got through the nomination process, I think, in maybe August, but that was par for the course; it wasn't a particularly problematic thing. I welcomed it; it was going to be an interesting assignment. I'm not sure frankly if the Democratic Party had won the 2000 election whether I would have gotten that assignment. I think there was some inclination to send another political appointee and yet when Gore lost the election, it was a relatively amicable transition at least on the Africa side and probably as well in the undersecretary's office side. So at that point I was told how about you going there and I said, "Fine." Yeah, I guess it would be considered to be a booby prize by some but I would rather be busy and in this case Zimbabwe remained a beautiful country and it was just a very problematic period to be there.

Q: What was the situation when you went there?

SULLIVAN: When I went, they were gearing up to presidential elections which had been scheduled for March of 2002. For the first time in his life, certainly in his presidency,

Mugabe faced a serious political challenge to his continued rule. Mugabe had already begun a couple years before that this policy of deliberate land invasions particularly land owned by Whites as a political tactic to seek to gather support from the population. The Opposition had gradually built up itself and there was a lot of, I think, popular wish to get Mugabe out.

The economy had been in decline since the early '90s and people were anxious for change. Civil society had grown significantly and the U.S. had been supportive of that. We had a number of AID programs that were supportive of civil society, so, to a certain degree, the U.S. was considered the enemy by Mugabe and his ruling ZANU- PF government. That said, we had a moderate degree of ability to do our job and one of the challenges we faced was that we had something of a multi-headed operation without very much coordination. So one of my challenges there was to make sure we were all working together and communicating with each other, particularly in the build up to the election. I worked very hard on that and even though nobody likes meetings; in that crisis situation, we were holding meetings virtually every day to make sure we were all coordinated among the major agencies and players at the mission including the USAID component; which as I said, was very heavily involved in democracy building efforts.

Prior to my arrival at post, bipartisan legislation, called the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act had been passed by the Congress in coordination with the Bush Administration and with the support of the black caucus. The legislation contained incentives to the government of Zimbabwe to hold free and fair elections, but also a number of sticks that would be used if there was interference in that process. The bipartisan US position toward Zimbabwe was a principal focus of the confirmation hearings that I had going out to post, which were very amicable compared to the previous hearings I had had for the Angola appointment.

So going out to post, U.S. policy was fairly clear and the policy instruments were clearer than they had been in the past. What was not as clear was our ability to achieve our policy objectives and how the Mugabe government would react to the conditions explicit in US legislation and policy. The Mugabe government apparently assessed that if they did hold fair and open elections, Mugabe stood a very good chance of losing those elections. In the typical call one makes on President Mugabe after presenting credentials, there was quite a bit of talking past each other. I was encouraging him to hold those elections openly to allow international observers freely, to allow domestic observers to be independent to do their job. Mugabe was going back and recounting his version of history; the history of coming to power in 1980 and his recollection of the British role in which he always believes conservative British governments were better from his perspective notwithstanding his own Socialist past. In any case, he really wasn't listening very much and I got no confidence that we would have much of a positive collaboration with the government. Sure enough, he effectively prevented observers from the Republican and Democratic Institutes from sending election observers. As the election approached, the government and election authorities began to put obstacles began to be put in the way of the opposition and in the way of election observer missions. The European Union eventually withdrew its observer mission due to obstacles placed in the

way of its activities. There was significant violence against opposition organizers and a good degree of obfuscation in the cities where ZANU PF felt itself particularly vulnerable. The government deliberately slowed down the voting process in the cities so that many people, mostly opposition supporters, were not able to vote. In rural areas, where ZANU-PF could control the process, ballot boxes were clearly stuffed and we were able to document this.

We, as an embassy, built up our own major observation effort and my deputy Bob Whitehead, who deserves the credit for this, organized and came up with the plan whereby we dispatched around 40 people from all around the mission and filled behind them at the embassy by securing volunteers, mostly from elsewhere in Africa. We did this so that our observers in the field would have the proper diplomatic carnet, should they be harassed, while out doing the observer mission. We succeeded in gathering pretty good information from our observers which enabled us to reach quite solid conclusions about the conduct of the elections. One of our observer groups did get detained by local police for three or four hours until we could raise enough Cain to get them released. No embassy employees came to harm, although a number of Zimbabweans linked to the opposition were beaten badly and those trying to carry out independent observation efforts were also mightily harassed. We concluded that the opposition would have won a free and fair election, but that the election had not been held freely and fairly resulting in Mugabe's election. In addition to our observation, we had other information that the Zimbabwean government had deliberately manipulated the election and stuffed or altered sufficient election results to assure that Mugabe would win the electoral commission's official count. That, notwithstanding, the South Africans had their own election observer mission and they concluded, I think, with not a lot of credibility the election was fair enough to merit recognition and Mugabe took office.

We began even before the election to implement some of the penalties called for in the Zimbabwe Democracy Act. Most of those penalties were targeted at individuals, removing and canceling their visas, their ability to travel to the United States. We coordinated with the European Union and later with Australia and other countries and they began to implement similar policies. Zimbabwean authorities were certainly upset at these and then some financial restrictions as well as their ability to hold accounts in our countries, but at the end of the day, these measures did not affect the behavior of Mugabe, who was above all, and remains today determined to hold onto power at all costs.

Q: As you went out there were you getting psychological profiles or had you been in Africa long enough to get a feel for this. I mean this is a very common trait, look at Mubarak today people don't give up power and privilege easily.

SULLIVAN: Right. I remember actually coming back and meeting with Colin Powell one time and he was quite convinced and correctly so that people like Mugabe "don't get off the back of the tiger; the tiger will eat them." I only had three or so years in Africa, but many of my staff had been there much longer and they saw these traits and the outcome might be predictable, but the question was "can we influence it in anyway"; we

certainly sought to, as did other international players. I think probably the most effective international players, and we recognize this, would have been other Africans but the majority of other African players, and certainly the key other African player from Zimbabwe's point of view, South Africa, declined to stand up. Some of it was Mbeki himself and South Africa's feeling that its own coming to majority rule was assisted substantially by Zimbabwe and Mugabe himself once he became president in 1980. Some part of it also was that Mugabe was considered a father figure, a senior independence revolutionary leader, by many Africans and, therefore, one who should be allowed to continue on and not challenged frontally. I think that was a major obstacle that we ever succeeded in overcoming.

I actually recall a visit to South Africa in 2003 by President George W. Bush, accompanied by Secretary Condoleezza Rice and they having after a meeting with South African President Thabo Mbeki announcing that they would look to him to provide the solution for Zimbabwe. Well, okay, except he was not going to really provide the solution for Zimbabwe because he was never going to ever challenge Mugabe. In addition to the other reasons I mentioned, Mbeki harbored some degree of anti-Western sentiments that led him to believe that if the opposition figure Tsvangirai and his party were supported by the West, then that made them illegitimate.

The other feature perhaps I should talk about is the economy. The economy, of course, continued to decline sharply and had major effects on the population leading by the time I left Zimbabwe to the emigration of about 25 percent of the population.

Q: Good God.

SULLIVAN: The majority to South Africa, others to Australia and others to England in order then to earn money to be able to send back to feed their families. So it's not a mystery, but it's a terrible tragedy and in some ways the greatest failure that a leader can be to their own people, that they force people to emigrate in order to survive; that's what wound up happening. To Mugabe, this was almost irrelevant; the important thing to him was holding power himself and there could be no Zimbabwe without him in his view.

Q: How stood things from the bleachers? I read in the papers about the White farmers being forced out and all. How stood the situation by the time you got there?

SULLIVAN: Well by the time I got there the majority of white farmers had been forced out. There were still individual cases in the process of being forced out and by now it must be 99 percent of them that have been forced out. I think there is an argument to be made that many of these white farmers had ignored the potential for problems in the future, particularly if they had bought the land since 1980. Since Mugabe came to power, it was necessary to obtain a certificate of no interest by the state in order to purchase the land and in almost all cases they got that. But that certificate did not protect them against Mugabe changing his mind and changing the courts as much as he needed in order to have his decision to take white farmers' lands upheld. But it is also true that a situation in which something like 20 percent of the most productive land being held by Whites in a

country in which Whites were perhaps less than one percent of the population this was a future problem. The white farmers probably didn't anticipate the potential problem very well. At least some of them had supported Mugabe with contributions to his favored causes, even political contributions to him. He also wanted them to stay out of politics, which for the most part they did. But at the end of the day, they were there when he needed a political cause, when he had already suffered one electoral defeat in a constitutional referendum and he made his political cause seizing the land of the White farmers, which won him some support among black Zimbabweans and other black Africans. By 2002, I am convinced that the majority of the population no longer supported him, but the land issue had become his political banner.

Fortunately, I think, none of the white farmers had American citizenship so the US had no direct espousal responsibility, as did many of my colleagues from the British embassy and many other Europeans. These embassies espoused the cases of their citizens and it occupied a great deal of their time with almost no effect really. The diplomatic advocacy might have been able to slow down the process, but was almost never able to prevent the government from not only seizing their property but in many cases the farm equipment on their property as well.

Q: Were these farms taken over by essentially dispossessed people who just sat there or were they taken over by natives of the country who were getting something out of it?

SULLIVAN: I'll go back a little bit to say that the Zimbabwean government had had a program of nationalization of property for benefit of black Zimbabweans and the British government to a small degree contributed to that and the international community also assisted. One of the reasons the international community didn't play a larger role in that program was that previously expropriated land had wound up going in many cases to cronies of Mugabe. Some land did go to blacks in communally owned lands, but these lands were typically not given sufficient resources or agricultural extension support to do much effective raising of crops and the additional land was devoted largely subsistence agriculture. Then what happened in the late '90s but certainly continued throughout my time there, was that the land that was taken was overwhelmingly given to cronies of Mugabe, army officers, later even army enlisted people, senior police and others to buy their loyalty. The majority of these people weren't farmers themselves, they had come from a different background. Many of them were urban people looking to have a stake hold out in the countryside but they didn't have the background and in most cases the resources that they were willing and able to put into the land to make it successful. The white farmers were universally recognized as highly efficient farmers of both wheat, maize, tobacco and other products and they had wound up being replaced by people who by and large farmed the land very unproductively. Consequently, the ability of Zimbabwe to feed its own people declined dramatically. Their ability to produce crops like tobacco for export to raise foreign exchange declined dramatically and you wound up with people who held the land not making efficient farm use of the land.

Q: Were they sort of letting it out to other people and sitting back and reaping whatever profits came out of it?

SULLIVAN: Not for the most part. For the most part they'd go out and visit their farm on the weekend so it was a tragedy in many senses. For the most part the white farmers had been apolitical and in most cases the land holdings were not huge; we are talking a hundred or a couple of hundred acres. But they were very efficient in what they did. Instead those couple of hundred acres began to be almost totally unproductive. Zimbabwe used to be a bread basket of southern Africa and it no longer raised enough grain to feed its own people.

Q: How did it feed its own people?

SULLIVAN: Well a lot of it with international assistance. The World Food Program set up a major program to assist people and the US contributed, as did most western governments, to those feeding programs and they helped many millions of Zimbabweans survive, which caused ambivalent feelings on the government's part. Nonetheless, the government mostly cooperated.

Q: Well in a way they were coming out ahead they were sitting back and relaxing and letting the White folk take care of them.

SULLIVAN: Sure, yeah to a certain degree. I mean they didn't like it in the sense that at the World Food Program food distributions, the local party leaders were not allowed to organize the ZANU- PF Party songs since it was supposed to be a non-partisan distribution. So things like that would irritate the government and cause conflict, but eventually, as you say, they needed the food, so for the most part they allowed it to happen. However, on the eve of the March 2002 election, the government shut down the food distribution for several weeks because they feared that somehow it could be used politically in a way that was not under their control.

Q: What sort of I won't say instructions but you must have had very mixed reaction in Washington of people saying well screw them let's not do this or you've got to bear down on it or you have to feed the people. It must have been a very difficult position for you to be in.

SULLIVAN: Well I think in that case actually there wasn't much disagreement, there wasn't a strong argument that we should not help feed hungry people most of whom were, as they usually are, women and children, many of whom would otherwise have starved or been malnourished; so that wasn't a real argument within the US Government. As I reflect back on what was the greatest disagreement between Washington and the field, it was the belief in Washington that U.S. actions and U.S. punitive actions, in particular, can achieve a political objective. We did not argue against US sanctions against Zimbabwean leaders, but we argued for facing the likely reality that suspension of US visas or financial accounts in the US of individuals in the Zimbabwean regime was not going to be sufficient to force Mugabe to give up power. Mugabe's interests were so strong that he would not hesitate in removing anyone who disagreed with him from their position. He just steamrolled all opposition and that was the way it was.

Q: The obvious thing would be and I mean I don't know if you can even comment on it was the sitting around waiting for somebody to kill Mugabe.

SULLIVAN: As is often the case in regimes like that, the most efficient operation that the State runs is its own security operations. Within ZANU-PF, loyalty to Mugabe was ambivalent loyalty at a certain point; there were a few people who broke with him but not many. So it was that inner circle that controlled the security forces, that inner circle that controlled access to Mugabe and there is a long debate about Mugabe and how much he'd changed and how much he was always this way, because in the independence struggle and afterwards, he was ruthless at a number of times; effectively ruthless. It can be argued that's the way a guerrilla leader has to be if he is going to succeed, but Mugabe conducted reprisals against black civilian populations that didn't support him and forced them to support him. After coming to power, Mugabe also conducted a major military campaign in Joshua Nkomo's stronghold of Matabeleland and reduced Nkomo from being a figure with his own following to being a powerless, nominal vice president to Mugabe. So Mugabe had a long history of ruthlessness but because he had been what relatively amicable to the West, because he had allowed white farmers to stay on the land and talked about reconciliation I think there was some hope in the West that prevailed in the end that this was somebody you could work with. He used to win his elections with typically 95 percent support and that probably was relatively authentic because there was no significant opposition once he had eliminated Nkomo's political base. But then once he faced a significant political challenge in the late 1990s he became ruthless again with that opposition, including with some of the civil society people that he used to have good relations with.

I can recall one very good illustrative story of Mugabe who prides himself on having, I think, seven doctoral degrees; some of them are probably not much better than those off a cereal box, but some of them authentic and some of them achieved while he was in jail. In Zimbabwe and, I think, Zambia and a couple other countries the president of the country is often times the chancellor of virtually all the universities of the country and certainly all the state universities; Mugabe took that role with some pride. I became good friends with somebody who had been the vice chancellor of the University of Harare in the mid-90s. This individual was a close, long time friend of Mugabe and he recalled the times when he was vice chancellor Mugabe, would invite him to drop by the president's residence and chat on a Friday afternoon. They would talk for two or three hours on problems at the university. He would call him Robert and Robert would call him Walter and they would discuss the problems in a very open way. Then in the late '90s, when Mugabe began expropriating farms, Walter who had diabetes and lost his legs and was no longer vice chancellor, asked to see Mugabe based on old time connections. Walter told him that he thought he was wrong in what he was doing and that he was going to bring the country to ruin and that it wasn't too late to correct this and so on. Mugabe listened to him, didn't comment, said goodbye and never spoke to him again.

Q: Yeah.

SULLIVAN: So that's...

Q: Well did you have any significant contact with Mugabe?

SULLIVAN: No, no I mean I had periodic contact usually in a pretty formal setting with a visitor but I would even regard my initial contact with him as two of us talking by each other without him really looking for common ground and not at all open to discussions about how we might be able to improve the relationship. So I had pretty good access to virtually everybody else in government and many of them remained close to Mugabe and I'm sure messages would get through with things that particularly bothered us and others that were perhaps areas of being able to work together but effectively we got no serious response. They were embarked on a course and were not to be deterred from it.

Q: Well did we have or do we have now sort of a plan when Mugabe goes what we can do?

SULLIVAN: Well I probably can't speak for what we'd do now, but we did then have some serious ideas about what we could do. We did work very closely with the opposition and had excellent relations with them and currently there is a coalition government of sorts in which the opposition leader Tsvangirai is prime minister while Mugabe is president. Mugabe does not adhere very well to the coalition agreement; he declines to name some of the people that Tsvangirai has nominated to the ministerial positions, has kept the president of the central bank notwithstanding the provision that that he was to be changed, but notwithstanding this, the opposition has succeeded in reviving the economy a little bit. Basically they've dollarized the economy and thrown out worthless Zimbabwean dollars, pay teachers in dollars at relatively reduced rates; I think it is about \$100 a month but that's better than worthless Zimbabwean dollars they were begin paid before. Probably the economy more than anything else subsists on the remittances sent in from Zimbabwean immigrants living abroad. That said, Zimbabweans are very well educated people, very industrious, when given the opportunity and, I think, it could come back relatively quickly if and when Mugabe goes and if and when there is a reasonable government.

Q: Do these people who have taken over the farming land have a real stake in it or is this just sort of a place to lounge in or something?

SULLIVAN: I suppose some of them thought they had a stake and thought they could make something out of it but it takes a lot of hard work, it's a seven day a week job, and it takes investment and most of them didn't have capital to invest themselves and the state by that point was so bankrupt that it did not have the capability of leaning money to them. The financial system in general had crumbled in ways that there really was no effective lending for agriculture available. What will happen there is a serious question. I think the opposition at this stage has said that it does not aspire to retake this land that would be a very unpopular act in an overwhelmingly Black African country, but instead try to make it productive again. To do that I would imagine that many of these people would sell their land for whatever the current value was to somebody who was capable

and willing to farm on it.

Q: Well within Zimbabwe are there any people there who have the right skin complexion who could take it over? I mean...

SULLIVAN: There are some, and even among those people who were given the land, there are potentially good farmers, given the right circumstances. In addition, there are many black Zimbabweans who have farmed for generations. Even though the system of communal land under which many black Zimbabweans farmed is a dependency-inducing phenomenon in which people don't have land in individual title, but only as part of a community, they do have farming skills. In the right circumstances if black Zimbabweans were to receive land in a system in which the system designed to foster more productive farming and provide them with the means and the capital to do such, I believe many of them would succeed. Zimbabweans have written many excellent plans for how to do just that, but the Mugabe government has been making land distribution decisions on political grounds rather than on the basis of agricultural productivity..

Q: In a way could you say you in the embassy were essentially holding a waiting brief, waiting for the guy to die?

SULLIVAN: Well there were challenges and possibilities and, as I say, we supported the opposition. There was at least one more round of elections, where we tried to monitor to the degree that we could. Yet, at the end of the day there was no effective means of moving Mugabe. The opposition was unable to mobilize sufficient public in the streets to challenge him effectively. I'd say that in some ways Zimbabweans had a history of intimidation; intimidation certainly by Ian Smith and that regime, intimidation during the independence campaign by Mugabe and intimidation in the campaign against Joshua Nkomo in Matabeleland. Most Zimbabweans or their parents have memories of that intimidation and never want to return to that sort of open civil conflict again. And Mugabe has used that in his favor.

Q: Often with embassies you end up with the senior officers, the ambassador, DCM and all you've been around the block you say okay this too shall pass and then you get junior officers who say for God's sake let's do something. Did you find that kind of split?

SULLIVAN: Not really I think that to the degree there was that phenomenon at the time I arrived, there had been a major and very activist AID mission very involved in democracy building, society building, etc., but in some ways doing their own thing without much coordination. I think we effectively implemented a system of a much more coordinated effort. That, notwithstanding, there were at least some individuals within that mission who were out on the edge, and the usual result of that would be that they would put themselves in situations where either people they were supporting would get arrested and we would try to intervene to prevent the worst. I wouldn't call it a policy dispute it was more differences over how to implement policy effectively.

We as an embassy were also fairly aggressive. We had one set of officers, who were

documenting human rights abuses. They were out in the countryside and they were in effect rounded up by some so-called war veterans under the guidance of Mugabe's security apparatus. They amounted to sharp troops under Mugabe's political control. They came up and set upon our people, they beat an individual from an NGO who had brought our people to the site to talk to people. They laid a few blows on our embassy driver and instructed our group to follow them. Who knows what would have happened, but our embassy driver was wise enough to only follow them for a little and then speed off in the other direction. Our embassy people escaped the situation, but we faced viciousness like that fairly frequently.

Opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai, for instance, was being charged at one stage on trumped up treason charges so we and other embassies insisted on witnessing that trial and even forcing our way into the court room, not physically but by our presence. At the end of the day, those charges were dropped and our having insisted on our ability to witness the trial, as provided in Zimbabwean law, helped assure there could not be a secret judgment against him. There were certainly frequent circumstances of human rights abuse and most of what we could do was bear witness to it, document it in our human rights report, complain of it, and seek to have the United Nations pass resolutions condemning such violations. Some of those positions were being undercut by the failure of many Africans to speak out.

Q: What sort of human rights abuses were there?

SULLIVAN: Well there were a couple people killed, not high numbers but probably in the tens of opposition activists killed. Many tortured, many beaten as well as failure to abide by the commitments that Zimbabwe had made in their own constitution and elsewhere to have a fair judicial system, fair civil procedures and humane prison treatment; much of that became politically manipulated.

Q: What about the British embassy and you and other embassies. Were you all sort of united or doing your thing? How did that work?

SULLIVAN: Yeah, I think we were quite united and the British embassy and we exchanged information closely. We had a somewhat larger embassy, but they had a lot of traditional relationships and a lot of information. We exchanged that information, we compared notes on how we could most effectively seek to influence the problems and most of the Europeans were in harmony. The European Union did take pretty strong positions, often at British urging. So the West was fairly united. I spent a lot of time with the Africans because I felt their taking strong positions was likely to be more effective than our taking strong positions. Many of their embassies, if not the majority, were in agreement with the criticism of Zimbabwe, but their governments back home took ambiguous positions. The most important country of all to Zimbabwe, South Africa did not take clear positions. Ironically the critical factor in breaking Ian Smith's government was the decision of the apartheid government of South Africa to end its support for Smith and, in effect, force him to negotiate towards a majority rule. This South African government, Mbeki, was not prepared to do a similar thing and wound up giving cover to

Mugabe, even within internal African forums. I think South Africa's unwillingness to take a strong stand was the critical factor in having Africa as a whole not take a stronger stand against the abusive policies of Mugabe.

Q: It was far afield but was Qadhafi messing around in there?

SULLIVAN: Funny you should ask that but it was a little bit, a little bit, not a lot but a little bit. Ironically in the midst of my time, there were the beginnings of the great change in U.S.-Libyan relations in a way that made our concern about Libyan involvement in Zimbabwe moot. If the U.S. was now much closer to Libya what was our problem with Libyan involvement in Zimbabwe. I think the broader point was that Mugabe found himself isolated from the West, which he used to admire. He speaks British English with a terrific accent and great vocabulary. He used to relish his trips to Europe, he had a new young wife who used to love to shop there and he was personally, I think, anguished over being excluded from this life. That said, he did what people do in circumstances like that. He turned to whomever he could and there were a series of countries and leaders willing to give him some comfort, Malaysia and several others. He used to travel there and had a close relationship with the previous Malaysian Prime Minister. He also cultivated better relations with China.

Q: Why would China care about there? I mean is it just...

SULLIVAN: Resources basically,. Zimbabwe does not have petroleum, but it does have a great deal of mineral resources. Zimbabwe's historic resource was chrome that was an issue way back when when the U.S. Senate sought to prevent the administration from boycotting Rhodesian chrome for fear that our only source of chrome would be the Soviet Union. More recently there are other newer resources such as titanium. Zimbabwe had set up in the '90s some investment vehicles for mining and some of it produced significant investment resources. There was also some diamond mining taking place which, I understand, has increased substantially in the last couple of years. The instability in Zimbabwe was diminishing Zimbabwe's attractiveness to Western and even South African investors. China saw opportunities and beginning to invest at the time I was there.

Q: Did you have many discussions with the Chinese ambassador?

SULLIVAN: Yeah, I used to do some social events with him and so on. The Chinese at that time had a pretty common line whether it be in Cuba, Angola or Zimbabwe and it tends to be that, "Well sure we advise them to follow our economic reform model and yet we are not going to interfere in their internal affairs. We don't adopt political criteria in our assistance or our investments and, therefore, we are not going to raise political concerns in our conversations. And because we have a great shortage of resources, we acquire them wherever we can and will follow a strict commercial criteria."

Q: Well then you left there in 2004 was it?

SULLIVAN: Correct.

Q: Whither Zimbabwe when you left?

SULLIVAN: Well I guess stuck, stuck and stuck in a bad place. There's been perhaps a slight improvement since then in that the opposition has joined the government and, at least, introduced some elements of economic rationality. But Mugabe turns 87 this year and doesn't think it is time for him to retire nor to prepare his succession. So it's a sad situation and I'm afraid the Zimbabwean people will continue to suffer until he does go one way or another. There is supposed to be a new election within another year, whether he will do that or he would ever agree to a fair election I am dubious. Certainly within his own party and we did have discussions with a number of people within his own party who wished that he would go, one of whom actually did put himself on the ballot as an independent candidate for president in the most recent presidential election about three years ago and received some modest support. But at the end of the day, most ZANU PF leaders are unwilling or unable to break with Mugabe. And ZANU- PF and Mugabe and his security forces are willing to use whatever force is necessary and whatever fraud is necessary in order to continue in power.

Q: What about social life?

SULLIVAN: Social life? For the majority of our time it wasn't bad, we could get around the country; we could have family come out and visit, go to the game parks and do some terrific things. Those things began to tighten up in our time. There was a period in which there wasn't enough gasoline and we were able to make a separate arrangement in which we got enough gasoline for our own vehicles but certainly if you drove out to the deep country side and needed to refill you were in trouble.

There was another period in which local currency became unavailable and so there was no way to exchange your dollars for local currency because there wasn't any; yet you needed local currency in order to make most of your purchases. For us it was a relative hardship, we had some means of acquiring things, I think we even sent some convoys down to South Africa to pick up some supplies and bring them back. For our Zimbabwean employees it was a great hardship, an enormous hardship. This had been a relatively sophisticated financial system; we had already some years before instituted direct deposits. I recall the gardener at the residence who was not literate unlike the majority of Zimbabweans going down to use his ATM card to withdraw his money and instead gets a notice that must have said that the bank was out of currency. He put his card in again and it promptly got swallowed and he didn't have an ATM card anymore. We had to negotiate that for him but it was a huge handicap.

In the convoys of food that we began bringing up we began seeking to take care of our FSN staff as well; they were affected more than us.

Q: Oh yeah. When you left did you pay a farewell call?

SULLIVAN: No, I did not on Mugabe. I decided that it would not be productive, that there would be nothing to be gained. I did call on the foreign minister with whom we had a reasonable relationship but not on the president. I think I decided that it would not be productive and informed Washington that I did not think it would be productive and that we should just leave it to my successor to have the next meeting with the president. My successor had actually got in some difficulties in his confirmation hearings. The nature of these things was that if the U.S. has a difficult relationship with the country one is nominated for, Senators asked very tough questions in the hearings and one is expected to give very tough answers. Yet those tough answers are very unpopular in the country you are going to. So that happened and it became a bit of a flare up in the press with some question about whether Ambassador Dell's agrément should be withdrawn. I went in and managed to smooth that over and he was on route. In fact, my successor in Zimbabwe, Chris Dell, had also been my successor in Angola. Chris had the next meeting with Mugabe although I don't think it was any more productive than my meetings with Mugabe.

End of reader