

TRANSCRIPT OF CONVERSATION BETWEEN BOB
TIZARD AND JOHN EARNSHAW

JOHN: HELLO BOB, JOHN EARNSHAW SPEAKING AGAIN, SORRY TO
BOTHER YOU AGAIN I HOPE
YOU HAVEN'T HAD TOO MUCH HASSLE OVER THIS THING

BOB: ONE OR TWO BUT WHAT I'M FINDING THERE IS NOTHING I CAN
DO ANYWAY ITS JUST GOING OVER OLD GROUND AND I DON'T RECKON
THERE'S ANYTHING IN IT

JOHN: I HAVE HAD A WORD WITH JOHN MACE AND HE HAD A DISTINCT
LOSS OF MEMORY

BOB: WELL TO HIM IT WAS JUST A LITTLE THING IHE WAS NOT
DIRECTLY INVOLVED AND HE WAS REPORTING AFTER THE ENQUIRY
PRESUMABLY HE HAD A PIECE OF PAPER OUTLING WHAT WAS
REPORTED FROM COAST DEFENCE OR NAVY OR BOTH AND THAT WAS
THAT

JOHN: WELL I HAVE SPOKEN TO DOUG PATTERSON HE SEEMED TO
THINK YOU MIGHT BE REFERRING TO THE PREVIOUS INVESTIGATION
ON THIS THING IN 1980

BOB: OH NO, NO IT WAS A FOLLOW UP TO THAT BUT THIS ENQUIRY
WAS DEFINITELY MADE WHEN MACE WAS CHIEF OF DEFENCE STAFF
AND IT WAS REFERRED TO AUCKLAND AND I WAS NOT GIVEN NAMES
OF PEOPLE TO WHOM IT WAS REFERRED TO ITS NOT NORMAL THE
CHAIN OF COMMAND IN THE FORCES IS SUCH THAT IT WOULD
THOUGHT AS NOT APPROPRIATE AND IS ALWAYS REPORTED BACK BY
THE SENIOR OFFICER AND THAT WAS MACE FULL STOP

JOHN: HE SEEMED TO FORGET ALL ABOUT IT HE DIDNIT QUITE KNOW

BOB: I DON'T THINK HE TOOK ANY INTEREST IN IT HE JUST REPORTED
ON AN ENQUIRY I MADE

JOHN: YEAH

BOB: HE CERTAINLY DIDN'T GET INVOLVED IN IT I MEAN MACE IS
CERTAINLY NOT A COASTAL ARTILLARY MAN OR A NAVAL OFFICER
THEREFORE HE HAD NO DIRECT KNOWLEDGE OR INVOLVEMENT.

JOHN: YEAH I CAN UNDERSTAND THAT HE WASN'T SORT OF
ASSOCIATED WITH THE PLACE

BOB: PROBABLY NEVER BEEN THERE IN HIS LIFE

JOHN: PROBABLY WOULDN'T KNOW WHERE IT WAS

BOB: HE WAS AN ANFANTRY MAN HE'S BEEN IN MALAYSIA INDONESIA AND PLACES LIKE THAT.

JOHN: YEAH THE ONLY... IS THAT THE FACT WAS HE WAS THE CHIEF OF DEFENCE STAFF

BOB: HE WAS THE CHIEF AND I MADE THE ENQUIRY TO HIM AS IS THE APPROPRIATE PROCEDURE AND HE CAME BACK TO ME WITH THE RESULTS OF THE ENQUIRY AS HE HAD THEM

JOHN: HE WAS QUITE SPECIFIC ABOUT THE AMO WE KNOW ITS THERE FROM ALL THE PEOPLE THAT HAVE.....

BOB: I DON'T THINK THERE IS ANY ARGUMENT ABOUT THIS DETERIORATING AMMUNITION

JOHN: YEAH

BOB: THAT'S WHY THE PLACE WAS SEALED INITALLY THEY HAD THE CHOICE OF METHODS OF DISPOSAL AND THEY TOOK THE CHEAPEST AND THEY JUST SEALED THE TUNNELS

JOHN: YEAH IT IS AS YOU SAY IN QUITE A HAIREY CONDITION AND OF COURSE AS YOU KNOW AMO JUST DOESN'T JUST GO AWAY IT BECOMES EVEN MORE UNSTABLE

BOB: YES

BOB: WELL THE DECISION GOING BACK EARLIER THAN 1980 SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN THAT IT WAS DANGEROUS TO SHIFT AT THAT TIME

JOHN: YES THAT IS WHAT I UNDERSTAND BECAUSE THERE HAVE BEEN SO MANY PEOPLE INTO THE PLACE THE LAST PERSON PHYSICALLY IN THE TUNNELS THAT I HAVE CONTACTED WAS IN 1978 AND HE REPORTED THAT THERE WAS ALL THIS AMMUNITION THERE IN A HELL OF A CONDITION AND I WAS TRYING TO FIND... TRYING TO DO... TO CONFIRM WHERE ALL THIS STUFF IS FIND THE PLANS WHICH WERE AGAIN IN THE SYSTEM IN THE 80's AND THEY'VE ALL DISAPPEARED ... AND THE FACT THAT THIS INFORMATION CONFIRMING THE AMO IS THERE TRYING TO FIND THIS BIT OF PAPER TO SAY HOW MUCH IS THERE AND WHAT CONDITION IT'S IN AND THAT'S THE DIFFICULT BIT.

BOB: WELL THAT WAS NEVER REFERRED TO ME I'M AFRAID

JOHN: THERE WAS NEVER...SORT OF...

BOB: JUST A STATEMENT THAT IT WAS THERE AND THE FEAR WAS EXPRESSED THAT IF THEY HAD TO REMOVE THE BLOCK IN THE TUNNEL THAT THE OPERATIONS OF REMOVING WHATEVER THE BLOCK IS I PRESUME IT IS CONCRETE BLOCK CEMENTED TOGETHER WOULD IN DANGER OF PRODUCING VIBRATIONS THAT COULD SET THE AMMUNITION OFF SO THEY WERE NOT PREPARED TO FACE THAT RISK AND THAT'S ALL I KNOW ABOUT IT

JOHN: I GUESS IF THERE IS A SMALL EARTH TREMOR IT COULD GO OFF BY ITSELF...JUST AS WELL YOU LIVE OVER THERE BOB

BOB: I CERTAINLY DON'T INTEND LIVING ON TOP OF NORTH HEAD

JOHN: THE OTHER THING OF COURSE GOING BACK FURTHER WHEN DENNIS MCLEAN SIGNED THESE AGREEMENTS ON BEHALF OF THE CROWN TO DO THIS INVESTIGATION AND THEN OF COURSE THE ARMY TURNED UP AND FLUFFED ABOUT WITH THIS DRILL AND IT WAS QUITE OBVIOUS THERE WAS NO INTENTION OF DOING THE TASK I MEAN YOU COULD END UP WITH QUITE CLEARLY A BREACH OF CONTRACT

BOB: I DON'T KNOW I DIDN'T SEE THAT STUFF DENNIS MCLEAN WAS SECRETARY AND HE WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR CIVILIAN ADMINISTRATION BUT THESE AREAS WERE CLEARLY ORAL? OPERATION AREAS AND WOULD NEVER HAVE BEEN UNDER HIS DIRECT SUPERVISION

JOHN: ALL HE DID WAS SIGN THE AGREEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE CROWN (YES) FOR THE ARMY TO CONTINUE THIS INVESTIGATION WHICH I PROVIDED HIM WITH AERIAL PICTURES OF SOME OF THE ENTRANCES AND OF COURSE IT WAS QUITE OBVIOUS AT THAT TIME THAT THEY WERE NOT INTENDING TO DO THIS.

BOB: WELL I THINK THAT THEY TAKE THE ATTITUDE THAT IT IS EXPOSING MEMBERS OF THE ARMED SERVICES TO UNNECESSARY RISKS IF THEY MAKE A PHYSICAL INVESTIGATION FURTHER NOW I CERTAINLY WOULD NOT ORDER THAT THEY GAVE ME WHAT I THOUGHT WAS A VALID OPINION THAT THIS STUFF WAS DANGEROUS IF DISTURBED THAT'S IT

JOHN: ALL RIGHT BOB THE PUBLIC ARE GETTING A LITTLE CONCERNED

BOB: I DON'T KNOW IF THE PUBLIC WANT TO PROVIDE DEMOLITION EXPERTS WHO ARE PREPARED TO GO IN AND MAKE THAT OFFER BUT

AS MINISTER AS DEFENCE I WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN PREPARED TO SAY I WANT SOMEONE TO GO IN DESPITE WHAT YOU'VE SAID

JOHN: IT'S A CAN OF WORMS BOB ISN'T IT

BOB: I DO NOT HAVE THE DIRECT INTEREST THAT SOME OF YOU DO AND I FEEL IT IS UP TO YOU IF YOU STILL HAVE THAT INTEREST TO PLUG AWAY

JOHN: I WOULD LIKE THE CO-OPERATION OF THE AUTHORITIES WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR IS THE PLANE SOME PEOPLE HAVE SEEN IN THE TUNNELS SOME OLD INVENTORIES OF THE PLACE WHICH HAVE NOW DISAPPEARED OF COURSE HAVE BEEN SIGHTED AND IT LISTED OFF SOME OF THE STUFF THAT WAS THERE.

BOB: I CERTAINLY HAVEN'T SEEN THOSE

JOHN: I HAVEN'T SEEN THIS STUFF AS YOU SAY THEY REALIZED WHEN THE PARK BOARD TOOK OVER IN THE 70's THAT MAYBE AT THAT STAGE THEY DISCOVERED THE AMO WAS THERE AND THE PARK BOARD HAVE ALSO HURRIEDLY CLOSED OFF A LOT OF THE REMAINING ENTRANCES

BOB: THEY WOULD TAKE THE QUICKEST WAY OF MINIMIZING THEIR RISK IN FAVOUR OF THE PUBLIC OR ANYBODY ELSE I'VE BEEN TO THE TUNNELSTHEY COULD BE A CONTRIBUTING FACTOR TO ANY ACCIDENT THAT MIGHT OCCUR

JOHN: EXACTLY, EXACTLY

BOB: AND ALL PUBLIC BODIES LIKE THAT WOULD WANT TO MINIMIZE THEIR RISK

JOHN: OF COURSE, OF COURSE

JOHN: WELL MAYBE ONE DAY BOB WE'LL FIND THIS PLANE YOU'RE AN AIRFORCE MAN AREN'T YOU

BOB: YES, YES

JOHN: MAYBE THEY CAN GIVE YOU A RIDE

BOB: I PREFER TO WATCH SOMEONE ELSE DRIVE.....I HAVE GREAT FAITH IN NZ ENGINEERS BUT NOT GREAT FAITH IN 60 OR 70 YEAR OLD AIRCRAFT

ENDS

Time: 11.21am

Date: 28th February 1992