

"Without Honour"

FOREWORD

I begged Robb to write this book for historical reasons. I think history is important. History is extremely important in politics. Winston Churchill's own amazing political career was built largely on nothing, but a knowledge of history. Robb and I spent our high school years in Churchill High School in Salisbury, Rhodesia (now Harare, Zimbabwe). The school was named after Winston Churchill and he gave it his blessing. Prior to that Robb and I went to Admiral Tait Junior school.

Our teachers taught us many things, but they also warned us of what awaited us in life. They imbued us with values and taught us to stand up for things we believed in. I remember our teachers telling us that life is indeed unfair, but that one must go out there and put energy into life. I remember being told that you get out of life in direct proportion to what you put into it. We must not expect life to give us things. We must go out there and make things happen. Some of that Churchillian attitude rubbed off on us. Perhaps now, after all these years, these values are more important to Robb and I than we understood back then.

Those were tumultuous and chaotic times. In those days, Rhodesia made world news headlines almost daily - much like South Africa was to do. Sometimes I actually miss them. Uncertainty was ever present in our lives. I remember standing in the school hall with our headmaster leading the prayers, praying to God that he would guide our leaders on the wisest course of action to save our country from evil. To us, Robert Mugabe was the ultimate embodiment of evil.

I remember too, sitting at home listening to my parents chatting to their friends and everyone agreeing that Rhodesia must not end up like Zambia to the north of us. Zambia, like all countries which ended up under majority rule, started out great and then things went wrong. Eventually, it became a mess. Countries to the north, west and east of us were ending up like this. We wanted to avoid that fate at all costs, and so we fought a desperate war trying to hold off the inevitable.

Despite all these hopes, prayers and battles, Zimbabwe today is far worse off than Zambia ever was. And the cause is not hard to find. In our case, of all the possible outcomes which could have occurred, the worst one happened. A curse was cast upon that nation, and that curse had a name: Robert Mugabe.

I remember sitting in class, in Churchill High School on the day when Robert Mugabe was first elected. Someone had brought a radio. The first official election results were to be broadcast. All of us in the class were white. And we knew that our fate would be decided on this day. Nobody spoke. We just

listened to the radio broadcast. Then it was announced that ZANU (PF), Robert Mugabe's party had won a landslide 93% of the vote. Nobody said anything. We just sat there. My heart dropped. Of all the possible outcomes - the very worst one had come to pass. It was as if we had fought a whole war for nothing.

My brother, who had been in the Rhodesian SAS and later, in the territorial forces had fought in the war. He said we should all get out of the country. He said there was zero hope under Mugabe's rule.

So the next year, before finally finishing off school, I dropped out and went alone, as the first member of my family to leave Zimbabwe. I went to South Africa initially in the hope of joining the Air Force, but an Afrikaans-speaking Colonel recommended to me that since I was so English, I should rather join the Navy - because there were more English-speaking people in the Navy.

So I left, and thus parted company with my school and everyone I knew, including Robb. We were to live the next 25 years of our lives apart, until one day Robb found me and left a message for me on my website.

Little could I have guessed what strange turns Robb's life had taken. He had remained in Zimbabwe and he wanted to be in the Police. So at the tender age of 19 he became one of the very few remaining whites in Zimbabwe's Police force. With Whites leaving the Police Force, he was to eventually stand out like a sore thumb. With his Churchillian attitude and Western values, Robb tried to play the role of the honest Policeman. He tried to do his duty, and he tried to stand up for the things he believed in - like the rule of law.

But he was in the wrong country. Being honest, and believing in the truth and in good versus evil, is not a good thing in a country ruled by an evil man, who only uses democracy as a facade to hide his totalitarian and racist mindset. Fate was to throw Robb into Mashonaland where a war would break out - a secret one-sided war - where a few Matabele people would rebel against Mugabe's rule, and where Mugabe would respond by murdering civilians en masse with an iron fist. Without plan or design, Robb, who had only shortly been out of school, soon found himself embroiled in a black-on-black war, an honest Policeman trying to serve an evil Master who was intent on murdering anyone who even hinted at opposing him. And murder them, he did. Nobody knows exactly how many were killed. It is said that in the Rhodesian war, from 1965-1980, that 30,000 people died. Yet, in a mere few years in the 1980's, Mugabe was to murder another 20,000-30,000 Matabele people.

It often happens in Africa that enormous wars are waged, and little is ever known or written about them. Millions die - but they are mere statistics. Back in 1998, I wrote an article for WorldNetDaily's magazine in the USA. I warned that there was an "African World War" in progress and that millions would die. Nobody seemed to care. Now we refer to that war as the Civil war in the DRC (formerly Zaire). Twelve African nations were involved and 4 million people died. But how many books have been written about it? Only one that I know of.

Many books were written about the Rhodesian War. But how many have been written about Mugabe's genocide of 20,000+ Matabele people? None that I know of. Yet it was people who were killed. Living, breathing humans were murdered - sometimes in the most despicable way - though they committed no crime.

Robb was one of very few white men caught up in this hideous series of events. I thus begged him to write about what he had seen because it provides a rare insight into events which were suppressed. Mugabe and his CIO (Central Intelligence Organisation), did all they could to cover up the mass graves and to deny that anything was amiss. Mugabe was the darling of the Western world in those days. As Robb and other Policemen were busy picking up bodies and parts of bodies of women and children, the Western Media was singing high praises to "moderate" Robert Mugabe.

In this book, Robb writes about his life as a Policeman. He writes about the daily grind, the excitement and the humour of life as a Policeman and a prosecutor. But then too, his experiences take him into hideous situations where he has to pick up dead bodies; or he stumbles on a mass grave; or interviews witnesses to the slaughter. His friends are shot dead and he sometimes has to pick up their bodies himself to take them to the mortuary. But in the end, there are ominous signs that if this lone white Policeman does not leave the killing fields... then he too will end up as just one more corpse.

This book is the story of a young white man, freshly out of school who just wanted to be a Policeman helping his community and his country. But fate had other things in store for him and instead he finds himself drawn into a nightmare. As Robb readily admits, those events scarred him for life. Some of the things he was involved in remain nightmares for him to this day and he tells me that he tries as much as possible to put them out of his mind.

That curse which descended upon Zimbabwe has still not been lifted. What happened in the 1980's could easily happen again on an even bigger scale. Perhaps, given the extremely dire situation in that country now, **worse, much worse**, may yet happen.

I hope that when next you hear: 10,000 people died, or 100,000 people died or a million people were murdered in Africa that perhaps you will sit back and think about Robb's book. Perhaps you may then think quietly that real, living, feeling people were involved. Their screams and their tears went unrecorded - because nobody today really cares about the suffering brought on Africa by dictatorial curses such as Robert Gabriel Mugabe.

Jan Lamprecht
Johannesburg
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Extract From Chapter 4

In very late 1981, I was at Police Driving School in Bulawayo.

The driving course and my presence in Bulawayo gave rise to a rather amusing story, this one published on "The Bearded Man" blog by myself in 2005 :

Whilst I did my driving course, I stayed in Famona in Bulawayo with a family I had befriended through my teen years in the Church Of The Nazarene.

I passed my test on a Saturday morning and was due back in Essexvale by the Sunday evening. When I arrived back at my friend's house, I was in standard district police uniform, consisting of grey shirt with badges of rank, gold shorts with leather belt, gold and blue knee length socks, dress shoes and peaked cap.



Zimbabwe Republic Police Cap

Upon my arrival I was asked by my friend's mother if I would play Santa Claus for the Church as their regular had let them down. They were in a bind and desperate for someone to do the job. I readily agreed and was whisked away at great haste - I didn't even have time to change out of my uniform!

Throwing the Santa Claus kit on over my uniform, I then spent the rest of the afternoon entertaining the kids. Good fun it was too – made a change from chasing bad guys and endless administration...

My good deed done, I returned to Essexvale the following evening and reported for duty on the Monday.

Life became very busy over the next few months and playing Santa was soon forgotten.

About 10 months later I was in Bulawayo on police business and found time to do some private shopping. I was in uniform in a well-known camera shop – Clinton's - considering a purchase (a camera, which I did buy - it finally fell to pieces in September 1993 – not a bad investment, all told), when I became aware of a young child with his mother.

The boy stopped in front of me. His eyes were big as saucers as he studied my legs with some interest. He then looked up, taking in the police uniform.

I smiled, wondering whether he was afraid of the uniform. I have a distinctive gap between my two front teeth... This was the catalyst he required.

His eyes wide with excitement, he yanked his mother's arm hard.

"Look Mummy! I *told* you that Santa Claus was a policeman!"

-o00o-

Early in the January of 1982, having been to Police Driving School to obtain my Class 4 (standard motor vehicle) Police driver's licence, I was looking forward to a quiet weekend off-duty. The Friday afternoon finished, I changed into civilian clothes, booked out of the Police Station and walked the hundred metres around the corner to the Country Club.

Whilst in the ZRP, even if you were 'off duty' you were 'on call' and were required to sign out of the station premises, indicating where you were. You were required to get specific permission to leave the Police area and even if you were on leave, you were required to let the home station know where you were at any time so that you could be uplifted if the situation required. You had to have written and specific permission if you were leaving the country whilst on leave.

The Club barman – nicknamed "AK47", since his initials were AK and he had been born in 1947 – served me a nice cold beer and I sat down at the bar to enjoy my first drink of the weekend.



In my early adult years, I drank Lion Lager

All of a sudden there was the roar of a heavy vehicle in the Club car park. It sounded like all hell was breaking loose. I was somewhat curious and then I saw the top of a Police Nissan 'crocodile' – originally a long-wheel based Nissan truck, converted during the Rhodesian war into a landmine protected personnel carrier. Very heavy, the body work was angular to deflect any explosion - landmine or otherwise - the 'crocodile' was an ungainly and uncomfortable vehicle, even harder to drive than to sit passenger in, but it afforded ample protection from rifle fire as well, with the outside edges well above eye height, with apertures for outgoing rifle fire...

Seconds later Trevor Tasker appeared, in full combat gear and chest webbing – breathing heavily. Momentarily he paused, looking between me and the newly poured, ice-cold beer.

He was obviously trying to work out if I had had any alcohol... then he threw me a set of chest webbing – a harness worn like a back-to-front rucksack that afforded you storage of four spare rifle magazines – not very comfortable to

wear, but very comforting to have - complete with charged magazines and yelled that my weapon was on the vehicle, and to get my ass on the truck.



**Police “Crocodile” armoured vehicle – also known as the “Puma”
in Army circles – don’t you love the “L” plate!**

My weapon was a Police issue South African copy of the Fabrique Nationale FN 7.62 assault rifle – the Fusil Automatique Leger (light automatic rifle) - or FAL - is a 7.62 x 51mm NATO self-loading select fire rifle produced by the Belgian armaments manufacturer Fabrique Nationale de Herstal (FN) during the Cold War, and adopted by many NATO countries. It has also been adopted by many other nations for their armies as well as being a popular civilian rifle – known as an SLR.



**FN 7.62 assault rifle (the SLR has a shorter stock,
a shorter barrel and a shorter flash-hider)**

Even though I had not an idea what the call out was, and why it was necessary to be armed, having been trained to respond to this sort of order, I ran for the truck. Climbing up into the back of the vehicle, I could see at least a dozen like-dressed members of the station staff, all ‘packing heat’ – and

plenty of it. The sergeant at the wheel of the crocodile dropped the clutch and we wheel spun away from the car park.

I looked to Tasker for an explanation as soon as I had recovered my weapon from a fellow officer.

“Ambush!” he yelled. “Situation unknown! We jus’ gotta get down there, Bob! Like now!”

That did not give me much information, but it was obviously all I was going to get – damn!

I kept an eagle eye on him, hoping he might impart just a little more information, but Section Officer Tasker went forward to speak to someone on the radio – probably back at the Station – whilst I was left to contemplate the oncoming mission. I was dressed in blue jeans and a bright red golf shirt – prime target, and no one had thought to bring me a riot jacket or a cammo jacket.



**The policeman on the right is wearing a riot jacket – brilliant blue.
All three men are wearing riot gear trousers and regulation combat boots**

“Brilliant,” I thought to myself. “First time out on real ops and looks like I’m the bait...”

Light in the early evening in Africa can be a problem. The sun sets around six o’clock every evening but light only really starts to fade an hour or two after that. It was now fast approaching the sunset mark.

The crocodile had turned south towards Mbalabala and as we raced down the highway, I was aware that vehicles coming towards us were flashing their headlights and sounding their horns.

“They’re either warning us, or egging us on,” I thought. “Either way, whatever is ahead cannot be very nice.”

Bear in mind that we had no fancy flashing lights or siren – we were just a heavy vehicle, emblazoned with the word “Police” rushing headlong down the highway...

Unannounced.

We passed through Mbalabala and the Filabusi turn-off and were not far past the shadow of “Old Baldy” when the sergeant at the wheel suddenly wrenched the wheel to the right and we went skidding off the tarmac road into the thick bushes. Bringing the vehicle to a halt, we ‘debussed rear’ and took cover behind the vehicle. Tasker signalled to me to take two men with me and do a ‘look-see’.

Not having been in this sort of situation before, I had not a clue what I was looking for...

What I did see, once we made it to within sight of the road ahead, turned my blood cold.

A grey Datsun 120Y station wagon was parked in the road, engine running and park lights on. The vehicle initially appeared abandoned, until I looked a little closer – there was someone in the vehicle. Then I recognised the vehicle as belonging to Manica Freight, often used by Wally Omniat and Evan Paul on their frequent trips to Bulawayo.



Datsun 120Y Station Wagon – the one I found was a light grey in colour and riddled with bullet holes...

I crept closer, ever aware that my presence might be monitored and could be terminated at any time with a well-aimed bullet. With every advancing step, I could see that the windshield of the Datsun was starred and had bullet holes through it. The left hand side of the vehicle, closest to me, was peppered with bullet holes.

As I homed in on the car, I could see what I had initially taken as shadows on the side of the body of the car, was, in actual fact, blood...

Finally, I broke cover and walked up to the vehicle. If whoever had done this could see me, let them take their best shot. If you think about it, what I did wasn't necessary stupid or bravado, once you leave the relative safety of the

bush and on the road itself, there is nowhere to hide anyway – and I was wearing a bright red shirt anyway!

Sat behind the steering wheel was the very dead body of my friend Evan Paul - his now sightless eyes staring through the broken windscreen, his face contorted in sudden death.