VOICE FILE NAME: COHP Mr Keith Somerville

Key:
SO: Sue Onslow (Interviewer)
KS: Keith Somerville (Respondent)
s.l.: sounds like

SO: This is Dr Sue Onslow talking to Mr Keith Somerville at Senate House on Wednesday 23rd January 2013. Keith, thank you very much indeed for agreeing to talk to me. I wonder if you could begin, please, by speaking about how you came to work at the BBC. I know that you had established an interest in Southern Africa as a schoolboy and as an undergraduate. You'd also hoped to pursue a PhD in theory and practice of Soviet involvement in African liberation movements. But how did you then make the transition to the BBC?

KS: The Monitoring Service then was very much an organisation that was both news gathering for the BBC and also a source of, what you could call, bulk political, economic and sometimes even military information for the government. So it was part funded by the BBC and part funded by the Foreign Office and the Ministry of Defence. At the time they were looking very much in 1980 in Cold War terms at 'who do we need to monitor?' So they were monitoring Soviet broadcasts - obviously Soviet domestic broadcasts in Russian, but also Soviet broadcasts in a variety of languages around the world. Part of the reason was to get information: whether it was economic projects, what they're saying about their own economy, but particularly also propaganda lines. 'What is the Soviet Union saying currently about the situation in Southern Africa?' 'Can we deduce from this, lines of policy?' 'Does what they say actually relate to what we hope they think or we think they think?' And so they wanted people to monitor at that time particularly Soviet broadcasts to Asia, Africa and also to Europe and North America. With my interest in Soviet theory and Soviet practice of supporting national liberation movements in Southern Africa, as soon as I saw this advert I thought that's something actually that I could do, that it would further my research, be very interesting and I get paid for it. I tried and I think my lucky combination of factors meant that I was the ideal sort of person they were looking for. I couldn't speak Russian but I could read it but then would be monitoring anyway in English. From my research I had a good knowledge of Soviet sources and the current Soviet propaganda line and the current Soviet ideological approach to Southern Africa and to Africa as a whole. Therefore I

would be able to spot what they wanted to spot, not just in order to inform BBC news gathering but also for their official clients, Foreign Office, MoD. I could spot changes in emphasis.

SO: But was the BBC, through its Monitoring Service, providing information through other British intelligence networks for the CIA, for the American government? In other words could the Americans profit from BBC Monitoring Services across Southern Africa?

KS: Absolutely. The deal was the Monitoring Service was this funny hybrid organisation. It was BBC, you worked for the BBC, but the Monitoring Service also, and very openly - they made no bones about it - worked for the government and through working for the government the Ministry of Defence; obviously intelligence service looked at the output, worked very closely, and there was an open agreement with what was then called the Foreign Broadcast Information Service which was an 'open source arm' – as they called it – of the CIA. The top floor at Caversham was off limits to BBC people; it was FBIS, it was effectively part of the CIA and we divided up the world between us. So at that time in 1980 the BBC was responsible for, I think, practically all monitoring in Eastern Europe, the Middle East and Africa. So we had a base in Nairobi, which we still have – an East African unit which monitored the Horn of Africa, East Africa and bits of Central Africa – and then the base that I worked at for a period in Lilongwe in Malawi, based in the British High Commission and we monitored South African domestic and external broadcasts.

SO: In English.

KS: In English. Zimbabwean broadcasts in English, Malawian, Zambian, Botswana. By the time I went there it was Zimbabwe, but when it was originally set up it was monitoring Rhodesia. In fact I think that was one of the primary reasons it was set up - to monitor Rhodesian radio and to monitor also South African radio. Interestingly at that stage bits of South African radio would be directly re-broadcast by the Rhodesian Broadcasting Corporation. For a while there was a BBC base in Francistown which both monitored and allegedly jammed, though the British government is still a little unclear on whether it did that, but also re-broadcast British broadcasts made specifically to be broadcast into Rhodesia.

SO: The files at BBC Caversham are explicit that the Francistown transmitter was put there to jam and also to beam in a particular line into Rhodesia, to try to simulate opposition to the Rhodesia Front government.

KS: Exactly. But the monitoring was very much to find out what was being said. You would find out very important news information, things that change. So for example when I was there I was monitoring around the period in early 1982 when Mugabe and Nkomo fell out and there were all the arms finds, secret ZAPU arms caches which were found both around what was still Salisbury, but also around Bulawayo and areas of Matabeleland, and I monitored the first references. There was a press conference and I monitored it live; apart from obviously reporters who were there, I actually got it back to Bush House via Monitoring to get it out on the air before anybody else. So I monitored it and I was recording it the same time and I was dotting in and out of the recording.

That was the sort of thing we did from there, monitoring radios for news, but also for very advanced political information. So when I applied for it I had the right background, I had a degree in international politics; I'd spent a year doing post-graduate research into Southern Africa and into the Soviet Union; I'd read Soviet journals like the Soviet version of International Affairs; I'd used the Summary of World Broadcasts (which was the printed, selected transcripts of Moscow radio broadcasts to South Africa, monitored by BBC monitoring) as part of my research. So when it came to the interview they said: "won't you get bored going through all this stuff?", I said: "No, I was doing it voluntarily for research". I was still doing my research, I will now be paid to do my research! This sold it and I started working for them. Pretty quickly once they'd trained me up, I would say on a daily basis, I would monitor maybe a Soviet broadcast to Southern Africa, and a couple of South African external broadcasts – Radio RSA beamed either at West Africa or Europe and North America, because we could pick up the signals perfectly at Caversham – [as well as] Radio Lagos, Accra Radio, then also Islamabad Radio, Delhi Radio and Kabul in English.

SO: How big was the BBC Monitoring office in Lilongwe?

KS: Oh no, I'm trying think how many English monitors there were. There must've been about 15 to 20 of us in Caversham; in Lilongwe there were only two people, and we did shifts. So you would perhaps do an early morning shift starting at seven and going through to early afternoon. There would be a couple of cross shifts starting at lunchtime going through to early evening and then a night shift. Well, it wasn't a full night shift, a shift that maybe started at six o'clock in the evening and went through to two or three in the morning; and then anything between three in the morning and seven in the morning was recorded. The day team took the recordings on the basis that most of the things we were monitoring were in a time zone pattern. We weren't monitoring, for example, any sources from North America, and the Moscow for North America – we could do their early broadcasts late at night and then the day team would do the recordings in the early hours of the morning.

SO: Were you doing information gathering and reporting, rather than first stage analysis of what you're hearing?

KS: You would analyse because we listened to so much that you had to select; we didn't just transcribe everything. So we would transcribe, we would listen and decide what was newsworthy and that we would transcribe very quickly and that would then be transmitted, then by teleprinter, straight to Bush House and other BBC news gathering departments and that would also go to the Foreign Office as a very quick news briefing on what was going on, what was being said on foreign radio stations. But also we would then choose what should we transcribe in full. Is there, for example, a particular commentary on Radio Moscow for Southern Africa that indicates perhaps a new line on something? Has the line, for example, known that we were closely watching what they said about Zimbabwe because, of course, when Mugabe came to power he was no friend of the Soviet Union. In fact I went to Zimbabwe in 1982, for the first time after my spell monitoring in Lilongwe, and interviewed a number of senior ZAPU and ZANU figures including one of the vice presidents and various other people who'd led ZAPU's guerrilla army or the political commissars within the Army. They hated the Soviet Union at that stage because the Soviet Union had refused to support them because Moscow had supported ZAPU. The Soviet Union had this group of what were

known as the 'Authentics', the group of movements in Southern Africa: ANC, SWAPO, ZAPU, MPLA, FRELIMO who they supported. ZANU was viewed as a 'split-ists' pro-Chinese, revisionist group, so wouldn't be supported by the Soviet Union. Consequently, Mugabe hated them and so anything the Soviet Union said about Zimbabwe at the time was keenly watched. Are they moving closer? Are they trying to make friends? Which they were because they suddenly realised they'd backed the wrong horse, and particularly once Nkomo was kicked out of government after the arms finds, the Soviet Union then had to make friends with Mugabe if it wanted to stay there.

SO: Yes, because they weren't able to open their embassy in Harare until '82/'83.

KS: That's right. In fact Mugabe never became particularly close to the Soviet Union; he still remained much closer to China and to North Korea because North Korea, of course, trained the appalling Fifth Brigade. So we were looking for things like that. We were also looking, obviously, for the Soviet reaction to developing events. So while I was out in Lilongwe obviously my colleagues were back in London. I was monitoring the Zimbabwe angle when Nkomo was sacked but in London they were monitoring carefully Soviet reaction to his sacking because he was their ally in the government.

SO: Keith, just to step back a little bit. You mentioned that there was a Nairobi office for BBC Monitoring, there was the Lilongwe office; but that you could still cover Radio Lagos. But was there a West African Monitoring service?

KS: That very soon developed in the early '80s. I couldn't tell you exactly which year it started, but that was the Americans. So as FBIS, the Foreign Broadcasting Information Service, they opened a base in Abijan where they monitored the whole of West Africa and then they opened a base in Kinshasa where they monitored West Central and West Southern Africa. So they took over monitoring, for example, of Namibia, Angola, obviously what was then Zaire, People's Republic of Congo, right the way up to Cameroon, while Abijan would do the whole of West Africa in English and in French. Later on the Lilongwe base of the BBC closed down and the Americans opened up their base in Mbabane where they monitored the whole of Southern Africa. So they took over, then, everything apart from East Africa and the Horn of Africa which remained monitored by the BBC in Nairobi and it was mainly because, as they could see things were beginning to change in Southern Africa, they wanted far more monitoring than the BBC could afford to do.

SO: Keith, this sets the BBC Monitoring Service very squarely in the context of information gathering within the Cold War, but where was the BBC in the Commonwealth at this time?

KS: The BBC was still very much an organisation which felt - and you can even see it now when you look at the Commonwealth Broadcasting Association, many of the people at the top of it are former BBC people who were senior, Elizabeth Smith, Rita Payne, who were all with the BBC during the '80s and '90s - I think behind it all, that the BBC had the same sort of ethical set of values that matched up with what the Commonwealth was seeking to do. Just the idea of the BBC's 'nation which would speak peace unto nation' is very much the same sort of broad ethos, I would say, as the Commonwealth. I think there was the feeling that the BBC had a huge audience in the

Commonwealth, [that it] was still admired, respected, even if many governments within the Commonwealth might have been suspicious of BBC output, because it said things they didn't perhaps want their own people to hear. They asked questions that their own journalists would not ask, yet still I always felt that there was very much a sort of empathy between the two organisations and that when I travelled for the BBC as a programme maker in Africa and also in the Caribbean at one stage, there was this big recognition of the BBC as something that was part of their history and was part of their present; they might not always agree with what it said but they didn't automatically equate the BBC directly with the British government because they would hear criticism of the British government on the BBC. This was not criticism I mean by the BBC, but it offered a full range of opinions.

SO: So what you're describing here is a sense among BBC employees, directors, programme makers, of a moral and ethical idea of the Commonwealth, a shared set of unspoken values, cultural empathy, but also a perception within the Commonwealth outside the UK of the BBC as their 'friend'?

KS: Yes and it created very interesting relationships. I mean people like Mark Tully, the great BBC reporter from India. He had a huge status in India.

SO: He still does.

KS: Still does. This status could turn round on him very quickly in bad ways in the way that one friend may turn on another when they think that friend has been disloyal to them. So, poor Mark: I remember and I'm afraid I can't remember the date, but I know the exact event, it was during the problems over the Ayodha temple, where there was the Muslim/Hindu dispute over the temple and whether a mosque could be built where Hindus said there used to be a temple. I was on the World Service the day that the second round of problems of Ayodha blew up and there was going to be a big march that day. I think it was a Sunday in Ayodha, Mark Tully was there to cover it. By then BBC World was broadcasting TV live to India and was received in India. As the march was about to take place, BBC World broadcast a report on it that was all absolutely factual, but they made one minor error. They showed film of a previous riot at Ayodha and they did not introduce it or flag it up with what are called 'ASTONS', the banners across the bottom that tell you 'Ayodha disturbances in 1990' or whatever, or put 'Library pictures'. When it was broadcast and seen in Ayodha, people thought it was going on there and then.

SO: They thought it was live?

KS: They thought it was live. It wasn't deliberate BBC misinformation, it was a genuine error. Somebody forgot to put the thing in there, hurried to get it on air, without saying 'Library pictures', or 'Ayodha three years ago', or whatever, and people came out on to the streets.

SO: To respond to 'the riots'.

KS: To respond to the riots and poor Mark Tully! He wasn't injured but he was severely harassed by people who thought 'Here is a man we trust and yet his organisation is broadcasting this.' It calmed down, but it was that sort of relationship. The BBC was trusted. They saw it on the BBC. They came out

on to the streets. They then saw it wasn't happening. 'Mark Tully what is going on? YOU are the BBC here.' Because that was the other thing, when you travel for the BBC as a correspondent or as a resident correspondent, you became for people the BBC.

SO: You had a status and an authority?

KS: You had a status. Authority. Also people felt (a particular connection) because of the way that radio broadcasts work. They work in a way that is far more intimate; you come into people's homes in a way that a newspaper doesn't. A newspaper is bought and brought into a home and read, but it's not a voice, it's not a person … or used for something even worse! … it is not a person, you couldn't use the Daily Times in Malawi.

SO: Because the print?

KS: No, in case there was a picture of Ngwazi, the live president, Dr Hastings Kamuzu Banda, destroyer of the Central African Federation. If his picture was on the front page you'd never use that. Anyway, radio came into people's homes and people became presenters, reporters, your friends. I remember, I think it was in Botswana, somebody said to me: "oh do you work with Pamela Creighton?" who was a newsreader at the World Service and had been for many, many years. "I love that lady. I have actually written to her and asked if she would marry me, she is such a friend to me and my life". They did, people would write to presenters and do that sort of thing. They saw you as friends, it was very personal.

SO: So, the BBC was actually a type of diplomatic actor, an opinion maker, an opinion former?

KS: Yes and it reflected an image of Britain that for many people was very, very positive. The BBC used to do lots and lots of surveys and it would come out that one of the first things that people saw in the BBC – particularly in Commonwealth countries because of the history, both of colonialism and then the decolonisation of the World Service, if you like – was the BBC taking over from the old Empire Service; becoming something that was no longer, if you like, a voice of empire, was a voice of a new world.

SO: I love the World Service precisely because of that aspect.

KS: They loved it. You would get questioned on 'Why are you broadcasting this?' or 'We didn't like that.' You put your hands up and say: "Well, it wasn't me! I don't control everything in the BBC". But they saw you as the embodiment of the BBC, and people would be very, very friendly.

SO: Was it used as an integral part of Britain's 'soft power diplomacy', to use a rather elaborate academic phrase?

KS: I think some more far sighted Foreign Secretaries did, but a lot didn't. A lot didn't quite understand, I think, the role that it played. Some did. Lord Carrington is one who did and, funnily enough, I was in Zimbabwe when Lord Carrington resigned as Foreign Secretary over the Falklands.

SO: In April 1982.

KS: Yes. I was in Zimbabwe and I remember interviewing Nathan Shamuyarira who was Information Minister at the time, and a senior ZANU government official. He had been a senior ZANU figure for many years, and was one of the intellectuals in the party. I remember interviewing him at his house in Harare and him saying, he said: "you know we had our problems with the Conservative government and we didn't think they played fair at first. But in the end there were certain people we got to like. In our way we got to like Soames; he was a big jolly figure, you knew you could have fun with him. And we liked Carrington and we respected him; we are very sad that he has had to go in this way". But I think as financial pressures on the government, commercial pressures on the BBC – as it began to think, how was it going to cope with a new commercial world? – decisions were made where you began to think 'The government doesn't realise (the implications of) this.'

SO: The BBC as part of a spider's web of connections within the Commonwealth?

KS: Yes, they don't realise the image that this portrays of Britain abroad: the idea of a trusted friend that, okay, you may not say the British government is your trusted friend, but an important British institution is a trusted friend and it helps and it creates an image of Britain. One of the lesser stated mission statements of the World Service was always to promote Britain to the world and promote British business to the world and create this atmosphere of trust; and it worked very well.

SO: Within that is promoting Britain to the Commonwealth.

KS: Yes and because the Commonwealth made up such an important part of the audience, the audience particularly in English but also in Hindi, in Hausa, in Swahili, these were vital audiences for the BBC.

SO: Was this acknowledged, managed, directed, in the preparation of the editorial line? Was the Commonwealth an explicit, particular focus or was the BBC genuinely global in your time there?

KS: I would say it was genuinely global, but within that you knew where your big audiences were and the biggest audiences were all in Commonwealth countries. You knew that and you did give quite a lot of prominence to Commonwealth affairs and officials of the Commonwealth - not I think for any direct propagandistic or political reasons - but because the countries you were broadcasting to which had the biggest audiences for you were part of the Commonwealth. Secretary General Anyaoku and others would give their time to the BBC. They saw it, I think, as an important organisation through which they could get their voice across. They knew they might be given hard times on things, but they would come in and give interviews, they would give time. I rather suspect, although you can never pin it down, that they would actually give priority to the World Service when they're asked to give interviews.

SO: Do you recall whether Sonny Ramphal also did that?

KS: Yes. I'm sure he did.

SO: Don McKinnon?

KS: Yes.

SO: Okay, thank you.

KS: The Eminent Persons Group relating to South Africa certainly did. I remember sitting talking to Michael Manley in Johannesburg in 1994 as the South African elections started. He was there as one of the representatives of the Eminent Persons Group. I was chatting to him just off the record and he said how important it was. He was very pleased to give interviews for the BBC even though they criticised his policies or aired criticisms of his policies in Jamaica, he was happy to do it. I think because they felt that the real mission of the BBC was always to try and tell people information that enabled them to make choices for themselves and, of course, people coming from areas or dealing with areas like Manley, as part of the Eminent Persons Group, where they knew very well that right up to the end of Apartheid, that South Africans were not being told by their own media what was going on. Something like the World Service was very important and although my personal belief is that all media organisations are in some way propagandising, the BBC (if you think on a spectrum of propaganda) is at the far soft, if you like, altruistic end, and things like RTLM, in Rwanda, are at the opposite end.

SO: Was the BBC then consciously influenced by the debate around the new International Information Order? Did the BBC help Commonwealth countries with their own broadcasting production?

KS: We absolutely did that, but I think not in the conscious way that we were establishing a new International Information Order, but on the basis that this was helping journalists, the media, develop better standards of journalism. This was very much in the World Service remit, through the World Service Trust, and it also worked by the way that the BBC took on so many journalists from Commonwealth countries.

SO: Was there a deliberate link that you know of between the Commonwealth Journalists Association and the BBC?

KS: Not necessarily a deliberate one, but certainly a lot of interplay. The BBC saw one of its tasks as the necessity to broadcast properly to Commonwealth countries; this required broadcasters, journalists from Commonwealth countries doing that broadcasting, not just a bunch of Brits who may have been very knowledgeable. If you looked at the African Service, for example, which I worked in for a while and worked closely with for many years, their key broadcasters were Commonwealth journalists.

SO: How about particular editorial steers before CHOGM meetings, such as discussions at the BBC on how and what to report, where were the side issues? 'Do we use particular Commonwealth journalists to, as you say, get the message out'?, which affected the presentation of BBC reporting?

KS: We would always prepare very, very carefully for CHOGMs. I can remember particularly Mark Brayne, who was one of the foreign correspondents, and Barney Mason, who covered them, and we would have big briefings. We would give over editorial sessions because CHOGMS were so important to our audience, because our biggest audience by the '90s was Nigeria. The Indian audience, particularly for radio, was beginning to fall away as television

took over in India, but it was still a very important audience. I wouldn't downplay it, but Nigeria had, in English and in Hausa, the biggest audiences. Swahili was very important, as was broadcasting to other areas of West Africa in English - Ghana, Sierra Leone, Gambia, as well as to Southern and Eastern Africa. So we knew we had audiences. We knew they wanted to hear about this and it wasn't the matter of deciding, if you like, CHOGM is important because we have some link with it, but it's important as a story to these people, to these very important, valued audiences. So we've got to cover it very well and we've got to think not just about 'OK, what are the important British angles?' Obviously we would reflect that, we would interview government ministers, commentators on what Britain wanted out of this meeting, but we would also be looking at what Commonwealth members wanted out of the meeting. We'd regularly do things on, 'What does the Commonwealth stand for?' – and we would do it very critically, but we always felt fairly, and we always got the impression that the Commonwealth appreciated this because it also gave this idea of an organisation that was collegiate. That wasn't led from the top, now, as it had been during empire days, (the era of) the Dominions and the Commonwealth led by Britain. By the '80s/'90s it was very collegiate. Britain certainly in the late '80s was on the back foot, I felt, in the Commonwealth over Southern Africa and we would reflect that. But we would talk about 'who do we want to interview? Who are the key players?' Who had particular things to say either about a particular crisis or about what role the Commonwealth has in the world now.

SO: So, for instance, there was BBC World coverage of the Harare CHOGM meeting 1991 from which emerged the Harare Declaration?

KS: Yes.

SO: The Ken Saro Wiwa crisis and his execution in Nigeria which took place at the same time as the CHOGM was being held in Auckland in 1995?

KS: I remember that very well because I was the presenter of the special broadcast that we put on the live hour broadcast to purely cover the execution of Ken Saro Wiwa. I knew him, I'd interviewed him in London, I knew members of his family and because of that partly and because of my Africa expertise, as soon as the news of the execution came out we decided to put on a special programme. I was then, I think, editor of what used to be called Radio Newsreel and then changed to News Desk and is now called World Briefing; and although I was the editor because I had the expertise on this subject, I presented the programme and interviewed people in Nigeria. I interviewed our correspondents, interviewed campaigners for Ogoni rights here and discussed the whole issue. Why had he been executed? What were the issues surrounding MOSOP and the Delta, and what was the wider reaction including within the Commonwealth? Things like that were vitally important and the importance of Commonwealth action on things like that were equally so. Other such instances were the suspension of countries from the Commonwealth, Zimbabwe was suspended.

SO: In 2003, yes.

KS: Yes. These were very, very important issues. I don't think there was ever a conscious thing of 'Commonwealth, Commonwealth, Commonwealth. We must cover the Commonwealth.' But it was just part of our being, it was our audience.

SO: Part of your remit? Part of the BBC's DNA?

KS: Yes, part of the DNA. Unsaid, unspoken. Certainly I did because of my interest in Africa. I'd also made programmes in the Caribbean, where again there was a huge interest, because, as I've said, Michael Manley being an important Commonwealth leader. There was a huge interest in and a feeling that the Commonwealth could work for them and therefore I don't think we ever really thought, 'Yes we've got to cover this because it's the Commonwealth.' We would cover this because it's important, but we felt that the Commonwealth had a role.

SO: Would there be debriefings after CHOGM meetings?

KS: Oh absolutely. Absolutely, after every major piece of coverage, whether it was a Davos, a CHOGM, any sort of major event, senior editors would get together and discuss how we'd covered it, have we got the right angles? Had we been critical enough? Was there a feeling we'd maybe given somebody an easy ride, given somebody else a hard ride? That would all be picked apart. We picked apart after individual programmes as well, feedback after a programme. How did you do that interview? Why did you ask that question? Do you think that worked? Between those two people did you give one a harder time than the other? There was this constant looking in on ourselves, are we doing this correctly?

SO: BBC monitoring!

KS: Well, BBC monitoring itself within the organisation.

SO: In best practice terms.

KS: Yes.

SO: So was HMG conscious of what the BBC was doing in its professional coverage and assessment of its coverage on individual CHOGMs?

KS: Yes.

SO: Did that information go to the Foreign Office or was there any cross fertilisation between Whitehall and the BBC?

KS: There were lots and lots of contacts. We would be invited regularly as programme editors, say, to Foreign Office seminars on key events, whether or not they were related to the Commonwealth. I remember going to a couple on Southern Africa which both had a slight Cold War angle still, and then after the fall of the Soviet Union to one or two meetings where it was 'Okay, how do we look at Southern Africa after the Cold War?' The BBC were seen as having expertise and input. We also got periodically the sort of feed-back, it reminds me slightly of 'Yes Minister' and more so - though perhaps without the swearing - The Thick of It, when governments felt we weren't covering things the way they wanted to.

SO: Well, you do know that 'Yes Minister' is a training manual?

KS: Yes, I'm sure! I can remember just after the Blair government took power and although this didn't have a very specific Commonwealth angle it related to aspects of British government, wider foreign policy in certain areas of the world when the Labour Party in opposition had been espousing very strongly the idea of an ethical foreign policy. Labour came into power and was immediately confronted with a very serious issue and that was the question of arms sales to Indonesia.

SO: When Robin Cook was Foreign Secretary.

KS: This was the time when East Timor was still high on the agenda for Commonwealth countries, particularly like Australia.

SO: Yes.

KS: Who perhaps had a different view point to Britain at the time. We interviewed Robin Cook about the ethical arms policy; we didn't feel he did a particularly good interview. We interviewed him, I think as we often do, with recorded interviews at some length and we only broadcast about three minutes of it which was quite average actually. They didn't quite realise this, the way that interviews went. That you'd do a lot and you would never do the whole broadcast, even for a British Foreign Secretary. Or, if it had been the Prime Minister, or the Prime Minister or President of another country, we rarely put something out at a length of 10 minutes. It went out at three minutes. It had been, I think, faithfully edited. Within minutes of it going on air, Alistair Campbell's office was on to the BBC World Service. I think it went through to the senior duty editor of the news room at the time, not quite Malcolm Tuckerish in The Thick of It, but very angry: 'How dare you! We gave you the new Foreign Secretary's time and this is what you did.' It wasn't even so much about the content; it was the length of time, it was a status thing I think.

SO: Oh I see! Only giving him three minutes was seen as disrespectful?

KS: Disrespectful. 'We gave you this, he's a new Foreign Secretary with a new reforming government, how dare you!'

SO: We have declared our ethical foreign policy and look what you do!

KS: Other times when I was working in the African Service - it was sometime between January and March in 1987 and I was working as a talks writer. I was actually replacing for a period Martin Plaut who was in Ethiopia gathering material for a programme and we were writing talks to broadcast both in English but also for translation into Hausa, Somali, Swahili, French, Portuguese, so broadcasting to Africa. At the time the BBC didn't censor itself, but it became very, very sensitive about whatever we said about President Siad Barre in Somalia. He was beginning to come under pressure and it was only a couple of years before he was finally overthrown. He was at the time, in Cold War terms, a British ally in what was known as 'the arc of crisis' stretching down through the Middle East, through People's Democratic Republic of Yemen into the Horn of Africa. Siad Barre had jumped ship from on the Soviet side when the Soviets started making up to Menghistu in Ethiopia, and Siad Barre was part of US and British policy in containing communism and Marxism in the Horn and East Africa. The British government became very, very sensitive about anything that was being said about Somalia and anything that was being broadcast, particularly by the

World Service and the BBC Somali Service and the BBC Swahili Service, that could be seen as weakening Siad Barre. They got in touch with the BBC World Service and were putting pressure on saying 'Be careful what you say.' Now the reaction of the BBC World Service was not to say 'yes sir, no sir, three bags full, sir.' But it was just to be very careful. Maybe it was partly because I was only temporarily at the World Service from monitoring, but I was aware that every talk that I wrote, normally everything is read by, seen by a second pair of eyes before it goes out or it was in those days, less so now because of staff cuts, I fear. But if I wrote a talk, either my colleague Pete Murray or perhaps somebody else in the African Service would read it before it went out or before it was translated. At that stage George Bennett was head of the African Service and he was carefully looking over what went out. Now at no stage did he ever censor things, but there was much more careful checking to make absolutely sure there was nowhere the British government could say, "you got that wrong", and to put further pressure on. But I was aware at that stage that there was British government pressure on the World Service to be very careful what it said about Somalia because they didn't want an ally weakened.

SO: So here we've got a case of the British government not seeing the BBC as a useful tool for communication. This is Her Majesty's Government concerned that the BBC shouldn't be a blunt instrument against its own policy.

KS: Yes, or that something could be said that could undermine or backfire and could actually turn out to be wrong. The BBC could absolutely maintain its independence by being accurate and making sure everything it said could be stood up. A bit like the Gilligan affair. I was heavily involved in running training courses for BBC journalists after the Gilligan affair. I co-wrote the course that all BBC journalists did on how not to make the mistakes that Andrew Gilligan made; and Gilligan did make mistakes. His report, I would say, was 98 per cent correct but he embroidered a tiny little bit and when the Blair Government got angry about what he said about government claims about weapons of mass destruction and the evidence on which it was based, the BBC handled it badly. Instead of saying 'We were right, but yes, in this little area we made a mistake.'

SO: The two per cent?

KS: And the two per cent that was wrong was building up the link between 10 Downing Street and strongly implying that changes in the dossier - the famous dossier on weapons of mass destruction - had been dictated by No. 10 and in the way that David Kelly, the poor scientific advisor to the intelligence community, had described. He was an anonymous source and as a journalist you will do everything to protect an anonymous source. Yet on the other hand, you must be fair to your audience and give them an indication of the level of importance of the source you're quoting.

SO: Because of the quality of the information?

KS: The quality of the information. Andrew Gilligan slightly over-exaggerated Kelly's importance by describing him as a senior intelligence official instead of a scientific advisor to the intelligence community. And you may think it's a minor error, but this is where the BBC went wrong. If they put their hands up and said yes okay there could've been a greater precision in the description

of this person and perhaps a little more caution about how the dossier was drawn up, it would've still been an incredibly powerful story. But the BBC would not have laid itself open to the accusations that it embroidered, as they said, 'over-sexed' the report, and then of course whatever happened, and I can't judge or not on how Kelly's name came out and who was entirely to blame for that, but the BBC made mistakes. What the BBC also did and this was very clear to me when I was constructing this post-Gilligan course for BBC journalists, is it broke its own rules. I was thoroughly aware of these having been the senior editor of the World Service, and how you responded to complaints. You responded to complaints by investigating in detail and then replying in detail, not as it was decided when Alistair Campbell sent in his 10 points, I think it was, of what the government felt was wrong with this report, that without initially doing a thorough investigation, saying no we were absolutely right. My feeling at the time, and I'm prepared to say this on record, is that Greg Dyke and Gavin Davies decided that because of criticism when they were appointed to their posts that they were too close to New Labour. They needed an issue on which they put some clear blue sky between them and new Labour and so they decided we will fight the government over this; we will not admit an error, because then when they actually investigated it there were errors and then, although I think the Hutton inquiry rather unfairly criticised the BBC in some ways or inaccurately criticised it, by not coming clean about the relatively small areas of error in the reporting, the BBC left itself open to criticism.

SO: Keith, going back to the 1980s on Commonwealth issues and Commonwealth crises: you had been in BBC Monitoring for nine months and you then returned here to London. Were you involved in any of the reporting around the Grenada invasion of '83?

KS: Yes, I was involved in monitoring things. I seem to remember coming in the morning after it happened and we were immediately getting reports from this new radio station, purportedly an independent one, called, I think, Radio Spice Islands which was American, very much like Radio Marty and other radio stations put out under the auspices of the CIA to broadcast disinformation and propaganda to Central America. This was a new one that suddenly sprang up overnight broadcasting to Grenada and the Caribbean. Yes, I'm sure there are transcripts available.

We also got the impression - I never had any direct contacts with government officials or the Foreign Office - but we would get Foreign Office requests into Monitoring to look out for particular types of material. I would say I got the impression at about third hand that the British government - put in no other way and I'm sure this is the way Thatcher would've put it - was bloody furious about this, about the invasion and about suddenly setting up this radio station that was broadcasting very crass propaganda to the Caribbean.

SO: So you were monitoring, you were not involved in any programme production, any news?

KS: No, actually I wasn't directly monitoring, I was then one of the editors. I was one of the deputy heads by then of the production team that put out what was Part Four of the Summary of World Broadcasts that covered Africa, Middle East, Greece, Turkey and Cyprus and Latin America. So the Latin America stuff we were putting out, anything to do with the Caribbean. We didn't do a huge amount on the Caribbean, but we would put out things, for example,

from Cuba, and we put out radio broadcasts from the region about the invasion of Grenada and about the coup there.

SO: So the BBC would then have been part of the information going into the British government. Do you recall, again, connections between Whitehall and the BBC on this at all?

KS: Absolutely, because there were regular communications. I mean it was very, very clear. We all had to sign the Official Secrets Act when we joined Monitoring, which you didn't necessarily [have to do] in the rest of the BBC, because we would deal directly with people. So, yes, we would get requests that we knew came in from the Foreign Office or even Ministry of Defence about particular issues. 'Look out for this.' I can remember at one stage getting requests that I think actually came more from the Americans but also from the Foreign Office, possibly the Cabinet Office, which tended to be, I think, the link between Monitoring and the intelligence services looking out for timing Gaddafi speeches.

Now, I always got the impression again and in off the record discussions – although this is on the record here – I had with the FBIS people and Monitoring that some people in the CIA had this theory that Gaddafi's more outrageous outbursts tended to coincide with phases of the moon. I'm serious.

SO: He was a genuine lunatic?

KS: Yes. They looked at all sorts of different things because he would veer widely. So we would get contacted about that. This was one thing very directly we did at the request of the Ministry of Defence and the Foreign Office, so of course BBC news gathering was interested and I did it myself, just after I came back from Lilongwe. I was in Lilongwe when the Argentineans invaded the Falkland Islands. I got back just after that; I'd been in Zimbabwe and talked, as I mentioned, to Nathan Shamuyarira and the Foreign Minister, Witness Mangwende, about the Falklands and Carrington having to step down to resign. When I came back one of my jobs throughout the period of the British re-invasion, re-occupation, liberation, however you put it, of the Falklands, I monitored Argentine Radio Liberty which was the Argentine propaganda station broadcasting at the British task force. We were asked directly to do that by the British government and it was useful for the BBC, but actually we didn't get a huge amount of it. I'm quite surprised because I'm sure they must've been monitoring it onboard the ships, but maybe they just wanted a back up because it wasn't in particularly good quality. You had to really struggle to listen, but we would pick up the most amazing propaganda. I mean Admiral Sandy Woodward committed suicide about five times and they sank an aircraft carrier repeatedly! It reminded me actually of something I read in the account of Goebbels daily meetings of his propaganda ministry during the war where at one stage they reported that the Ark Royal had been sunk and it took a very brave official from the German Naval Ministry who was at the meeting to say this. Goebbels said 'Right, we've reported the Ark Royal as being sunk. Now we know it has not been sunk and we've got to back track on this, Naval Ministry how do you reply?' And this is in a transcript I've got of the meeting and the brave person from the German Navy said 'Well, I'm afraid, Herr Minister, that is your problem, because it was the Propaganda Ministry that sank it and not the Navy.' But during the Falklands War they sank…I'm trying to remember – I don't think it was the Ark Royal..it might've

been the Invincible…[It] was sunk so many times and the propaganda was so awful.

SO: This is truly global radio wars.

KS: But at the same time at the World Service, a colleague and friend of mine, Rob Watson – he's now still a senior BBC correspondent – used to do a BBC programme called 'Call in the Falklands' that was specifically done for the Falkland Islands as it was broadcast nowhere else. It was just presenting news of particular interest to them, maybe things that wouldn't get on to the World Service, much more minor things going on in Argentina or Uruguay or things going on with Antarctic surveys or something that would be of particular interest to the Falkland Islanders. It was put out, I think, a weekly programme called 'Call in the Falklands'.

SO: Keith, in terms of your other professional outputs, you also wrote for Derek Ingram as part of his Gemini news gathering service.

KS: Yes.

SO: Did you get a particular editorial steer from Derek and the particular line he was interested in? Was he attentive to how you wrote up a story, telling you to tweak it or to alter the slant for a particularly Commonwealth audience?

KS: I didn't particularly get that sort of feedback. He was very meticulous about it being accurate and when I sold him the story it tended to be more me phoning him to sell him stories, although occasionally he would contact me because he knew my particular areas of interest and we would discuss the angle. What would be the angle that they wanted on the story? In the same way I would think about something I did for the World Service in terms of who's listening to this and what do they want to know. I would never slant a story to the extent of missing main points of the story, but you had to think, you always think about what does your audience want from this story? What do they need to know? What level of knowledge can they presume? So I did a wide variety of stories for Derek, I would do a lot, because obviously it wasn't a Commonwealth country. It bordered Commonwealth countries. I would do a lot on Angola, which in the '80s and '90s was one of my specialist areas. So the progress of the Angolan War because of the long border with Zambia, the closeness to Botswana, so a future and then after 1990 a new Commonwealth member country, Namibia, the link with South Africa which obviously, whilst outside the Commonwealth until 1994, was very much in the view of the Commonwealth as an important area. So I would cover Angola, the regional balance, I would cover things going on in South Africa. Also conservation issues which is another thing I do: important conservation issues within Commonwealth areas and those tended to have quite a wide remit. I remember seeing things that I'd written on the endangered wild dogs of Africa, because Derek was always very good about sending me photocopies of where it appeared, for example in a Nepalese newspaper which quite surprised me. But it was always, when I discussed things with him, 'What is going to interest your audience?' but I never felt there was a tweaking of 'You've got to give a particular view on this.'

SO: So it was an editorial steer rather than editorial insistence.

KS: Yes, but really I always felt it was very much the same sort of intrinsic, underlying view that I had at the World Service. And I never felt it intrusive or pushing me in directions that either wasn't comfortable or I hadn't thought of going.

SO: So this is a case of Derek then selecting his journalists for contributors relatively carefully?

KS: I suspect – and I'm trying to remember how I first got in touch with him – and I rather suspect it was through Colin Legum, who I knew well and who I'd been, you could say, in a gentle way, I was headhunted for. Because when I was originally doing my research on Southern Africa and the Soviet Union one publication that I used was one called USSR and the Third World, strangely produced by an organisation called the Central Asian Research Centre, now unfortunately defunct, run by somebody who had previously been at Monitoring many years before me called David Morrison, who was an expert on, not just Central Asia, but particularly also on the Soviet Union, China and the developing world. David Morrison produced a digest that included monitoring output but also included Soviet press output that he translated himself on the Soviet Union and the Third World, and I'd met him. I actually became company secretary of the Central Asian Research Centre for a while and when I was going out to Malawi to work for BBC Monitoring, Malawi was a no go area for western journalists. Kamuzu Banda did not like western journalists. He kicked out all the western journalists and he was very, very tight on ever letting them in.

SO: Had there been critical reporting?

KS: Oh yes. Yes and then the critical book about him – by a chap who later became somebody I worked with a lot, who was a very good BBC China correspondent but had worked in Malawi, and [who] I think was actually editor of the Daily Times in Malawi in the run up to independence. That's Philip Short and Philip had written a very good book called 'Banda', all about Banda, and he brought out all sorts of things that Banda did not like. After he left and after there being various other reports that Banda found distasteful, he just stopped journalists going there. So there were no western journalists resident in Malawi. When I was going out there David Morrison wrote for Colin Legum's Africa Contemporary Record. He wrote, I think, the Soviet Union and Africa and the China and Africa sections and he suggested to Colin that I go to see him before I went out and that I maybe wrote the Malawi chapter when I came back from Malawi, because I was going to be out there, I would actually get a feel for things. I couldn't under my BBC contract report from Malawi for anyone else while I was out there and had I tried to do so I think I would've been deported straightaway.

But there was no problem from the BBC viewpoint of me writing, if you like, an academic style article for Africa Contemporary Record. So I gathered the material and I then started writing the Malawi chapter. I got permission from Monitoring to do it on Malawi. I wrote the Malawi chapter for the Africa Contemporary Record, I think, for about the next eight years and then also a couple of years after I started writing the China and Africa section. So I think it was Colin, because Colin then liking the stuff that I wrote on Malawi and my style of writing, he gave the introductions to various people. For example, he gave me introductions to Sean Moroney, who was then editor of African Business who then gave me introductions to Alan Rake who was editor of

New African, both of which are still published, although Sean and Alan have now moved on and I think he also probably gave me an introduction to Derek.

SO: This is very much a Commonwealth journalist network.

KS: Yes, very much.

SO: You also became a member of the editorial board of the Anti-Apartheid News.

KS: Because again, I'd always, as I mentioned, been very interested in South Africa, very effected just by hearing that news of the Soweto uprising and seeing the pictures and in fact I was describing this to my students at Kent the other day, talking about journalism and covering major events. I still almost get a lump in the throat when I talk about it, having seen that picture of the dead boy, Hector Peterson, on the first day of the Soweto uprising and the killings of school children by the South African police. I broadcast live next to his grave on the morning that the polls opened in South Africa – with a queue stretching back miles in the cold, early morning of Johannesburg, a queue miles long of people waiting to vote at the polling station right next to his grave – and [I] interviewed people live in the queue as they waited for the polling station to open at seven o'clock. But yes, I was very, very interested during my time in Malawi, then going to Zimbabwe. I didn't go on to South Africa on that occasion. When I came back I started writing a lot and again I can't remember the connection, but I was beginning to look at various aspects of British military relations with South Africa – not official government relations, but the way, perhaps, that British military technology could still, in ways, be passed to South Africa despite the suspension of arms sales and arms embargoes – and in order to do the research, I went up to the offices of IDAF. And there I met Margaret Ling, who was the editor of Anti-Apartheid News and she helped me with a piece of research I was doing and then said: "would you be prepared to write this research up for Anti-Apartheid News?" So I did, but at the time my name didn't go out on air at the BBC because I was still at Monitoring.

SO: Yes.

KS: This was not a problem for the BBC because I couldn't be linked directly to the BBC.

SO: So did you know of people such as Abdul Minty?

KS: Yes, and Mike Terry, people in London from the ANC, from the SACP, yes and then from basically I think from '82 or '83, it was certainly late '82 at the earliest I then started writing regularly for Anti-Apartheid News. Then in '84, I think it was, or possibly '85 I was asked to become a member of the editorial board. So I used to come up once a month to Selous Street, very odd name really, I think it was Selous Street.

SO: I'm sorry, that is ironic!

KS: Yes, to Anti-Apartheid headquarters for the monthly editorial meeting with people like Mike Terry, Margaret, Alan Brooks, Karen Allen I think was also a member, who I think may still be with the AAM, Elaine Unterhalter, various other people. We would plan and often have an ANC representative there,

planning output, and I wrote every single month for about, I think, up to 1988 when I moved up to the World Service and my name started going out. At that point I would still write things but it usually went out without my name or actually under an assumed name.

SO: As you say South Africa was a very important area for the Commonwealth.

KS: Yes.

SO: At this time. So did you report on the visit of the Eminent Persons Group, for Anti-Apartheid News?

KS: Yes. And I reported things like Commonwealth reactions to the Mazeru attack and to suspected and actual South African support for dissidence in Zimbabwe, for example. I'm trying to think of other things I remember. The assassination of Ruth First. I never knew Ruth, but I knew Joe and interviewed him on a number of occasions and things like that. I'd cover things like that for Anti-Apartheid News and because I knew all the sources at Monitoring and when I was at Monitoring and then at the BBC, I could also not only see what was published but I could see what didn't get published, not censored out, but things just because there wasn't room and the BBC didn't have the money to publish everything in the SWB. I would also see lots of radio transcripts, lots of reports that just didn't get to air and I could use them because it was basically once you'd read it, it was open source intellectual property. It wasn't anything hidden or secret. So I had a lot of very interesting information that I could feed into both what I wrote for the BBC, what I wrote as a freelance and then what I wrote for the Anti-Apartheid News.

SO: Keith, just to draw together the threads of the discussion so far then, where would you position the BBC in the question 'how has the Commonwealth survived and why it's survived?'

KS: It's very difficult. I think in a lot of ways, it's because of this unspoken empathy and the fact that coverage of events in Commonwealth countries, whether critical or just purely informative, creates a link. It creates voices and the way that people in Commonwealth countries would view the World Service as something they didn't always agree with, they didn't always like, leaders would be critical of it, people would be critical of it on the ground but on the whole they felt that it was telling them broadly the truth.

SO: How much did the BBC help and does it still help, in your view, make the Commonwealth the people's Commonwealth, rather than the elite actors, rather than the professional organisations, so actually the Commonwealth has relevance in terms of connectivity to the everyday?

KS: Because it goes into people's homes. I mean it is again why I think radio, in particular, but also the BBC in terms of its website, the fact that it has a specific Africa website, it has African output not just in English but in Swahili and Hausa, for example, but it gets into people's homes so it's not something mediated through their governments. It gets into their homes. I think sadly the way the BBC is changing due to financial pressure means that it gets to fewer people than it used to and it is more susceptible to being interrupted than it used to be and the way it looks at its audience is different. We always knew that part of our audience was an elite and that most of our audience would be,

say, in the top 10 per cent in education and probably earning terms in most of the countries we broadcast in. But we all had a belief that we weren't just broadcasting to them. I think every single person I worked with had this belief or this hope. Maybe it was a false hope, this hope we were broadcasting to ordinary people. We were broadcasting to everyone. We were not an elitist organisation. But gradually, over the years, as BBC World Service financing has dropped and you couldn't afford to broadcast as much as you used to, even when I was there they were beginning to talk when you had senior figures, we would have planning meetings, and I got to the stage where I was running groups of programmes. At one stage, I was effectively managing editor of the World Service newsroom. And I was part of planning for the future. By the time, I think, that Mark Byford took over there was much more of a view that we now move to where our primary audiences around the world were what they called - and I remember these terms being used – metropolitans and cosmopolitans. So it was more educated, perhaps more active in what you could call the globalised sectors of economies…in audiences.

SO: It slightly smacks of the chattering classes.

KS: Yes. Yes it does. We are broadcasting to the metropolitans and particularly to the cosmopolitans: those within those classes that travel, had international links, the decision makers, the movers and shakers, the people who can influence things, instead of what we all wanted. We fought against it tooth and nail and I think the point where it moved too far was a couple of years ago. I can't remember the date – I should do, because I actually organised and wrote a submission to the sub-committee of the House of Commons, the Foreign Affairs Sub-Committee, and you can find it online: a paper contributed to by a lot of former World Service people on the problems of the changes in broadcasting to Africa and how this would cut out a lot of the value that had been there in reaching a wider audience and particular decisions, for example. I can understand why they did it from a technical point of view, but I think from a reaching an audience point of view – if you like, an inclusiveness point of view – it was disastrous, to cut out a lot of shortwave broadcasts and to rely on FM, and this made it interruptable.

Take Rwanda. Once you stopped broadcasting on shortwave and you relied on FM relay stations in Kigali or Ruhungeri or wherever, it could be stopped, and it was. So, the last Rwandan election, not that long before the election, Kinyarwanda broadcasts [were] started by the BBC as a sort of lifeline service and then continued as an important service to the people of Rwanda who had suffered so much from the – no other way of putting it – the evils of their broadcasting system before and during the genocide. This was a service that would tell them what was going on. When it was stopped on shortwave and went on to FM, the Kagame government stopped it when it wanted to. So, suddenly, 'nations shall broadcast peace unto nation' – unless the local FM re-broadcaster decided they didn't want to hear it. And they could cut it off, as they did, for several months.

SO: But actually this is tied into the Latimer House principles of supporting the three pillars of democratic governments.

KS: Yes and as soon as you stop having control over your means of broadcasting and your audience means of receiving, you've handed over control to somebody else and it can be easily interrupted. You'd have thought the BBC

would've learnt by its monumental and stupid cock up over BBC Arabic television when it was first launched. On the editorial side it was purely and absolutely independent, but its satellite provider was partly owned by the members of the Saudi royal family and relatively soon after it started broadcasting, it broadcast something concerning Saudi Arabia. I can't remember if it was 'the Death of the Princess' or something else, but it was something the Saudis didn't like, they pulled the plug. Satellite went down as far as the BBC was concerned, the BBC could not be seen in Saudi Arabia.

SO: What then in your view has been the role of BBC World TV? I mean you emphasise the particular importance of radio.

KS: I mean in some areas of the world like the Indian sub-continent, for example, where TV audiences grew massively and began to replace radio audiences, then BBC World TV became very important.

SO: So does the journalistic team of BBC World Radio in any way feed into BBC World TV?

KS: I think it does now, but it didn't used to. They were in two separate buildings and although a lot of BBC World Service people moved over to World TV, there wasn't quite the same … there wasn't a very, very regular contact between us.

SO: They are two very different media.

KS: Yes and it was much more governed obviously by pictures, so whereas we could cover an event in quite a lot of detail say in a country … I'm just trying to think off my head. If something happened in Rwanda, we could cover that, we could get voices from there. TV really doesn't like covering things if you can get no pictures. So it might not always be covered for that reason. I've always been, although I watch TV and watch quite a reasonable amount of TV news partly so I can criticise it … talking to my wife, she actually said last night: "I would like to hear what Jon Snow is saying, not just what you think about what Jon Snow is saying". So I argue with the television and the radio all the time, but I think TV coverage by its very nature has to be less inclusive, has to be less comprehensive because they want pictures, you want pictures, unless it's a huge event and you can get your correspondent in the studio or you can at least get a picture of your correspondent and their voice or maybe a Skype scratchy thing up of them. You want pictures or you don't really cover it.

SO: Commonwealth audiences are changing, the way the Commonwealth consumes news is changing.

KS: Yes, oh it is. It is, but I think the BBC is almost making it change, in terms of its consumption of the BBC, by cutting out certain things. So, for example, if you are in a rural area of Ghana, you may not now get the BBC as you used to because it will be re-broadcast on FM and FM has not got the same range as shortwave, so you may not get it any longer. But it is cheaper and easier and when it does get to people it is in better sound quality and it's the way to go and there's almost, I would say, this fetish of technological advance that overcomes what I think should be the focus of what audience you're trying to reach and then differences of opinion over what your audience is and maybe I'm very old fashioned about it, maybe I'm much more, how can one put it.

SO: A word-smith?

KS: No not particularly that. In my outlook I make no bones about it, I am very much to the left and I do not believe that media should just be there for the elite; I think media should be there for everybody and in a format and in ways that everyone can reach.

SO: Keith, on that note, thank you very much indeed. I'm going to stop it there.

[END OF AUDIOFILE]