

SIR WALTER LEONARD ALLINSON

Index of Tape

- pp 3-4 Entry of CRO; first Secretary in Lahore.
- pp 4-6 Royal visit to Kenya c.1983.
- pp 6-9 Merger of CRO and FO in 1960s.
- p7 (and note) Rann of Kutch dispute, 1965 (see also p33 on Kashmir)
- pp 9-10 First Secretary in New Delhi: John Freeman as High Commissioner,
Harold Wilson, arms sales (Oberon submarines).
- pp 11-13 Comments on Africa since independence and position of the
Commonwealth.
- pp 13-23 High Commissioner in Lusaka: royal visit, Commonwealth Conference,
Rhodesia problem, Kaunda.
- pp 24-25 Acting High Commissioner in Nairobi; working with Kenyatta and Moi.
- pp 25-28 High Commissioner in Nairobi; comments on ministerial visits.
- pp 31-32 Comparing British to US diplomatic practice.
- p 32 Carter and Callaghan visit India.
- p 33 Indo-Pakistan War of 1965.

SIR WALTER LEONARD ALLINSON

Career Outline

b. 1 May 1926

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| 1947-8 | Ministry of Fuel and Power |
| 1948-58 | Ministry of Education |
| 1958-60 | CRO |
| 1960-62 | 1st Secretary, Lahore and Karachi |
| 1962-3 | CRO. |
| 1963-4 | Madras. |
| 1964-6 | New Delhi |
| 1966-8 | CRO. |
| (1968-70 Head of PUDS) | |
| 1970-74 | Head of Chancery, then (1972) DHC, Nairobi |
| 1975-8 | Minister, New Delhi |
| 1978-80 | High Commissioner, Lusaka |
| 1980-82 | AUSS, FCO |
| 1982-86 | High Commissioner in Nairobi, Kenya and Ambassador to UN Environment Programme |

Jane Barder interviews Sir Leonard Allinson, 5th March 1996.

Transcribed by Jeremy Wiltshire.

2nd July 1996

An interview between Sir Leonard Allinson and Jane Barder, 5th March 1996

J: 5th March 1996, Jane Barder, talking to Sir Leonard Allinson in Wandsworth. Born in 1926, retired from the diplomatic service in 1986 as High Commissioner in Kenya and ambassador to the UN environment program. Sir Leonard was appointed MVO in 1961, CMG in 1976 and KCVO in 1979. He was educated at Friern Barnet Grammar school and Merton College, Oxford, where he took first class honours in history and entered the Home Civil Service straight from University. He worked at the Ministry of Fuel and Power and at the Ministry of Education. Then you transferred to the Commonwealth Relations Office ..?

L: Yes, I worked in the Ministry of Fuel and Power temporarily waiting for the first normal method 2 exam after the war, replacing the reconstruction examinations. I passed that coming joint third and my first choice was the Ministry of Education. My second choice was the Commonwealth Relations Office. I got my first choice. But the Ministry promoted me to Principal at the age of twenty seven, which was quite good and transferred me down to be the Principal in their Welsh office, in Cardiff, ostensibly for two years, in fact I stretched it to four at which point the Ministry said I must come back to London. My wife and I didn't relish the thought of spending the rest of our lives in London and at that very moment I was approached by the Permanent Secretary to tell me that the Commonwealth Office wanted principals of my age and that though the Ministry didn't want to lose me he was notifying me and others of that age of the opportunity. In fact I was interviewed by the Permanent Secretary at the Commonwealth Office who spoke for an hour. I said "Yes" occasionally, at the end of which he said I was just the person they needed and sent me back to Curzon Street, the Minister of Education, in his official car. I thought this was the firm to join. So I moved over to the Commonwealth Office and then a posting which gave me a chance to get a very good overview of the work of the Commonwealth Relations Office.

J: That's a home posting?

L: A home posting in the Principal Staff Officers Department. Sir Gilbert Laithwaite, the permanent Secretary then said that I should go to Lahore as the first secretary because it was the most efficient deputy high commission in the Commonwealth and would be a very good place to learn the trade. So I went to Lahore in 1960 with my wife and three small children and a British nanny and arrived at Lahore station in a temperature of 116 degrees in May and the deputy high commissioner Desmond Crawley had been in the Indian civil service and the Indian political service and was a very self sufficient, self reliant, laid back character who gave me the most excellent grounding in how to be a diplomat.

Almost immediately, within a few months we had to start preparations for a royal visit by the Queen who was going to spend five days in Lahore as well as time in Karachi and Rawalpindi. Desmond Crawley delegated a great deal of the arrangements for the Queen's stay in Lahore to me, in conjunction with the Pakistan authorities and I'm happy to say it worked out extremely well and it was most impressive to see the enthusiasm with which the Pakistani population turned out to greet the Queen and the real desire of all Pakistanis, high and low, to arrange things to please her and to show their country at its best.

This experience of the very warm feelings evoked by the Queen was to be repeated for me both in Lusaka, in Zambia in very very difficult circumstances in the run up to the Commonwealth conference which was the beginning of the end of the Rhodesian conflict and the settlement, and again in happier circumstances in Nairobi in 1983 or 1984 when she made a royal visit to Kenya. The whole road from Nairobi up to Nyeri which was a distance of well over a hundred miles was absolutely in throng with people to see her drive by. The children of the local "Kirinyaga" girls' high school at Nyeri sang a song that any other country would have killed for. As free propaganda, these children (and it was all done by Kenyans, I had nothing to do with it, it came as much as a surprise to me as to the Queen) sang a song specially composed for the Queen saying, "You brought us freedom, you brought us the English language, you brought us justice" and other praises of that sort.

J: Heart-warming?

L: Really heart-warming sentiments, of which of course the British press made nothing, although they were present.

J: So you had nothing to do with that particular song but Missions do get involved with a great deal of work in preparation, but you feel it's ..?

L: A royal visit requires a very very great deal of work and everything has to be meticulously timed to the minute. All routes have to be covered. Every conceivable kind of arrangement has to be made. You have to have in mind medical emergencies, you have to have security in mind and you have to have crowd control in mind, press arrangements. It really requires months of intensive work. But there are many bonuses from this apart from the actual enthusiasm and good feelings between the countries, that are evoked by a royal visit by the Queen. You gain a great bonus too, because you work very very closely with the authorities of the host country. You build up your relationship with them in a way you couldn't possibly achieve in ordinary day to day contacts because you are working as comrades and colleagues on a very detailed project and you get to know each other in the most wonderful way and you make all sorts of contacts, not just in the capital but in the other areas the queen is visiting and gain deeper insights into the country.

The Kenyan Minister of Finance was joking to me and saying, "We'll do this British time, not Kenyan time."

J: And they did?

L: And they did, which was unheard of. Everything was on the dot.

J: But you've also had experience of visits by members of the Royal family other than the Queen. Do they have the same kind of impact?

L: Well I had experience of several visits by the Princess Royal, Princess Anne as she was then, largely working as representative for Save the Children Fund. Of course, there wasn't so much detailed work involved in that but again, she creates a very good impression on the people she meets. I remember the Starehe school in Nairobi which is

a very large school for about 1,200 boys, many of whom are orphans from poor families and it's largely supported by charitable money from all over the world and provides a first class education right up to preparation for University. She was supposed to visit it for about an hour. In fact the visit lasted for well over two hours and the detailed and sympathetic interest she took in the boys' projects and work created the most enormous feeling of enthusiasm and pleasure amongst the boys and she was cheered to the echo when she left. I mean it was most astonishing, the demonstration of affection, it really was.

J: So 1,200 friends for Britain ..?

L: Absolutely, and there was no doubt about it, she was not putting on an act, she was interested, she was very keen to see what they could do.

J: So that must have been a pretty high spot very early in your career but what was it like working for the CRO and what did you feel when the CRO merged?

L: I had always seen a lot of value in the idea of Commonwealth as a link between the former colonies and Britain and as a way of helping countries to develop and creating good feeling between the races, with the ready made link of the English language there and the understanding of common institutions. So it was very much a pleasure for me to join the Commonwealth Relations Office having also enjoyed my experience at the Ministry of Education, but we were always in second place in Whitehall to the Foreign Office, which was a much larger institution and much longer established and which undoubtedly had some highly talented members of staff.

The Commonwealth Office did have some very able people amongst its senior staff and I call to mind particularly Sir Joe (Saville) Garner, who became the first Head of the Joint Diplomatic Service and was made a life peer, Lord Garner, who was an able man by anybody's standards. Also Morrice James (Lord St Brides) who became a life peer as Lord St Brides and served as High Commissioner in India, Pakistan and Australia and was the last Permanent Secretary of the Commonwealth Office. Morrice James was a man of great force and ability. I think he became a Lieutenant Colonel as a very very young man in the Royal Marines during the war. Morrice could take on anybody in

Whitehall if he had a mind to and was a man to be respected. Although he didn't reach quite that eminence Sir Cyril Pickard was a man who virtually brought peace in the Rann of Kutch dispute between India and Pakistan, virtually single-handed.

J: From London?

L: From London. From his desk in London¹. So there were some very able men there, but there were also some people who were not quite up to the fighting weight of their equivalents in the Foreign Office.

J: Do you know how people like Morrice James, as the last Permanent Secretary of the CRO, felt about that merger with the Foreign Office?

L: I never discussed it with Morrice in fact, because unfortunately he went off to India I think it was and I went off to Kenya, so I never ... he married a French woman, he lived mostly in France after he retired. I imagine he felt it was inevitable as I did, that the two offices should merge, but I think there were penalties. I think that because naturally the people in the Foreign Office saw as our priority our relationship with the United States and our relationships with Europe, the Commonwealth was always a bit of an irritant. Unfortunately to start with in the days of the Commonwealth Office the Indo-Pakistan Kashmir dispute got in the way of Commonwealth meetings. It was never solved but at least it settled down to an uneasy relationship that rumbled on and wasn't going to change. But then we had the trouble with Rhodesian independence and the struggle over Rhodesia and the apartheid issue in South Africa. It meant that in all Commonwealth meetings Britain was in the dock.

¹ In a letter dated 5th June 1996 Sir Leonard added the following: *As to how Cyril Pickard "solved" the Rann of Kutch episode, I cannot speak from total knowledge. But as a First Secretary in the Political section of the High Commission in Delhi at the time I can say that Britain acted effectively as a go-between with India and Pakistan and helped to bring about an agreement which was all too short lived - Kashmir erupting soon afterwards.*

As I understand it Pickard had a line to the British High Commission in Pakistan and another to Delhi and orchestrated our efforts from his desk in the CRO. Certainly as a leg man in Delhi. I and another First Secretary were briefly members of the Congress Parliamentary Committee and also sounding out their views and relaying this to the HC who was himself in touch with the Indian PM and Ministers, strengthened by our

Naturally enough ministers found this very irritating and troublesome. It did mean the Commonwealth really was not given the attention it should have had in my view, because if you take the long perspective what do we see now? We see now a great deal of talk about the tiger economies and the rising importance of the Pacific. We see India becoming more of the economic giant that it has the potential to be. So you have some very significant Commonwealth countries, India, Malaysia, Singapore, where we could have been in a better position now if we had wished to be. We failed to be in that position because we focused too much on Europe and America.

J: We had very up and down relationships with Malaysia in particular. Do you feel that those would have been differently handled had there been ..?

L: I think they would have been. You can't prove it.

J: No.

L: But I just think that a different mindset ... the point is that everyone at the Foreign Office is Foreign Office based and nobody in the Commonwealth Office sat in a senior position there for very long after the merger.

J: Was the kind of staffing dispositions such that people that had been in the Commonwealth Relations Office stayed more or less serving in Commonwealth countries?

L: No. In fact I was told when the merger came up, I was working as deputy head of PUSD, I was told that my next posting would be to a foreign country. I said that was okay, I was ready to go wherever they wished me to go. In fact I was promoted to be Head of PUSD and from there I went to Kenya, my first visit to Africa and I never did serve in a foreign country, which probably is just as well as I'm not a great linguist. Some fractured Urdu and Swahili is as far as I ever got!

J: Well yes, I think not enough recognition is given to command of these languages. Perhaps as you say, they're not in the forefront of people's minds.

L: No. I do think we've missed some chances but I think the merger of the offices was almost inevitable. An example of how we missed the trick in India is that, as I say in 1965 a conflict developed over the frontier in the Rann of Kutch and Cyril Pickard brought that to a halt really as a one man operation.

J: He was an assistant?

L: I think he was the AUS at that time. That was really quite a high achievement. Unfortunately later in the year infiltrators from Pakistan moved into Kashmir disguised as insurgents and calling on the people to rise and a thirty days war of some intensity broke out between India and Pakistan. I was then serving in India as First Secretary. I was the Senior First Secretary and John Freeman was the High Commissioner.

J: In New Delhi?

L: In New Delhi. 1965, I should say, not 1964. Everybody between John Freeman and me in the political hierarchy were away so I worked directly with the High Commissioner obviously.

J: John Freeman of course was a political appointment?

L: Exactly, appointed by Harold Wilson. Harold Wilson issued a statement condemning the Indian advance on Lahore, which was meant to counter attack the move into Kashmir by the Pakistanis, without consulting John Freeman and the first we heard about it was the text coming through on the diplomatic wireless in the middle of the night. I woke up John Freeman, who I must say is wonderful at becoming instantly alert and being wonderfully unruffled in a crisis. I said he'd better come in and see this. The wording that Wilson put out seemed totally biased in Indian eyes but Freeman had been given no opportunity to comment on it. We were instantly in the doghouse in India. It took Freeman many many painful months to restore a sort of relationship with the Indian government.

J: That's extraordinary, given the relationship between Britain and ...

L: Yes, very odd. The year before that in 1964, I'm afraid I've got the chronology out of step here, when Paul Gore-Booth (who subsequently went from Delhi to be the Permanent Under Secretary of the Foreign and Commonwealth office) was our High Commissioner and the Indians were eyeball to eyeball with the Chinese up on the frontier (you remember the Chinese had attacked India the year before) the Indians had wanted more up-to-date fighter planes. They wanted the American F104, whatever the current American fighter plane was.

The Americans were not willing to provide those because they thought it would upset the Pakistanis and I also daresay they thought that the Indians would leak their secrets and they said, "Well the British will let you have their Lightnings." Well our Lightnings were designed for the defence of Great Britain. They had a very short range, not much endurance. The Indians knew all about them and they didn't want Lightnings at all! They were no good! So they bought Russian Migs, which was a very big change and, of course, was very unpopular with Britain and America.

The Indian Navy now wanted to re-equip itself and modernise itself given the Chinese threat and they said they wanted to buy British Oberon submarines which would have to be built. I think they were going to buy three but they wanted the loan of a Royal Navy Oberon pro tem so that they could train to run these submarines and be up and running so as soon as the first one was delivered they'd be operational. The Navy were not willing to release an Oberon submarine. They said they couldn't spare one.

Paul Gore-Booth, who after all was a very senior man, he was going to become the PUS of the Foreign Office, telegraphed back arguing with Whitehall no less than three times about this which was very unusual. You may argue twice but to go back a third time is not a normal procedure. He pleaded with the Government to release the Oberon submarine and it was turned down and so the Indians then turned to the Russians and they got Russian submarines.

J: Why was it turned down?

L: The story was that the Navy could not and would not release an Oberon submarine.

J: Was it fear of passing on secrets?

L: Well no, as we were going to sell them Oberon submarines anyway ...

J: We were prepared to sell them ..?

L: Yes. It was extraordinary. So you got the Indians turning wholly to the Russians for equipment at that stage. Of course that didn't improve relationships with the west at all.

J: Michael Stewart was Foreign Secretary at the time. You speak of Harold Wilson.

L: Well he was the Prime Minister.

J: Was Michael Stewart interested in ..?

L: I don't think so. I didn't get that impression, although he was quite a good Foreign Secretary in some ways. He wasn't a non-entity, let's put it that way, but it seemed to be Wilson who was the key figure on that issue.

J: That kind of issue affected our continuing relationship?

L: Yes, very much so. If we let them have that Oberon submarine they would then have bought three Oberons and that very very strong link that existed between the Indian Navy and the Royal Navy would have been strengthened and built up instead of being weakened tremendously. I think it was a great pity. As I say Paul Gore-Booth who was a Foreign Office man through and through and so on, thought it was too. I'm afraid we take short term views, not long term views and this does not pay.

J: Have you seen this in other ..? (Tape stops.)

L: It may partly be that when we try and take a long term view it's wrong. As a vice president of the Royal African Society I was very intrigued at a conference the society had not long ago when they reviewed the forecasts that the Society had made on the eve of African independence. They took a thirty year look to see how what people had said

then had held up. Virtually nothing did. I remember in the Commonwealth Office we did a sort of ten year look at what might happen in Africa in the days when Ghana bulked terribly large and you know, where is Ghana now? It's done a bit better than some.

J: Because Ghana then was considered to be very prosperous.

L: Ghana was terribly important and was seen under Nkrumah to be a threat to British outlook in Africa. The worries and so on were very misplaced, weren't they? So it may not be just that we're short term; even when we try and be long term we're not too clever at it.

I think that we do have a problem of resources, of people and money and we can't do all some of us would like to do and we can't do what some countries would like us to do for them. I'm not speaking there, strictly of the aid programme, which I think very often has been used quite efficiently in latter days, although sometimes you think elements of it are more to help British industry, although every project is agreed with the host country and is something they want. I suppose there is no reason why it shouldn't be of mutual benefit, but there are a lot of countries that need help where we can't give as much as it would be nice to do, such as Mozambique for example. It is striking that a country like Mozambique looks to Britain ...

J: ... to join the Commonwealth.

L: To join the Commonwealth. There was this marvellous occasion when I went to Maputo, as one of the five nation effort on Namibia to try and get agreement from the so called front line states about the independence constitution we'd drawn up for Namibia.

J: This is late seventies?

L: This is early eighties actually. About '81 or it might have been '82. The French member of our five nation group was to speak for us and he started off saying we have a draft constitution for an independent and democratic Namibia and President Machel

stopped him and said "You're a Frenchman. You can't talk about democracy, you were run by that General." His aides said, "General de Gaulle! General de Gaulle! You Americans, you can't speak about it. You had that General Eisenhower. The Germans, well ...". Then he turned to me, ignoring the Canadian who was saying, "We haven't got a General," and said, "It's the British, the British! They know about democracy! I'll listen to them about democracy!"

Subsequently, as you say, they joined the Commonwealth. This is really a very remarkable thing. Here we have an institution that people actually want to join, although it doesn't offer a great deal in material terms to them, but it is a place where small countries can get some comfort and understanding.

J: People at home don't realise what an important role it has in foreign capitals, the coming together of Commonwealth diplomats, not in Commonwealth capitals but in any capital.

L: In any capital the Commonwealth High Commissioners usually meet together for lunch or whatever and can exchange views. I was sent to Lusaka, I'd been Deputy High Commissioner in India. I was sent to be High Commissioner in Lusaka in 1979, as a very important mission. In fact the Office put it to me that if I didn't go there was a strong likelihood a politician would be given the job and therefore, "I would go wouldn't I?" So I went!

J: Is that because of Zambia's role in the Rhodesian ..?

L: This was the role in the Rhodesian conflict and the negotiations that were underway and Kaunda's importance in all that and also Joshua Nkomo was resident in Lusaka and his men were quartered all over Zambia.

So I was plucked away from India before my time and sent off to Lusaka which was a very different kettle of fish. I had been in Kenya before and I was expecting, I suppose, much the same sort of people to deal with. But whereas the Kenyans I dealt with were extremely confident and relaxed and they weren't looking to find some hidden meaning in what I said, when I was there in the 70's, in Kenya, Dawson Mlamba (the Permanent

Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nairobi) would call out down the corridor when I was going to see him, "Now then Len you imperialist rogue, what are you coming to tell me today?" Whereas, in Zambia, I was treated with the utmost suspicion and mistrust and it was very hard to have a really good working relationship based on mutual respect with many of the Zambian officials and ministers. In fact one or two ministers were positively weird.

This is where the Commonwealth context was so helpful because the African and West Indian Commonwealth High Commissioners there, some of them, were of course in a better relationship with the Zambians. They were trusted. But they trusted me and so I could get via them a better insight into things than I could do directly. This was a great help to me and of course I could also help them in explaining what we were trying to do and how the negotiations were proceeding. I can't rate too highly, really, the help I got from three or four of those colleagues from other Commonwealth High Commissions in Lusaka.

It was really very difficult in Lusaka. One day the Rhodesian aircraft came in the morning and caught a whole Zambian battalion of Nkomo's men on parade just outside Lusaka and bombed them, causing tremendous casualties, hundreds of casualties. It was a 900 man battalion, caught in the open.

The Zambians brought the bodies and injured back through town and Lusaka's a small town, through the main streets to the hospital (which incidentally was only able to treat them because I had arranged for some medical supplies to come only the week before) and the ordinary Zambian in the streets saw these corpses and bleeding bodies trailing blood being driven through the streets and there was a briefly very bad attitude towards all white people in town. Some people got chased and scragged and I and the papal nuncio and I think the Swedish ambassador, on behalf of the diplomatic corps went to see the Minister of Foreign Affairs to demand that the Zambians protected foreign nationals, which in fact they did.

J: This must have been in the lead up to the famous CHOGM (Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting)?

L: This was in the lead up to the CHOGM conference, and before that the Queen's visit. The Queen's visit was quite unusual in the sense that there was a real physical danger. There were Nkomo's people there. Who knew whether the Rhodesians themselves might not pop over and get up to dirty tricks. There was considerable fear in Britain, I think even Mrs Thatcher was not happy that the Queen should be put at risk and Mrs Thatcher herself, of course, was going to face the dangers of the Conference. I was called to give my views and to attend a special meeting at 10 Downing Street.

J: You had to go home?

L: I had to go to that. I was firmly of the view that in fact it would be all right. After all I was putting my money where my mouth was in the sense that when the Queen travelled about I would be with her, so I would be close to her, so I too would be at risk and my wife as well. But I did say that I thought we should send a military team out to review security with the Zambians. They sent out Air Vice Marshal Reed Purvis (who was the Commandant to the RAF regiment with a Group Captain and a soldier to assist. aid to the Zambian military) had said that they would co-operate. But when we had our first meeting with the Zambian military command they were most unhelpful and totally unco-operative. We were getting nowhere so I arranged to have a meeting with President Kaunda. He said we should have a 'working breakfast' two days hence. The day before the 'working breakfast' the Rhodesians conveniently, but I assure you with no arrangement on our side, helicoptered their men into a suburb of Lusaka where Nkomo had his intelligence headquarters. They landed troops, the helicopters retired to the bush, the Rhodesian troops attacked the intelligence headquarters which were defended by Nkomo's men. After a firefight they captured it. They called back their helicopters and put captives and captured documents on the helicopters and flew away, following the main street, Cairo Road in Lusaka, waving to the crowds (who waved back) and dropping leaflets saying, "we're not attacking you, we're attacking these parasites who are feeding off you."

During this whole episode not one Zambian anti aircraft gun had fired. I said to Reed-Purvis, "Come up on the roof of the High Commission and I bet you in half an hour the Zambian Air Force will arrive and I wouldn't be surprised if their own guns don't fire on them."

It happened exactly like that. Two Macchi fighters of the Zambian air force turned up about twenty or thirty minutes later and the Zambian anti aircraft, which had not fired on the Rhodesian helicopters, fired at their own planes, but missed them. So we felt we had a very strong case on our part for getting some co-operation from the Zambians. When we went to see Kaunda the next morning at this 'working breakfast' he took the wind out of our sails by saying, "Tell me what I've got to do!" So it ended up with this Group Captain being stationed at Lusaka airport with a direct line to all the anti aircraft batteries and all sorts of co-operative arrangements so that there was no fear of the Queen's plane being shot at.

But another problem arose over the line up when the Queen arrived at the airport because the Zambians wanted Nkomo to be in the line up. This was totally unacceptable in our view. Nkomo's men, not that long before had shot down a Rhodesian air liner with civilians on board and the survivors had been killed in the bush. In the press conference subsequently, Nkomo had laughed about it, which had not gone down at all well. We felt it would not do to have Nkomo in the line up to shake hands with the Queen and I made this plain to the Zambians. The Zambians said, "All right".

Then the night before the Queen was due I was tipped off by a reliable person that they had decided to put Nkomo back in the line up. I luckily had an appointment at State House because you couldn't just walk in there. So I went there and instead of seeing the person I was due to see, I went to see Mark Chona, Kaunda's political assistant and said that I'd heard this and if that was the way it was going to be the Queen would not come. I would have to inform her and I was pretty sure that the plane would be turned elsewhere. He said that I was interfering with Zambia's internal affairs and we had a fairly heated discussion. I returned to my residence and said to my wife that I would wait for half an hour before I sent a telegram to the Queen's party, then in Botswana. Sure enough after about twenty minutes the phone rang and it was Mark Chona to tell me that the President was greatly displeased with my behaviour but nevertheless Mr Nkomo, President Nkomo as they called him, was going to be in Angola tomorrow! This still left unresolved a passage in the speech which Kaunda was to give at the banquet for the Queen. We'd had the text and despite all my arguments they had some

unacceptable remarks in it about the freedom fighters. I had not been able to shift them on that so I had briefed the Queens' party about it and they were able to finally talk Kaunda round when the Queens' plane landed, when he was on the plane, quite a dramatic event in itself.

In fact the Queen's visit went off like a charm. In fact I have a very very vivid memory of the Queen at the airport. There was a huge crowd of Zambians there to see her and to cheer her. As she went out of the airport to drive away there was a barbed wire fence, a high barbed wire fence. The Zambian crowd in order to get another view of her, flowed over the barbed wire, shirts getting ripped and so on as if it was cotton wool, in order to run up and be on the road to give another wave and cheer to the Queen. It was quite extraordinary. Another illustration of that magic touch that somehow accompanies the Queen which I must say I find very hard to believe we would get with a President.

J: Mrs Thatcher got on well with Kaunda?

L: Mrs Thatcher's visit was an eye opener too. I had met her once when she was leader of the opposition and visited Delhi. I was the Deputy High Commissioner and I had to brief her about things in India. She arrived at night and the press and Kaunda himself could not have been nastier about her. I mean they really said vile things about her. She didn't know what sort of reception she was going to get. In fact I read, although she didn't say it to me, that somebody had told her that she might get acid thrown in her eyes. Despite all the arrangements we had made with the Zambians for the arrival, for the police to hold the crowds back, I'm afraid the Zambians behaved as I would have expected them to do and not like my Kenyans! It all broke down and a huge mob of really press basically, foreign press, local press and of course, officials, swarmed round the aircraft and I and the Whitehall Knights who were with Mrs. Thatcher, and the special branch, had to form a sort of rucker scrum to get her into the airport buildings through this howling mob. She didn't know (it was dark) whether they were friendly or not. I mean I didn't think they were hostile, but it was very ...

J: ... But a crowd can be unpredictable?

L: Yes! It was quite intimidating for somebody who just arrived and had been vilified publicly in advance. Anyway, after that it was uphill all the way. She was accommodated in a special village, all the heads of Government were, each with their own villa. (They were at) Mulungushi village which had been built for an OAU conference, security all round. Because the Zambians were so very very security conscious we hadn't been able to check the villa out very much. It was only on the second day I heard very indirectly that Mrs. Thatcher was not getting any hot water through the taps. I got a plumber up there and when I saw her that evening I said, "Why didn't you tell me?" She said, "Well I thought it was the same for everybody, I didn't want a fuss. It's all right now." I said, "Well is there anything else?" She said, "Well, the eggs taste horrible, is it possible to get some nice eggs, some decent eggs?" I said, "Yes. There's a US Peace Corps worker who is doing a hen project. I'll send some eggs up." She said, "And an egg cup would be helpful." She'd been eating horrible eggs without an egg cup, you know. This is not the normal picture of Mrs. Thatcher, is it? I was asked to explain to her that Nkomo and his merry men actually did represent the sort of valid point of view, that what they stood for, in the eyes of a considerable number of residents of Rhodesia was valid. I felt afterwards that it must have ... that I'd been as it were, a rear gunner on a thousand bomber raid over Berlin with the flak coming at me with the most incredible intensity! But it was interesting to see that after a day or so her opinion altered somewhat.

J: Oh really?

L: She had modified her opinion. She had, without admitting it to me at the time, she had reflected on what I had said. She had argued very strenuously with me, but I had stood my ground. It had made an impact on her thinking. That was quite a revelation. In fact she struck up an excellent relationship with Kaunda and then we had this extraordinary farewell banquet at the end of it all by Kaunda for her and Dennis Thatcher, with Kaunda and Mrs Thatcher and Dennis Thatcher and Betty Kaunda, leading the dance. It was really quite touching, but it was a very intensive experience and very good to see the beginnings of the settlement of the Rhodesian problem coming about. Then it all ended in tears for me, because what had happened was that Mugabe's men were making tremendous inroads into Rhodesia and Nkomo realised that he was not going to have any effective presence there when it came to the final push and so his

men were organised much more on Russian lines, more as units, with Russian training. The Russian ambassador was always telling me we ought to back Nkomo instead. The Russians were. So he started to move his men in many, much greater numbers from Zambia towards Rhodesia. The Rhodesians, in order to stop that flew in and drove in and they blew up all the bridges and roads to stop this movement. Kaunda had been on a visit to London ... (SIDE ONE OF TAPE ENDS)

Side two

L: So he returns to a hero's welcome and was immediately humiliated by this tremendous Rhodesian blow. Of course the Zambian's defences were totally ineffective. They never really tried to take on the Rhodesians, usually. He immediately made a big speech and it was all the fault of the British and we should pay for all this damage. I was pressed to reply and our Press Officer issued a statement saying we were very sorry that this had happened but we couldn't take responsibility for Rhodesian actions though we did help Zambia and would help Zambia.

This of course was not the answer he wanted and he'd got to have a target to humiliate and show his people he was (the) big cheese. So I was denounced as a fascist hyena and I still treasure my front pages of the *Zambian Times* and the *Zambian Daily News* with pictures of me described as arrogant, irrelevant and insolent. Lord Carrington and I were fascist hyenas and there was a huge demo outside the High Commission. I was actually visiting the American ambassador Frank Wisner at the time (the High Commission and the American Embassy were near each other, with a door through the garden wall).

My people rang up to say this demo was going on outside the High Commission and I said to Frank I had better get back and so he said I should take a Marine Guard with me to see me safely into the High Commission. So we went through the wall (the door in the wall) into the grounds of the High Commission and in the far distance was this great Zambian policeman and a howling mob outside. This Zambian policeman saw us and told the mob and they started flowing over the wall and running towards us. We were quite a distance from the High Commission building. The Marine Sergeant I was with said to me, "I think we better make a run for it." I remember feeling tremendously cool and calm and working out, well if the US Marines are going to retreat I suppose it's all

right. So we turned round and ran back through the door in the wall and back into the US Embassy. That evening Peggy and I went out to a reception. We met the Vice Chancellor at the University and Peggy said, "Well your boys made quite a mess of today." He said, "I'm sorry. They were other students, my lot are coming out tomorrow."

There was a really bad demonstration. It wasn't voluntary. British teachers in Zambia rang us up to say that loudspeaker vans were going round telling students to report for voluntary demonstrations outside the High Commission. Windows were smashed and they started trying to break down the outside wall. This was not long after the US Embassy had been destroyed in Islamabad. One really didn't know whether the Zambian police would hold them at bay or not and we started burning our secret documents. I'd never done that before and we discovered that you get black as stokers because soot gets all over the place! K.K was raving and shouting, a sort of continual speech at the State House being broadcast.

My wife was sitting on the veranda of our house which wasn't too far from the State House, she could hear it in the distance. The gardeners' little children were walking round repeating this and saying, "Kill! Kill!" Not knowing what they were saying. It really was quite unsettling.

J: Very upsetting, even though it's not directed at you personally, it's very personalised isn't it?

L: I was called to the ministry and I was not allowed to say anything. I was given the crime sheet of all the dreadful things I'd done by the foreign minister, a chap called Wilson Chakulya, who really hated the British. I wasn't terribly unhappy to find that he was in prison for drug smuggling later on. The atmosphere really was awful. The nice thing was that a few Zambian friends of mine including one or two ex-ministers rang up to say, "Sorry about this, Len. We don't believe it."

J: How did the British government react?

L: I was prepared to stick it out. I thought it might be prudent to leave the residence and

go and live somewhere else. But the government (or Lord Carrington) said, "You better come home."

So Peggy and I in fact left that night. I was invited to Lord Carrington's early morning meeting the next day, because the Lancaster house conference was in session, to join him reviewing tactics and so on, which was I think very nice of him and very heartening. But I couldn't really play an effective part at that stage because it was too far on for me to join in. Possibly, with hindsight, I was too shell shocked. But anyway, he was very nice and he then appointed me as Assistant Under-Secretary for Africa. It was a moment of great pleasure when Richard Luce, the Minister of State, who dealt with Africa said then, "Come and join me, the Zambian High Commissioner is coming in."

She was a very nice woman actually, Miss Chibesekunda. She came in and he said to her, "You know Len, don't you? He's going to look after Africa for us." Her hair practically stood on end!

J: So The Zambians didn't withdraw her?

L: No. They didn't actually 'PNG' (persona non grata) me, they just made life extremely difficult. Peggy went back after a couple of months to pack up our stuff and sell our car and so on. But it was a very unpleasant end to the whole thing. It was rather fun on the great Namibian circuit when I went back with the Five Nations tour to explain the proposals for Namibia. Of course we went to Lusaka, one of the five front line states. There was a meeting with K. K. and everybody wondered what would happen because here I was back in Zambia for the first time. Of course the answer was K. K. gave me a weak smile and said, "Hello Len," and shook me by the hand. I refrained from bopping him! There wasn't a twitch or a whisker of anything in the Zambian press to my discredit.

J: So that's one of the down sides to diplomatic life.

L: That was not a happy occasion. In fact it was very dramatic, the whole thing in Zambia because at an earlier stage when Jim Callaghan was Prime Minister K. K. got

cold feet. He probably had an intelligence report the Rhodesians were going to go for him personally, which they were quite capable, because Nkomo's main home was near the State House. On one night they actually motored into Lusaka at night and attacked Nkomo's house and destroyed it. It was known in Lusaka afterwards as the ruins of Zimbabwe. Three of my staff lived just opposite. I think there was a bullet hole in one of their walls. They saw the fight. Nkomo of course, wasn't there. It was near the Zambian army barracks, no response from the Zambians at all. So K. K. had some reason to be frightened if the Rhodesians had gone in. Anyway, he rang up Callaghan and wanted Callaghan to come to Lusaka and Callaghan compromised and said, "We'll meet halfway at Kano. You bring my High Commissioner, I'll bring your High Commissioner."

J: What did he want?

L: He wanted arms, for defence. More arms. We had quite a difficult meeting in Kano at the end of which Callaghan told me Kaunda thought I was the best High Commissioner that they had ever had in Zambia, in marked contrast to what happened later on. We agreed to give them Rapiers and some other weapons, which the Zambians were not happy about. They only wanted the latest and the best. The fact that they couldn't service them was neither here nor there. You know, they wanted bright, shiny toys. As the commentator said at the Royal banquet that Kaunda gave the Queen, "The Queen's wearing lovely, shiny beads, wonderfully shiny beads. Mrs Kaunda's wearing shiny beads but the Queen's are much shinier."

So it was with weapons, they wanted nothing but the very latest, whether they could work them or not.

J: What about training? Were we involved in training these people who fired at their own side?

L: No, not at that stage. No. They didn't trust us you see.

J: So it wasn't that we didn't have the resources to train them, they weren't asking us to train them?

L: Yes. I discovered subsequently, (I was very friendly with the Chinese ambassador who'd been on the Long March, he used to smoke a whole tin of cigarettes during an hour and a half's talk and died sad to say; a very nice man) we'd discovered that we'd both given armaments to the Zambians which were later found just rusting in a warehouse, totally wasted. Well, just as well they weren't used to kill anybody but, really, it was a waste. It's like buying a book and thinking you'll know what's in the book, even if you don't read it because it's on the shelf.

I had experience of an African election in Zambia. I'd seen one in Kenya which was quite good, although it was a one party state. A lot of MPs lost their seats. If they hadn't worked for the Constituency out they went and a new man would come in. Really a substantial turnover in the assembly. They had an election in Zambia and it was a presidential election. I really could hardly believe my eyes, because I'd seen a lot of elections in India and even one in Pakistan. What was the election campaign? The election campaign was, 'Teaching the people to vote for the President.' That was it. I said, "what's the platform?" They said, "Oh we've got a platform." But nobody ever heard of one.

That was all it was. The people had got to vote for the President, that was all it was, nothing else. There was a former leader, a potential rival, he just wasn't allowed to attend the nominating meeting. I was told by the people who were Zambian citizens that at many election booths that there was a 'yes' box at one end of the room and a 'no' box at the other end of the room, with a policeman standing in front of it, so you've got to be very brave to get past the policeman to put your thing in the 'no' box. It really was farcical.

At the same time you have to say that Kaunda was not a tremendously cruel man. He didn't bump people off like some of these awful people like, the Ugandan tyrant.

J: Idi Amin?

L: Idi Amin and so on. He was not in that category. But he didn't allow any poppies to grow. If anybody looked like getting a bit popular they'd be sent off as a High Commissioner or something or other. So it was a very unhealthy state of affairs.

J: How would you compare him with President Moi? I mean after your time as AUS in the office, you then finished out your career as High Commissioner in Kenya.

L: Yes. I'd been in Kenya while Kenyatta was in power, of course in his latter days. I had one upset with him.

J: Kenyatta?

L: Yes. I'd been trying to hurry him up about taking a decision and he didn't like being hurried up. I'd done it indirectly through a contact. I was acting as High Commissioner. The High Commissioner was on local leave down at the coast. Whitehall had been saying, "We must know whether he is going to accept this offer or not."

I was working over lunch at my desk and the phone went and Kenyatta you have to remember didn't speak to High Commissioners or ambassadors except very rarely British or American ones. He didn't bother with small fry. The phone rang and the girl said, "It's the President for you." My heart just sank into my boots! This wonderfully gravelly voice said, "I am very unhappy." I said, "Mr President, if you're unhappy, I'm unhappy. Can I come and talk about it?" "I think you'd better," (he said.) I thought that I'd better drive myself, you know, no witnesses. So I drove up in my little car and the gates opened for me at the State House. I was in such a panic I didn't notice they'd just tarmacked one side of the drive and I drove up the bit they'd just tarmacked. When I left I could see the tyre tracks I'd left all the way up! Anyway I was ushered in and Moi who was the Vice President was standing with the President and old Kenyatta was sitting at his desk and he'd got his ivory handled fly whisk and a sort of ivory ... mace. His knuckles tightened on that mace several times. He looked like he was going to clobber me! He'd got wonderfully yellow lion like eyes, you know, a very impressive personality. He was staring at me and I was thinking, if you think you're going to hypnotise me you're wrong. I was also thinking how the hell I'd got in this situation!

I took the position that I was extremely sorry that I'd upset him, but the thing that I'd been asking him to do was in the interests of both our countries. It was left that I should

write an apology and give it to Vice President Moi, so I did that. That was the end of it. But I staggered out of the room, you know, having had this not very happy experience, because previous High Commissioners had actually been removed from Kenya because the Kenyans had got upset, so it is said. I staggered out, feeling pretty drained and there was the Head of the Kenyan Civil Service and the Head of the Kenyan Police, Kikuyu waiting to go in. The Head of the Civil Service, Geoffrey Karithi, said to me, "Hello Len, how are you?" I said, "Bloody shattered!" He said, "Don't worry, it happens to us all," which was terribly heartening, you know. It shows the whole difference in the relationship with the Kenyans, to the relationship with the Zambians.

J: That's extraordinary isn't it?

L: Totally different.

J: The machinations of the Central African Federation presumably?

L: Yes, all that back history. You were asking me about Moi and I had slightly side-tracked from that. Moi of course, a very different man from Kenyatta, totally different. He was very much liked in his early days as a school master and a politician. He was always well thought of, you know, he was a very Christian man, he doesn't drink. He had a nice personality, but just before I left he was tightening up the one party state into a more ...

J: The second time you were there, when you were High Commissioner?

L: The second time as High Commissioner. He was moving towards much more of a tighter one party. The Kenyan one party state originally was quite a loose sort of thing, back benchers could speak out and so on. If they had gone too far, they'd risk getting bumped off, but you know, there was quite a lot of flexibility about it but he was moving towards a much tighter controlled situation. Of course he'd been promoting his own ethnic group, the Kalensin.

Kenya really basically, is suffering from what I always feared, this enormous explosion of population which is outstripping their resources, so that the very good development

in earlier days under Kenyatta and the beginning of Moi's time, simply isn't adequate now to fulfil the needs of this hugely increased population.

J: It's got one of the highest birth rates in the world?

L: Yes, enormous. I mean when I first went there, I think in 1970, I think there were about 8 or 9 million Kenyans. When I went back in 1982 there were 17 million Kenyans. I think they're expecting about 30 million at least by the end of the century, which, given that all the land is in use that can be used ...

J: And they have a water problem?

L: Well a lot of it is arid and there are no particular mineral sources. This is a very, very difficult problem. I always said jokingly to the Kenyans that my final gift should be a Schlieffen plan for them to invade Zaire and make use of the excellent land there, because they're excellent farmers, the Kenyans. They would soon turn Zaire into a much better developed place.

J: Does that explain his advance of his own ethnic group?

L: Well I think it quite normal in Africa where there are strong ethnic groupings, of unequal size, that you promote your own lot. Tanzania has escaped that because there were no large groupings at all, they were all more or less medium sized, so it didn't arise in the same way. But Kikuyu had such a grip on everything that Moi wanted to change that. Of course you feel safer if you've got your own chaps there. The East African, I mean he really does expect benefits from his senior. African friends would say if they went back to their village (even in Zambia) they would expect to have to give a gift to the head man. This creates a big problem when a Kenyan who makes good is expected to look after all his cousins to the nth degree.

This was the source of great irritation for many sophisticated Kenyans who had a very European lifestyle in Nairobi, that their country cousins would expect to be able to come and live in their house as long as they wanted, freeloading, whether the host wanted it or not. There was the extraordinary experience of Tom Mboya's widow. She

was a very sophisticated, intelligent woman; handsome. The Luo tradition, if your husband dies, is that his brother takes you on as an extra wife. Tom Mboya's brother was not an attractive man. He spent a whole evening once abusing the British, spitting all over them, because he was rather a slobbermouth. Then at the end of it asked me if I could get him a job in a British bank. She really did not wish to become his second wife or whatever. But in the end family pressures were such that she succumbed. It didn't last, but these sort of tribal traditions (you're not allowed to use the word tribal, but cultural shall we say, being correct) are there and they're not easily shrugged off in the way it is so easy for us to shrug off things when you escape in the anonymity of London.

J: So the other 'hat' you wore in Nairobi was when you were ambassador to the UN environment programme?

L: Yes, the least said about that the better, I think. They did do some good work in trying to prevent desertification, that sort of thing.

J: Was it just related to Kenya?

L: No, no. That is the world headquarters.

J: Right.

L: That is Africa's share of a UN headquarters.

J: Oh I see. It's not even just Africa it's ...

L: No, it was the world headquarters. They had, you know, the usual clutch of experts there. Mustafa Tolba was the director general. He was quite an impressive character, an Egyptian. But one thought there was a considerable element of empire building and swanning about without achieving very much on the part of a good many of them. That may be terribly unfair.

J: Weren't the other Heads of Mission in Nairobi also appointed as ambassadors to

UNEP.

L: Yes, yes. I think the other thing that's interesting is we talked about Royal visits and I said I really did see very strong value in the Queen and Princess Anne visiting. I only had a visit by Prince Charles when he was a young man. But we of course had no end of visits by ministers. Well if it's your Foreign Secretary or Minister of State dealing with Africa, that's very much part of the trade. But you get all sorts of ministers who are finding a bit of an excuse for travelling around, or maybe they do have a serious visit to, let's say, South Africa, but they want to fill in the itinerary so they come to Kenya.

J: Which has marvellous game parks?

L: Yes. We didn't get many visitors to Zambia during the time I was there unless they were there on very serious visits or business. In India we had no end of MPs and Admirals and Generals and Air Marshals. It was quite ludicrous really. Many of these visits were just really educational for the people perhaps, but it didn't do anything for our relationships as far as I could see.

J: Takes up a lot of time?

L: Takes up a lot of time. It really does. My wife went on strike and said she wasn't going to take another visitor around the Red Fort in Delhi come what, come may!

J: Were entertainment allowances quite stretched by this?

L: Oh in Nairobi, of course it was. It is a cross-roads of Africa so we had a tremendous number of visitors. If they are interesting people as many of them are, then it's a good excuse for the diplomat to have the appropriate Kenyans in and to have a really worthwhile conversation or help towards some useful deals. But it cost money. I was in Delhi as acting High Commissioner when the dreaded Central Policy Review was going on.

I was extremely cross because they kept their cards close to their chest. They didn't

condescend to explain to us what their thinking was. They just asked questions. It was all take and no give. They came up with this thing, that you should entertain in restaurants, well a fine confidential discussion you'd have in a restaurant wouldn't you? Who on the 'other side' as it were is willing to be seen to be having that sort of conversation? It really is very odd that they couldn't have a proper dialogue.

J: They also came up with this peculiar conclusion that the Office was giving too good a service in that it was too, I can't remember the word they used, but too gold plated or Rolls Royce or something.

L: Well we do have some very able people undoubtedly, but I mentioned Namibia. After all that constitution we'd devised and sold to the front line states, it couldn't have been done by third raters. It couldn't have been sold by third raters.

J: It couldn't have been done by people without the experience of negotiating throughout their lives with foreigners?

L: Absolutely, yes.

J: Have you come across any other of these reviews of the Foreign Office? I mean what do you feel about the way things changed during your career in management exercises? I think more of them have happened since your retirement.

L: I think I escaped most of them, thank God, because I see a lot of it through the work I do for the Home Office. I think this tremendous concentration on reporting on people and them seeing their reports and being able to comment on their reports really is excessive to my mind. I think that you've got to take it as it comes. Not all my career was a success, I've had my failures. I don't think one should whinge about it. You should get on and do your job. I don't really agree with extra payments. I think you should work hard, do the best you can and expect to get promoted for good work. I don't think that there should be this differentiation. We're not in business, we're not selling a product. I mean okay, you can quite see if you're selling toilet rolls and you can sell twice as many toilet rolls as the other chap you're entitled to a bigger share of the profits. But it's not quite like that.

While I was in the Office working in London, they came up with this idea of according points so we would scale our effort in each country according to its importance to us and there were so many points for a trade connection and a political connection and immigrants and British population there, all sorts of factors were brought in and so a country would score, whatever it was, eighty nine; or some little insignificant country (from our point of view) in Central America, would get only two or something.

Well that's all very fine but foreign affairs is not like that, because that insignificant little country that doesn't account for much can suddenly blow into something terribly important that's capturing the headlines and is a hell of a difficult problem.

J: British Ministers are not going to stand up and say, "I don't know anything about that country."

L: No, and you've decided "Oh we're not bothered about it, it's going to be covered as one of five countries by a chap with two helpers or something, who gets there once a year, perhaps. It doesn't work, unless ministers are prepared to say "We don't know anything about this." Of course they're not.

J: No.

L: I quite accept we can't have a resident in every single country and so on but I do think (and I'm not the first person to say it) we should cut our coat according to our cloth. We should make a good effort and therefore you need good people because an able man well motivated can do a lot more than a less able person. But we shouldn't pretend to do absolutely everything if we can't afford to. If we can afford it let's do it. But I do think that the matter of pretension is shown up very much by the way junior British ministers visiting foreign countries expect to be received at the top level, whereas foreign visitors coming to Britain are jolly lucky if they get to see the Secretary of State or even a Minister of State. We don't expect to give that access, yet a junior minister going to an African country is terribly miffed if he doesn't get to see the President, never mind the foreign minister. This is very, very inadequate thinking on their part, really.

J: In your experience do ministers from other countries behave in the same way? The Americans?

L: The Americans have access because they've got the money, potentially they've got the money. On the great Namibia circuit Chester Crocker was the American Assistant Secretary for Africa. He had an American plane to fly us round. Everywhere we went it was a bit sad because the Africans were all clustering round Chet Crocker basically, you know. I mean I'd get a few, the German would get one or two, nobody wanted to know the Canadians, and the French countries weren't actually involved in the front line states. But you know, it was very much the Americans who were the big cheeses, except in Kenya where I'm happy to say at least up until my time we maintained a strong position.

J: Vis-à-vis the Americans?

L: Vis-à-vis the Americans and vis-à-vis the Kenyans.

L: Has your experience been in these Commonwealth countries that the Americans have been sensitive diplomatically in their relations?

L: Oh they've varied enormously. In Zambia in those difficult days the Americans had two very good men. Steve Lowe, when I first went there and Frank Wisner who's now the ambassador in India. They were wonderful colleagues.

J: Career diplomats?

L: Career diplomats who co-operated deeply in Anglo-American negotiations. They were extremely helpful and supportive. Men of great perception and very nice characters in addition and that was wonderful.

In Kenya and India it's varied a lot. There have been some fairly brash characters and some very good ones. It's not a consistent pattern.

J: In those larger, more important countries it's very often political appointments?

L: In India, particularly. Frank Wisner of course is a professional. But we had Galbaith for example, in India, who of course got on very well with Nehru but wasn't your normal diplomat at all and didn't bother with trivia like going out to airports. I think I can't resist my American anecdote about President Carter. When I was Deputy High Commissioner President Carter came out on a visit to India. Carter made a very highfaluting speech about democracy and freedom. Jim Callaghan came only about two weeks later and again trooped out to the airport and Jim said; "I like coming to India. Audrey and I always like coming to India. I've liked India since I first came to Bombay as young Lieutenant in the Navy. But don't worry. The British Raj is not returning!" The Indians all fell about laughing. It set, you know, a wonderful note quite distinct from Carter's highfaluting stuff, which incidentally was totally ruined at the end of his visit because he gave a press conference in India and when it was over the Morarji journalists all left. However one of them had left one of these magic tape recorders still on, unbeknown to Carter and Vance. This tape picked up Carter saying to Vance, "If Desai doesn't come along with us on this atomic thing we'll screw the bastards!" The journalist's secretary eventually typed all this up. It rather detracted from the highfaluting tone!

I think to end this up I would like to say that there has been a wonderful sense of comradeship working in the Commonwealth, generally speaking, Zambia excepted. Even there as I said, there were Zambians who felt differently. But in Kenya for example, they understand the system even if it doesn't work always perfectly and it's not perfect democracy. The officials all worked the same way. In fact we had an agricultural adviser who came out and he'd worked as a young colonial official in Kenya and he wanted to look up something about a farm in connection with an aid project. He was able to go to his old office in Nakuru and turn up the exact map in the old filing cabinet, still there. Kaunda once said to me, "Len, we may not get it right, but at least we know where we're getting it wrong. In Zaire they don't even know they're getting it wrong."

I think that is quite a valid remark really. Whatever was wrong about the Colonial system we did set some standards that were worthwhile, that have been valued. The

Kenyans still have Provisional Commissioners and District Commissioners who even wear uniform.

In India when the Indo-Pakistani (1965) war broke out over Kashmir, they were still working under defence of India rules dating back to World War Two, if not World War One. I have to say on the whole we were trusted. During the Indo Pak war of course the Indian High Commission in Islamabad were locked up and segregated and the Pakistanis in Delhi. The Indians readily agreed that we could pass messages to the Pakistanis from Islamabad in return for us to do the same for the Indians. I must say I never felt worse than when I found out after I'd passed many messages to the Pakistan High Commission and I had to go to Rasgotra, to the Indian Permanent Secretary and say to him, "I'm terribly sorry, we're not getting the messages through to your High Commission in Islamabad. The Pakistanis had not reciprocated. Our people had told us, but so many telegrams were coming in about the war that it had got overlooked. We would have stopped at once at my end if I had realised that". He took it terribly well, really. I think that is indicative of that relationship. He didn't think it was a dirty trick on our part. This is part of the trouble, if you don't have that understanding between people and trust. That's what the diplomatic service really ought to be about is creating trust, preferably a genuine trust. I'm very happy that in my career I never was asked to do anything that I conscientiously objected to. I think it says something about British policy, generally speaking. It's been all right, or at least I missed the bad bits.