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2
3 **KWAZULU-NATAL ORAL HISTORY PROJECT**

4 **INTERVIEW WITH RANDOLPH VIGNE, CONDUCTED BY NORMAN BROMBERGER**
5 **AND PETER BROWN ON 18 JULY 1996.**

6 **(‘N’ - Norman Bromberger, and ‘P’ - Peter Brown, shall indicate the Interviewers and ‘R’ -**
7 **Randolph Vigne, the Interviewee.)**

8
9 N: All right? This is an interview with Randolph Vigne with Norman Bromberger and Peter
10 Brown present, at Peter Brown’s house in Pietermaritzburg on the 18th of July 1996. Okay?

11 P: Randolph, I don’t know whether you remember, but my recollection is that - of meeting you
12 at a party in Cape Town, when you had either expressed interest in the Party or you might
13 have just joined it. I don’t know if you remember it?

14 N: I do..

15 R: Would you call it the Liberal Party again?

16 P: No, it was ...

17 N: ? understanding for ? Wedding actually.

18 P: Probably, might be...

19 R: ..probably mentioned it. No, that’s right, I do that like a lot of people, when the Party started
20 in May ‘53. I was - we got married - oh, on May 8th when the Party was also May 9th - so
21 we were away, and I sort of remember seeing in the newspapers and things ? would be -
22 having followed a little bit of what was happening, mainly through the Forum, which, I
23 discovered for some reason only restarted again in about ‘95 it had a gap for a year or two
24 then it’s restarting everything about ‘51, and we had a lot of interesting Liberals sort of
25 generally ? profession. So that was why - I mean - then I did - then in fact I didn’t - I think
26 I didn’t join - when we went to ? I didn’t join that ‘till ‘55. Why I don’t know, but - that sort
27 of discovery recently, I thought it was earlier...

28 P: And then got involved - what - how initially?

29 R: No, then did get involved. because the Party was I think, I’m not sure about this but I think

1 it was still the hectic, sort of 'game western..' relic...

2 P: Is it notably election time?

3 R: ...election going on and I can't you know like a lot of people in this instance - some of the
4 situations, contacted the Party office on genders and said you know 'Here I am, what do I
5 do?' And the answer came down. And then I was found - I was a member of the Sea Point
6 branch, we were actually living in Bell House in Cape Town and Harry Ross-Brodie were
7 very good and they used to have meetings in their flat in Sea Point. And um, I can't really
8 tell you - I - I ? Dan Tekili - why they would belong to the Sea - of course, he lived in
9 Woodstock or something like that - I suppose - there wasn't a city branch, and a wonderful
10 old fellow called Wilson Seque, another story about him..And I don't really remember who
11 the others were, but they were typical sort of branch meetings - they had this little fiddle
12 fiddle about paper clips? probably ? informed - I - I thought you know 'Is this the freedom
13 struggle I thought I'd joined?' And then we went to England in '56, just a very short - we
14 were I think only away a month or six weeks really and so often, it was getting out of the
15 country and sort of seeing it all from the other end of the telescope so to speak that really got
16 me thinking that either - if I came back to South Africa I would either go in boots and all -
17 or we go to England because it's so absolutely fed up with everything and again failure to get
18 involved with the Party. I did go to I think it was the January '57, to the Party Congress
19 which was in the Tafelberg Hotel, that was the first Party Congress I'd been to - been to - and
20 'd been to quite a few public meetings; I remember Margaret Ballinger and Donald Stuart
21 and some other - I forgotten what the occasion was - it doesn't come up in my researches.
22 Well I used to sort of trod along to things but still wasn't really ? involved much. I should
23 say when I came back from England, well from that trip to determine whether to have a go
24 or not, I flew down from - I think I went back to Jo'burg on some business thing and then
25 flying back to Cape Town, Leslie was on the 'plane, Leslie Rubin and I proceeded ? the nose
26 and said 'You know, what about me?' All in short and Leslie takes credit for having sort of
27 got me to join the Liberal Party. It wasn't in fact the case it was more that I was said that you
28 know I joined the Party a ? year ago and doesn't ? suit me. And so he then - and then I found
29 myself - asked to speak at a meeting somewhere like Grassy Park - well it was at sort of Cape

1 Flats - was it? The incredible - you've never seen such a place - sort of squatter camp thing
2 with Denys Goldberg and I think Vic Goldstein who later left - Vic Goldberg, who then left
3 the COD and I remember Leslie coaching me - exactly what I had to say and so on - as if?
4 I hadn't the faintest idea what it was all about you know. I did say I grew up in a totally
5 unpolitical environment, Port Elizabeth - politics was the equivalent of sort of pornography
6 or something like that - you just didn't go in for it you know. And so that was really what
7 got me but then of course the world stepped forward - it wasn't 'till '58 with the general
8 election when a lot of us in a similar dissatisfied state worked for Gerald Gordon and then
9 you know got buoyant? And it was a very bad time to join the Party because it was when the
10 Cape was sort of breaking away from...

11 P: A National sort of direction..

12 R: Ja, ja, and the sort of young Turks hadn't really sort of started anything you know so then it
13 was the Gerald Gordon campaign, followed by, of course, the arrival of Pat..after he got??

14 P: Pat Duncan.

15 R: From Pat Duncan and there was a sort of local leader to follow which we hadn't had until
16 then. I mean Oscar and some of them - Oscar was okay but some of them were positively
17 off putting, I mean Tom Price..

18 P: Oh, I know - yes.

19 R: ...had us all ? the Party but, anyway so that was really why I got involved and I remember
20 meeting you at a party at the Rubins after that when I was already..

21 P: Well, I think that's where I first met you, Norman? You probably don't remember - when
22 Paton and Rubin were singing naughty songs if I remember rightly.

23 R: I remember Oscar and Paton sort of swotting anec - ? public stories in Afrikaans..

24 P: I don't remember that...

25 R: In NUSAS days. Of course you were a great pal of Neville's weren't you?

26 N: Yes.

27 P: Well that's certainly where I first met you - it might not have been on that occasion - so -
28 with Neville at the Rubins..

29 R: Aha

- 1 P: Before we carry on with your adventures, you mentioned Donald Stuart, the tape recorder
2 might like to know a little bit about ...
- 3 R: Oh yes. Donald was one of the - he was one of the - he was Professor of English at Fort Hare
4 I think.
- 5 P: I think so, yes.
- 6 R: And a very nice, attractive character, a very intelligent man and a sense of humour and so on.
7 Good speaker too, but I think if he had - it must have been - I may have got it later on, but
8 you know when they were all kicked out of Fort Hare?
- 9 P: Yes, he was kicked out, he was kicked out then.
- 10 R: Was it something - was it called 'Manderstab' or I can't remember - a good speaker too.
- 11 P: That was of course Terence, Beard?
- 12 R: And Nyemhezi too, ja, and...
- 13 P: And Nyembese...
- 14 R: Also...
- 15 P: I think Nyembese went at the same time.
- 16 R: ? right - yes, they had an absolute clean out. I don't know what pretext they used but I
17 recollect it was all taken as broad action, you know.
- 18 P: Was it not when control passed from the missionaries as it were to the state?
- 19 R: Yes, there you are - probably rich enough to take over. They're here at Fort Hare now? And
20 just absolutely wrecked it - ja that's right I think it must have been just at that time.
- 21 P: Alright, Gerald Gordon's election and Pat arriving in providing I suppose a sort of rallying
22 point for..
- 23 R: Very much, yes, that was quite ? of course, it gave one something to do - you know, which
24 is what one wanted, rather than sitting around talking about jumble sales and Kirk sales
25 which is just, as we all know, somebody said 'all sort of politics comes down to licking
26 envelopes.' You know when you think things there's's a great battle to be fought..' you're
27 not satisfied. But I think it was just at the end of Gerald Gordon Campaign, Alan Baldwin
28 who joined the Party perhaps about the same time - and also ? involved with the campaign,
29 with the election and his sister ? now wait now, I can't remember - I knew her name - as a

1 little group of us. Adam and I sort of convened this thing and we were - and this was a sort
2 of make or break thing you know - either we made something of the Liberal Party in the Cape
3 or we go away and do something else because it seemed so helpless in a way it was being run
4 and we then - he and I - I think got on to the ? Committee and then the whole thing began and
5 sort of Peter responded to being liberal very much because he hadn't given much of a lead
6 quite frankly when we were all looking for a leader and ...

7 P: What was his position then? Just a member of the Committee?

8 R: Yes...he was and he's..

9 P: Of the Provincial Committee?

10 R: ...?? go and see him. I remember it was so ignorant ? what the party was all about that we
11 thought who do we go to in the Party to say - you know - give us something - a leader - we
12 don't know what's happening - the whole thing seems to be so dismissive and disorganised.
13 They could see it. And the fellow who we were most attracted to from hearing him speak
14 at meetings, was Donald Molteno. I remember saying to Peter - do you Millie's
15 Luncheonette? Meeting PC, Peter at Millie's Luncheonette to have a sort of Council of War -
16 it was still ? -we knew each other. And I said our group have formed and we've decided to -
17 we want to take your advice and we're thinking of approaching Don Molteno and he said 'I
18 don't think you'd - I don't think that's really very wise.' I don't know why - Don was right
19 under the right wing of the Party you know, so we had to rethink that - I don't know what we
20 decided about finding a somebody else - I think it was on the arrival of Pat probably just
21 filled the gap you know because he came in - Of course I'd missed all the nastiness -
22 nastinesses about your George Clay and Piet Beyleveld which had created a lot of feeling -
23 the case had - I think - you were at that were you?

24 P: No. We had a row almost immediately with George Clay ...

25 R: ...about the second or third issue of ? gone to him..?

26 P: Yes, George Clay having come from where the Cape Times?

27 R: He was the - no, I think he was one of the Port Elizabeth papers - he was with...

28 P: Yes, I think you're right, I think you're right.

29 R: I think he was with ? Correspondence - he lived in Cape Town.

- 1 P: And Pat signed him up as Editor. And then they had this row - but I can't remember what
2 it was about.
- 3 R: No the row was because there was an agreement that they would not attack the COD but nor
4 would they promote it.
- 5 P: Right.
- 6 R: And then they used to have some core meeting like Contact News Aid - sort of profile and
7 they did a profile of Piet Beyleveld, which I re-read recently and I don't - I'm not - I totally
8 sympathise with Pat actually because it made Peter Beyleveld the most wonderful person you
9 know..
- 10 P: Now he was - what was he? Was he Chairman or something of the COD?
- 11 R: He was the Chairman of the COD later as you know..
- 12 P: Turned State...
- 13 R: State Witness.
- 14 P: Yes.
- 15 R: ? proudly - raised from the COD history box. But um, so that was what the row was about.
16 Pat I think sort of flew down from - I think it was Masinga? Where he was living?
- 17 P: Ladybrand.
- 18 R: Ladybrand.
- 19 P: Ladybrand.
- 20 R: And just sort of sailed into the thing you know - I mean - people were really quite upset, I
21 mean - quite a lot of people resigned from to...
- 22 P: From the Board?
- 23 R: From the Academic Board..
- 24 P: But I was never on that Board, but..
- 25 R: Oh were you not?
- 26 P: No, no.
- 27 R: I know he's alleged to have said - I think it's in Jonty Driner's biography - you know
28 'Contact' is mine and what I say goes.' Or something like that which was rather - to the
29 Board you know, you'd think they'd - ??? But anyway, so as I say that was - that filled the

1 current of leadership and ..

2 P: And then what? Next...

3 R: Oh wasn't Allen? I meant to say the person that I should mention is Leo Marquard..

4 P: Yes.

5 R: Leo was hardly ever seemed to be around - I mean he lived in Stellenbosch and he would
6 come into the Oxford University Press - when we had that at Stellenbosch - ? service - so we
7 didn't see much of him but when we did see him he was always very much the kind of
8 reassuring figure to the you know - that we were on the right lines to send this? And
9 ridiculous on the franchise - I mean - we expected to find that all the old guard were - people
10 like Den P? and Walter Stanford and so on were all heavily qualified franchise people and
11 Leo wasn't which I found? a great shock. He said he thought there was no - you know - so
12 he was certainly a big encouragement from my side of things. So then of course the next
13 boost I suppose to activity was again elections - was the '59 Provincial Council elections
14 when Pat stood.

15 P: Right.

16 R: For Sea Point, well we'd already laid that up - the spade work - before General and there's
17 nothing like you know that sort of - you know - ? that you've got a chance of session or not.
18 so we said..? In both cases, the UP had a rather poor candidate - indeed that was ??

19 P: It didn't seem to make any difference - how poor the cabinet was.

20 R: And the classic joke thing was that you know - as you say - we'd - you compare candidates
21 when you were canvassing - there was somebody in Sea Point who was alleged to have said
22 'If the United Party put up a baboon, I'd vote for it.' Which reminds me - you know Boh ?
23 Captain Jack Basson who was never heard of again I don't think - once he got elected.

24 N: Was that also for Sea Point?

25 R: Both Sea Point, ja. Yes there were great disappointments, but Gerald we thought we were
26 in a good position because what was called the Jewish vote and Gerald surprised everybody
27 by going Schules? He hadn't ? for the last forty years, you know.. Putting on whatever those
28 little caps are. But the Jewish vote didn't come our way. I remember canvassing with Derby
29 Katz, in Camp's Bay, and he was trying to persuade somebody he knew, I think, he tried -

1 he was a most persuasive - you know - articulate figure I realized what Gwynn Ash once
 2 said, who 'things is the measure of our task.' This was when the Liberal Party had - tried
 3 to break into Athlone - at an early stage and had a meeting with sort of three - dapper - a
 4 handful of Unity Movement - and got absolutely nowhere. Having done a big canvass and
 5 nail? and - this fellow - I think he was the Cape Treasurer - was he - I know him quite well.
 6 He said 'this is a measure of our task.' And he thought like that about Sea Point but you
 7 know, I think, I think a lot of - after the '59 elections, I was going to say after the '58
 8 elections, we realised you know elections are purely for pulling up one's - you know, -
 9 response of ...

10 P: No, no..

11 R: We tried quite hard - particularly Gerald who wanted to get into parliament, you know?

12 P: Did he?

13 R: Oh yes..?

14 P: Oh.

15 N: This is quite interesting - isn't it? Thinking about it - your reference to you know - the
 16 measure of our task - there is somebody like Toffy Katz - a - labouring away unsuccessfully
 17 in the constituency where - would it be their children, or perhaps their grandchildren. I don't
 18 know - I suppose by then it's two generations - at the University, are voting them in as Vice-
 19 President of the SRC or OPS? you know...

20 R: But not on that sort of politics I don't think were they?

21 N: Of course, that is a point - I agree - but there was a - I mean already - I remember Toffy - sort
 22 of - you know arriving at University myself as a and if you said to me what do I remember
 23 about Toffy Katz, it would be that he was the Liberal leader. You remember - tried - sort
 24 of -

25 R: Was it before Neville?

26 N: Yes, yes. And before any of them - there was that progression of people but it was about
 27 politics - they also did an administrative job because there was a lot of student
 28 administration, but I think that - you know - politics was a substantial part of the reason why
 29 he was there - why he stood for the SRC and why he got in.

- 1 R: It wasn't that he was standing against the left, or the Reds, or the Communists as we like to
2 call them?
- 3 N: Well, I think that did get involved and the details of that you know - I'm not all that clear
4 about because at that stage I wasn't involved, but I don't think that that - it is of course true
5 that there was a low participation...I'm not going to go on? it was a thirty - forty percent vote
6 that kind of thing. So there were a lot of part-timers and so on who wouldn't be able to vote
7 and some of those probably were somewhat more conservative, but there was a clear, you
8 know - take a generation and a half on - there was already a constituency - admittedly
9 selected somewhat because they were at University, but you know one has the feeling of
10 distinct links with that kind of constituency when you're talking about it - who had already -
11 I don't know what to say really, but at that stage of their lives if you like were voting Liberal
- 12 R: Ja, ja. I think the trouble was that what went on at the universities was kind of like sowing
13 your wild oats, you know - political wild oats and it was tolerated, you know, these Jewish
14 families who obviously didn't like the idea of Rebecca's. Of course there was a strong
15 socialist tradition in the Jewish community as well.. Barney Zackou, I'll tell you now, he
16 used to ? all these camps, these ? and all these things - it was all socialist you know - it was
17 all - Byron Kirsten's autobiography puts that across quite clearly as well. But I think ? a bit
18 less in Cape Town because those sort of preposterous and rich families. Jewish families
19 obviously didn't like the idea of her sons and daughters attracting attention. But it was all?
20 to win something that happened there. It didn't have a very big draw from NUSAS I don't
21 think - or from the SRCs..
- 22 P: Later on...
- 23 R: Individuals?
- 24 P: Yes, ja, but..
- 25 R: Ja, from??
- 26 P: ..but not numbers...
- 27 R: ...it got on with something - at the first Liberal Party meeting as a student - University of
28 Cape Town, so - but no, I think, and then of course when we tried to get a proper student
29 organization going at UCT - I don't think - well you were there - I don't - you disappeared

- 1 for a long time - didn't you - then reappeared?
- 2 N: '58 to '61, I was there...
- 3 R: You were here - you remember it?
- 4 N: Ja.
- 5 R: Well it would have been at the end of that - late in that period. I got hold of - or one of us got
6 hold of David Welsh and others and said we must have an organisation you know of -
7 everybody have this ? that belong to the University. and I think Bruchell Francis-Wilson -
8 I can't remember who the others were now. and they - the sort of point one was you can't use
9 the word liberal - it's got to be called - so we decided to call it the 'Student Radical
10 Association' because the liberal word was so tainting the University which wasn't the case
11 when you - you were talking about earlier.. You could be a little detailed about that - but I
12 think this was the - whether this was the increased vociferousness of the Unity Movement?
- 13 N: They did come back into active participation in student politics - I mean on-campus politics,
14 about '56.
- 15 R: Ja, right, ?..
- 16 N: .. for some time - from the days when Vic Wessels said ? on his own SRC as Ronnie
17 Seymour..
- 18 R: ...really, yea..
- 19 N: Ben must have participated for a while which had cooled out again??
- 20 R: No, 'cause I think they were the main attackers rather than the communists who were called
21 the Modern - New World Society, yea. John Luberitz? Nobody told me that in his early days
22 of sort of liberal on the Eastern Cape Town SRC. that their fights with the left were all about
23 Soviet foreign policy and the Visenka controversy and they hardly touched that - that's why
24 I've asked whether national politics was a big issue. In those day they weren't really
25 concerned much about what was happening in South Africa ...Until maybe after the Defiance
26 Campaign, it..
- 27 N: Oh I think they ? with that without wanting to digress too much. had to do with the fact that
28 NUSAS, you know belonged to the International Union of Students, there was this long
29 campaign to get NUSAS out because that was run from Budapest or you know somewhere

1 in that sort of powerful executive which spoke on behalf of the organisation. So of course
2 these western students' unions found themselves effectively being more manipulated to ? this
3 organisation. And made part of the kind of peace from, or? and my memory is that it was
4 Andre o' Dowd's presidency when that fighting got out- you know that would have been
5 about '53, '54, somewhere there - so I would have thought that that ...

6 R: A little later...

7 N: A little later?

8 R: But not much later, I mean, I venture this because I really do - you know doing my Hansard
9 in the last week and there was - a big piece - Rubin, Toffy Katz had his passport taken away,
10 and he had somebody called Stephen Ramasodi, whom I think was a protege of Trevor
11 Huddleston's who was going to an English Public School or something like that and
12 Margaret Ballinger, sort of withering attack on whoever the Minister was - Erasmus, or
13 Swart, saying how absurd this was because this man was actually going to attend, I think, the
14 conference of the ISC, that had now at last broken away from the IUS, rather than being a
15 communist he was actually - strongly supporting the - you know - anti-communist - if
16 anything, international unions of students - I think he got his passport back..'cause ...

17 P: But when are you dating from?

18 R: I think this is probably '54?

19 N: Yes.

20 R: I think the party had started because I remember people like Leo and ? holding forth in Cape
21 Town newspapers- it was Don Jies, who was home - it was a home ? interior and Margaret
22 who was savaging the parliament over this.. But as we know - as I now know from going
23 through the set of archives, Minister of Justice files - they didn't give a damn whether you
24 were a communist or not - they weren't interested, you know. If you were a nuisance and
25 agin` them - that was it - use the act? No pretence of any action ? on participant communist
26 liberals. Anyway, that was that.

27 P: Right, well post-Gerald Gordon and now - was your next involvement in the - I mean after
28 Grassy Park, then the ...

29 R: Oh yes, I think it was about the time..

- 1 P: ... in the townships..
- 2 R: ...my, my you know - what's the phrase, my sort of - I think I was on a swan song - you know
3 what I mean - you know - my ? London.
- 4 P: I mean did Pat start to get involved in the townships, or..?
- 5 R: I remember the first proper township he came - inherited was what ..
- 6 P: Nyanga West-?
- 7 R: Nyanga, the old - not Nyanga West which became Gugulethu, but you know, Nyanga, with
8 Gerald Gordon and um - it must have been about '59 when they begin. And then, yes, and
9 then he used to - and then we tried to build up branches in - you see because most of our -
10 these sort of very senior African Members we had like to keeping and Wilson Seqwe and
11 Joseph Makaku - that was a great thing when he joined. ? Peter were absolutely got
12 astonished that Makaku had joined us from the ANC and so on. But they didn't live in
13 Langa? they mostly lived in Woodstock? That was an old, old, you know settled Africans,
14 but their home Zulu, District Six or Woodstock and so Langa we had already had this sort
15 of break into - they knew people there - and so we were quite food. And then also we had -
16 I think 'Contact' was a very good base for - sort of pulled the lot of people in, we're going
17 to sell them newspaper apart from anything else. Some really quite outstanding you know
18 minor figures, ?Committee that ? forget the local ? No, I think, we - there was a big move
19 then into getting active in the townships and I'm not saying Pat was all that effect - all that
20 personally involved in that - he did a good deal of speaking, but - that was very much a thing.
21 And then of course, March 1960...Sharpeville and Langa and the whole scene changed for
22 us.
- 23 P: That ran off - which came first - after that - SWAPO or the Transkei?
- 24 R: Um SWAPO..
- 25 P: As far as your involvement.
- 26 R: Was, no, SWAPO started when Peter Hjul met some of these chaps working on the fishing
27 boats - he was editing fishing news - you know the Cape paper of the fishing industry and -
28 and he met some of these chaps and he was talking about them - you know how impressive
29 they were. Then I'm pretty sure it was the house meeting at which we got the sort of call

1 together for Pat's campaign in early - I don't know what time - what month the Provincial
2 Council elections were - it would have been I think about say early part of the year and some
3 large house at Sea Point and these fellows turned up - about three or four of them. And all -
4 you know beautifully turned out and incredibly impressive looking chaps - Andre Shabanga,
5 one of them. One of them incidentally is the present SWAPO - present Namibian
6 Ambassador to Beijing, who was Minister of Defence and was in fact the sort of Raj-raj ball
7 here - he was originally from a foreign affairs chap. Peter Mushakane, ? he was Pedro when
8 we knew him - which obviously come from the other side of the border - from Angola, but
9 became Peter, you know the Kwanyama - being both sides of the Angolan, Namibian border.
10 But as I said that was when they came in - was in '59 and on a simple case - look we've
11 started this programme with our peoples' organisations, but we don't have any knowledge
12 of political organisation it doesn't exist for Blacks in our country - we've looked around,
13 we've - like the look of yours - this sort of thing - can we join your Party on a sort of a joint
14 basis. We are remainders of the OPO while we're in South Africa, we will be the Liberal
15 Party and so you know when we projected this through this was accepted. And they were
16 excellent - we used to see a lot of them you know and they brought in other Africans too
17 from you know - from their contacts so that was really - The Transkei was only that when
18 Pat and Neil Ross went on that sort of tour - just after the emergency, the emergency was
19 probably still on then - drove to Cape Town and went up to ? Johannesburg, or around there -
20 Malcolm Peak?, and then on their way back I think they must have come through the
21 Transkei.

22 P: Yes, they did - I remember that.

23 R: And the connection there was that having Harry Majija and his wife, who lived in Gugulethu
24 had their house was one of the ? hundreds of houses that the police had burst into and bashed
25 them all up you know and he had both his forearms broken. And - as suitable - it was some
26 time - not ? after this - he came in - he and his wife came into the Party office and in the
27 course of telling us what had happened to him - he was a Party member, he then said 'You
28 know I think you ought to know where I come from in the Transkei - things are boiling up.'
29 And so it was really to look at that that Pat and Neil went to Inzombo? District to Baziya

1 Location to see - they took the Majijas and the ? and all the ? really what ? started. I think
2 that must have been - I don't know what - I don't remember off hand now - something like
3 June '60 - shortly after the ..

4 P: After the Emergency.

5 R: Ja. because we had the Party Congress in Cape Town - on the 31st May...one...

6 P: Yes.

7 R: At the very end of that - you know - join the Emergency - you were instant inside. When did
8 you come out?

9 P: Beginning of July I think.

10 R: Ja, that's right. Things began to come right.. Could we have a break?

11 N: Ja.

12 N: Randolph, just one thing for the transcription, the Baziya?

13 R: BAZIYA.

14 N: Baziya.

15 R: ? near Umtata, or in the Ixgobo? District.

16 N: Okay..

17 R: Just quickly about the - back to the Namibian connection. Um, from then on - it wasn't that
18 they only worked in the Liberal Party things, we had a very good branch going I think it was
19 in Maitland or somewhere like that - Eddie Daniels sort of ran, and we used to - and they
20 spoke to folks at meetings, they brought you know - obviously - it was good experience for
21 them too, they ? the best of the pack were really an excellent bunch but they also wanted us
22 to help them in Namibia. And their big strength was the most of the canning workers are in
23 Luderitz or stay in places like that so we got involved in a number - with Pat too - printing
24 leaflets - sort of strike leaflets - all sorts of stuff and partly - through - as it was said - so, you
25 know, as we got closer, they said what we need in Namibia is a thing like the Liberal Party
26 and because there are Whites who were - who need. We know there are Whites who are sort
27 of sympathetic, but we need to bring them out and get them into like a mixed Party, but first
28 of all we've got to identify them. So it was - I then was asked to go - I've forgotten quite
29 how it came about but - to go up to Windhoek and sort of try and set this up and that was in

1 early '61, the whole thing in Namibia took off in December '59, with - we're talking - that
 2 was just four months before Sharpeville. They had their own thing in the old location where
 3 we took I think eleven people were shot - that huge thing - I think some of them were
 4 frightfully badly injured by police gunfire and not only police - the layout - old Snyman was
 5 firing away at the crowd, for no - absolutely no good reason to put them down. I mean they
 6 really were very very primitive so the whole ? thing was politically very hot. So I went up
 7 in early '61 and had a very short - I think - I don't think I was even there to - perhaps ten
 8 days, or a fortnight and but met ah, people like Hans Berger, who later became Chief Justice
 9 and was the chap who ushered in the new constitution and the independence thing in ? in
 10 1990 - as a great - and he was a barrister, a wealthy chap and Namibian and - but he got a
 11 little group together - I can remember some of them well. And - but as far as any - forming
 12 any group was concerned, absolutely out you know - they were all scared to death of stepping
 13 out of line. Namibia was a completely different kettle of fish from South Africa in that way
 14 there was no sort of mood that you could - I mean even in the Free State you could be a Jean
 15 van Riet, but you couldn't have operated in Namibia, they would have made life impossible
 16 for him you know. And so that failed, but it did cement things with SWAPO and also with
 17 SWAMU, we weren't actually, you know we weren't wedded to SWAPO. SWAPO started
 18 I think in - in about February, March 1960, changed the name from OPO to SWAPO, it
 19 always had had a few non-Ovambo members so it was a real - they always remained a largely
 20 Ovambo party.

21 N: It still is.

22 R: And so we got involved with - also with the SWAMU people who were the Kandalale
 23 Koznigwize? Do you remember him? Was he Imkonto ?

24 N: Yes, he was...

25 R: He did his first degree in Fort Hare. Kos Ingwesi? And this outstanding guy called
 26 Gadyerewe? Who's actually now in Namibia, although SWAMU - now a Namibian
 27 Ambassador to the EEC in Brussels, and they were the Herero kind of aristocrats and the
 28 Ovambos were looked on as these distant peasant like creatures who were far north - you
 29 know - who turned out to be much brighter. ??? No, I mean that's a wild generalisation but

1 in fact SWAPO really did make the running politically. The US Movement people to some
2 extent influenced, the SWAPO people, not Kozawezi but some of them were rather
3 influenced by the kind of Unity Movement line, you know, not Trotskyism, as such, but
4 councils of perfection an anybody who didn't absolutely agree on every subject was out in
5 outer darkness. So they never really got anywhere...but um...

6 N: Because what, there was some Unity Movement influence...

7 R: There was a politic called Phiri Abrahams, Dr Abrahams, who married a wealthy - into a
8 very well-known family called Schilling, I think they are Rehoboth people. Orphalene ?
9 Schilling and her sister Nora, who is now called Madnerson Dora Chase? - they were very
10 articulate and powerful sort of people - they were always - I mean when it came to the
11 elections in 1989, the first independent elections in Namihia they still put up political
12 candidates and got absolutely no votes at all, you know, so obviously, except I presume
13 they're ancient families. They just didn't believe in that sort of thing you know - just sort
14 of expected everybody to stand up and vote. But nevertheless some of them have quite high
15 positions, but Argalee married Abrahams who was sort of a Cape Town University interlude
16 product and extremely voluble, pouring out with the stuff you know - always anti-SWAPO
17 and this affected the SWAPO to some extent - but that's what - rather a big diversion. As
18 I say it - they did establish a link with the Liberal Party - I wasn't the on - I mean John Claire
19 went up in '63 I think it was - or maybe '64, as a journalist and followed up a lot of these
20 things but because of him having these Namibians in cape Town, you know, we kept closely.
21 The other fellow I should of mentioned of course, who was in Cape Town before these
22 fellows was Ja Toyvo, and Ja Toyvo was a tremendously taken up by the Simonses, Jack and
23 Ray, and Thambo, who you know said, 'use our house.' They used to go away a bit and sort
24 of live there and we'd be on ?? first Buffalo Peoples' Congress which was the forerunner
25 of the OPO. That was SWAPO were sort of formed in their house I would think by Ja Toyvo
26 and a few others from Namibia but then Ja Toyvo was kicked out - was sort of deported back
27 to Ovamboland, under guard - it crumbled away. I actually met him - just - Chief Luthuli
28 came to Cape Town and it was a tremendously successful visit - absolutely took the place by
29 storm. And we had a wonderful meeting at Rondebosch Town Hall..

- 1 N: When was that do you know?
- 2 R: '59? I think it is in May '59, because the feeling is that that was why they had decided to ban
3 him despite the bad publicity because he was getting across to Whites you know. But I
4 remember Joan Carter introducing me to Ja Toyvo at that meeting and I saw and I actually
5 went to Cape Town Station to see him off when he was sent back to Ovambo land, but that
6 wasn't - and he was very well disposed towards us, but his links really were with the old CP
7 people - in fact that is - I assume - why Vorster always used to say that 'SWAPO was
8 conceived in sin.' Old cowardice ? 'was conceived in sin' and it was the Buntings and the
9 Camersons and people like that that had given birth to it - but it's not strictly true because
10 that - the old PC thing that it had come to an end that it restarted as the OPO with us. Not
11 that I begrudge them the - because I mean the Simonses, you know.. Incidentally they never
12 belonged to the COD I discovered the other day which was quite a ...
- 13 N: Did they not?
- 14 R: No, didn't approve of something about it. But nevertheless he was looked on as the great
15 theoretician - South African Marxism, Leninism...
- 16 N: He always subscribed to Reality and when it was threatened with closing down, wrote to say
17 that it wouldn't close down..
- 18 R: Oh did he? Ja. I remember he said to me when I was - you know when I first sat close to
19 meet him but he spoke to us at a meeting you know - one of those little ? shower meetings
20 we used to have, you know for the faithful - some - about the Pass Laws or something and
21 he was introduced - he read my - he had read something I had written in the newspaper and
22 he said 'Are you Duncan's right hand man? Or I hope I can say Left Hand man.'
- 23 N: Just before leaving that thing you did stand at one stage yourself, did you not?
- 24 R: In '61, ja.
- 25 N: '61, was it?
- 26 R: Ja. '61 - the general election.
- 27 N: Why was there a General Election in '61? Because it's every four years after it became a
28 republic?
- 29 R: It must have been yes..

- 1 P: There was one that was brought forward.
- 2 R: And there was a referendum - the Republic Referendum - weren't there two - anyway that's
3 history. Ja, so it was - I know that the UP, one of our problems was the UP machine was
4 absolutely you know in wonderful shape because they had pulled the whole vote out twice
5 and so they had everybody on tap you know -in the invited constituency - but ja. that was the
6 '61 General Election which of course was a tremendous problem in the Cape because I mean
7 Pat and 'Contact' and quite a lot of leading radical members were dead against standing
8 because of - and I mean Pat and I really fell out over that and it wasn't I think until - because
9 then he disappeared from Lesotho anyway - but I did see him - the time you weren't there -
10 I mean round about those - that same period - and I think there was a sort of - duel - we never
11 quite made it up until we met - I can't remember now...but no, the feeling was that we
12 shouldn't you know take part in elections..
- 13 N: And you were that time ? was - on what kind of argument?
- 14 R: It was our job, we just had to...
- 15 N: Just had to keep..
- 16 R: ...ja you had - putting our case provided you did it in a totally non-racial platform and our
17 campaign slogan was 'one man, one vote.' Which is now of course itself politically
18 incorrect, one person, one vote - it was on the posters and everything and ...
- 19 N: The constituency was what?
- 20 R: Constantia.
- 21 N: Constantia.
- 22 R: City Ward Seven?
- 23 N: Constantia is wine country.
- 24 R: It wasn't then? Nor was it on the Postnet.
- 25 N: Wasn't it?
- 26 R: No, but - no one of the nice things we had was Heather Russell was a member of the
27 Wynberg - I think he had a - what do you call it - one of those - you know ? serious and so
28 at one stage Molly Russell and Diana - the elder - Jill, worked in my campaign office every
29 day - I mean she was an absolute mainstay of the whole thing and even, you know Mrs

1 Russel put in quite a few hours, not ? but of course had by then joined the Progs later
2 themselves. But it was quite - it was alright at that election - but ...you would ? sort of
3 Russel, the ? wards were absolutely terrified of losing... yes. He was a professional
4 politician, ? he did the job? Not that there was much of a salary in those days, but he
5 represented various interests which I could name and as I said, the election day, the day of
6 casting the vote, I rather enjoyed all the ? and humiliating in one way because we got so few
7 votes - we got 1 115. Well even one thousand and fifteen people voting for one man one
8 vote wasn't too bad and - but - he was very affable and relaxed, and you know, very
9 professional about - well obviously it was his life you know. Crazy? But, ja - but then - that
10 was the last election - I don't think we ever stood again - '60 - I don't think so.

11 N: I can't recall now.

12 P: I don't remember.. I think it would sort of be round there..

13 R: Ja, ja.

14 N: And from that point to in a sense switching your line would be ?

15 R: The bombs?

16 N: I mean that's quite a ...

17 R: That's another story which will take too long...The thing was we were still - as Du Toit I
18 suggests, to say that the ARM consisted of embittered disillusioned Liberals - we then know
19 that - it was a fixed thing that we were not to damage the Liberal Party - those Liberals - nor
20 the non-Liberals - well they had no capacity to do so, and we were in course with the
21 majority anyway? But the thing was we wanted to use our activity - not in a dramatic way
22 so that it would be instant - you know - (the tape goes blank)

23
24 End of First Side.

25
26 Second Side.

27
28 R: Very much was speed and all that and of course.

29 N: I'm going to disappear - you just carry on...

1 R: So, and I was perfectly willing and had something to say and I think we had just arrived on
2 the scene and I did quite a lot of speaking and my family didn't arrive for about several
3 weeks - sort of late September - and um - so it was easily done, but you know one realised
4 that we weren't on the same wavelength with the anti-apartheid movement entirely, partly
5 because - I'm slightly exaggerating into thinking - because that's how I've seen them. They
6 were very ? with ANC backing and on the left and while there were English Liberals, people
7 like Jeremy Thorpe and Tim Beaumont and others - who were you know stalwarts - to Tom
8 Kellock, who were stalwarts of the ARM Committees, the actual day to day running was
9 done by Ethel De Kazer? Who was the sister of Jack Tarshay ? she had been a ? CO - not
10 Communist person who was imprisoned and a good friend - I met her in England - I met in
11 South Africa on a visit - and, um, but you know they didn't want to keep this thing. So we
12 first of all had our own sort of separate little sphere which was the New African Office - we
13 had the 'New African' magazine which we had started in East London, and Cape Town - in
14 the beginning of '62. A mysterious American Trust, called the Farfield Foundation. Before
15 I arrive - I think before we left South Africa - you said Neville had gone ahead - you
16 remember? Neville left and got this job at ? and I think it was - something - some approach
17 to him that they sent money to keep - to get the New African magazine scene going and then
18 - so when we came - when I came to England rather, I was asked to go to the offices in Paris -
19 it was the Congress for Cultural Freedom - which was intensely respectable - you know it
20 had funded 'Encounter' and various magazines and things and I had a friend who was there -
21 called John Hunter and I knew of Ivan Kalz - who was a great friend of Uys Krige oddly
22 enough - they'd published ? or something or another and they were very nice and helpful and
23 they never on any occasion said 'we think you should say this, or you shouldn't say that.'
24 But then after about a year, this began to happen and I would be summoned to meet John
25 Hunt, arriving from Paris, with one of the top people from Geneva, where they have - their
26 European head office was and they rather started this thing about 'why do you have all this
27 smear..' we had a series called Africa and Marxism - which had - we put both sides - I
28 remember Martin Brogassy? Writing a piece. 'Is it necessary to have all this?' You know -
29 that - you know enough you're probably been got at and then - but only because we knew

1 they were there for what they thought was cultural freedom which meant excluding ? you
 2 know ? stuff and it was years later of course that the sad ? broke that they were the CIA. And
 3 suddenly other people who had taken their shilling without realizing that nobody could ?
 4 everybody else much - and - but nevertheless for that period '64, '65, second half - no we
 5 didn't start - we started the beginning of '65 with the English, London-based 'New African.'
 6 So that gave us a little world, a little hase of our own in central London and where we
 7 remained on good terms with the anti-apartheid movement, you know - they had their own
 8 show and didn't particularly want liberals. The other bases,, the other things of course were
 9 the international friends in aid fund which was still called DNA and ? Christian Action,
 10 before it had become the very great thing with several million pound turnover that it became
 11 later. And again, the - our friends from the left had already moved in - not altogether - not
 12 that there had been no reporting - because John Lang worked there - he virtually plotted his
 13 copy book and in his resourceful and clever way he got quite a lot going, he also made a -
 14 created a few problems. So um and then I think as I say Canon Collins had this curious
 15 capacity, although you know, Christian Minister, to work closely with the communists and
 16 he made no bones about it - well I mean that's not strictly true - the line tended to be 'oh of
 17 course, x isn't really a communist you know - if you were in South Africa you'd be just the
 18 same.' You know that sort of thing hut over the years of course, IDAF, International
 19 Development and Aid Fund ? became a South African Communist Party dominated
 20 stronghold run by the Collinses - you know - but with all the actual day to day work. I mean
 21 Bill Collins had raised the money and Diana particularly did a great deal of the organising.
 22 They were in the hands of the left as was anti-apartheid movement. The only other
 23 organisation that exiles could grab and take ? was the Africa Bureau which was Michael
 24 Scott. But it was in decline by the time I arrived. Michael Scott got involved with the laager
 25 you remember in India?

26 P: Yes..

27 R: And got it banned in Southern Africa for a while. I remember when he came back into the
 28 scene - the first time I met him must have been about I don't know '66, '67 something like
 29 that or '68 but he'd I think his moment had passed actually - he was never a force. He used

1 to go to the UN and so on and prepare papers and things but he didn't really have a base - I
 2 think the African Bureau it actually - it carried on for quite a number of years - people like
 3 Colin Legum and so on and David Aster - I assume - was the funding. You know James
 4 Symonds who made Tom Kellogg - they were very and they used to have useful meetings
 5 and they were much - they liked the New African magazine - they weren't overtly South
 6 African, they tried to broaden the thing whereas the anti-apartheid movement, although it got
 7 involved with Zimbabwe a lot was very much a South African show. So the next step in the
 8 journey was that in '68 the big SWAPO case came on in Pretoria - do you remember - the
 9 SWAPO - Ja Toyvo and all these SWAPO - not that he had been at the ? ? guerillas that
 10 they'd captured in the north were put on trial in Pretoria and there was a very very serious
 11 intention from all accounts for the death penalty and the anti-apartheid movement, we
 12 thought didn't really exert themselves enough on this, and I remember going to the AA office
 13 and finding they had sort of pigeon holes with leaflets and pamphlets on all those thing as
 14 and all they had on Namibia was a sort of wretched cyclostyled thing with the years and date
 15 and so on? and it just wasn't - it didn't have anybody considerate enough to push it - so
 16 partly that was the excuse we had. Also I remember Diana Russel - arriving from America
 17 at that time and meeting a group of liberals and absolutely sailing into us - these people are
 18 gonna hang - you've got to get cracking and so on.

19 N: Was she the younger?

20 R: She was David's twin.. Ja, very political feminist lady ? and so that certainly you know - we
 21 needed a bit of a push but I had had a little contact - I hadn't - no you say Kuhongwa had
 22 been te SWAPO leader sort of outside. The Vice-President too did most of the running
 23 around at that stage. I never knew - and it wasn't I think until Sam Nujoma made - no, sorry
 24 - another part - how I got involved probably was that before I arrived, I think in '63, Segal
 25 put on this tremendous sanctions conference in London - it was really a big show - he was
 26 a great impresario you know and he got this - all sorts of famous British people - apartheid
 27 was still a very fashionable and popular - I don't mean fashionable in the sort of vogueish
 28 sense, but I mean - fashionable - you know - a popular cause. ? he was notorious and in the
 29 60's, or was it - no I think it was probably '65 he did the same thing on Namibia and held a

1 conference in the Oxford Union. Chairman of the Conference was Olov Palmer who was
2 then quite a junior minister but already making his name as a ? world spokesman - ?
3 advocate - and it was going - it was a glamorous affair with all sorts of - some excellent
4 Americans came - I think they were ? and I went to that and had the same cold shoulder thing
5 from the left but I knew some of the Namibians from my - oh, I should have said - by '65 I
6 had actually gone to Tanzania, gone to Dares Salaam, and I think on 'New African' business,
7 funded by the Farfield Foundation and had met the SWAPO people there - some of them
8 who were at this conference - and also Shapango, whom I'd known - he was a sort of leader
9 whom I'd known so well in Cape Town and so this got a sort of - a few of us got together.
10 Then in '69, Sam Nujoma left for the first time after that and then he came on federal visits
11 and I used to have to sort of you know shepherd him around London and sort of try and make
12 arrangements for him and appointments - awful job you know - well, I always try to work in
13 the office and explain lengthy absences and colleagues would be baffled about the whole
14 operation. Then in '69 he got - they decided they'd open an office for SWAPO and Peter
15 Katchalble then came - whom I met when he was a junior representative in Daresalaam when
16 I was ? up there in '65. So '66, '65 I went to Ghana and so then we got the SWAPO office
17 going and that gave me and therefore and quite a few others a sort of base outside the anti-
18 apartheid left dominated anti-apartheid ? world. But that ? having - really not having much
19 for us and so really from then on my exiled activity was almost solely on Namibia and where
20 we had a function you know and some use. I was still, I always remained a member of AA
21 and used to go to - I worked as a - I remember one year - it may have been in the early 70's
22 they had a frightfully important Russian coming from Moscow to do their annual general
23 meeting and the Secretary of that - ? he invited me and Mike Terry? people ? of the British
24 Communist Party, was terribly anxious this had to go well and I remember he'd - I was
25 known as the only member of the ? Support Committee who wore a suit - they were all sort
26 of jeans and t-shirt type people and he said 'I must go to this thing at ? and tell them exactly
27 what I had to say.' And obviously putting on a show for the Russians who presumably
28 coughed up some of the funds. But I didn't mind going along with that sort of - as long as -
29 but in terms of keeping us - we didn't want to have a breach with them - they didn't do much

1 for us - nor did we want them to take us over. The Anti-Apartheid Movement. Here was one
 2 of the strong things about in favour of SWAPO in my book was that they always kept the
 3 strong liberal faction in tact? - well unlike the ANC - and - yea, they weren't willing to all
 4 the other congresses, they weren't willing just to become a part of the sort of popular front -
 5 you know CP double net, as it were? while keeping in with them as well - so that - that. No,
 6 as far as the other - as far as the Liberals were concerned it was regrettable that we never got
 7 going as a group - Marion Friedmann, I suppose was the centre when I got there. And I am
 8 devoted to Marion - she and I were great friends - but she was a highly disorganised person -
 9 ? piece of paper - and ? beyond her - so things didn't work as they should but you know she
 10 was effective when - on occasions when pushed into taking action. And she was also a good
 11 link with a very, very important person which was Mr ES Reddy, you know, the chap. who
 12 started this ? for all that long period - the Special Committee on Apartheid at the UN and
 13 very nice - I think he's been on a visit here and been accepted - and did he speak to the
 14 parliament or something? I don't know but he was a tremendous figure to all of us really old
 15 Reddy and he never took sides, he knew that they had the ball at their feet - the ANC and
 16 affiliates but he would always encourage us to talk to him and see him and so on. And
 17 Marion and Allen - I had first met him at their house and so they were good at that and of
 18 course then the Party came to an end in '68, in the National Liberals' Club and although I
 19 wasn't strictly speaking - I had left the Liberal Party of course in the beginning of '63 when
 20 I got banned - I mean what had formally deceased membership - obviously if I'd have
 21 remained. So it wasn't an issue about resigning over the ARM, but and I had quite a few -
 22 we were - were you ? term ? '68? Did you come to the ?

23 N: No... in '67...

24 R: Oh, did you yes...?

25 N: ...going around my house...

26 R: You were probably at - in Clandersthal?

27 N: Mmm..

28 R: And so the Party wound up and so any chance of having a sort of - continuing organisation -
 29 ended there although in a way it would have been the time to have started one here ...

- 1 N: There wouldn't have been people this end who might have got into trouble by the things we
2 said and did...?
- 3 R: But it didn't come about - do you think there are any other sort of main centres of activity
4 other than those I've mentioned?
- 5 N: Well, yes, the British Labour, the British Liberal Party...
- 6 R: I found them very disappointing actually other than individuals like the ones I've mentioned -
7 Jeremy Thorpe of course who later fell from grace and Jim Bermont - other - I remember
8 being told when I got to England that the chap to go for was Eric Lubback, he was the real
9 brains of the show - you know - he was an Orpington man - do you remember - won that
10 Orpington by-election?
- 11 P: Yes..
- 12 R: back in the early '60s - a thousand Tories on the sort of - and like so many times before and
13 after, the liberals thought their moment had come - but of course it hadn't - he's now called
14 Lord Avebury. Such a - inherited peerage and takes up issues, but he's never really become
15 a national figure. But I didn't find the locals I mean - you know - I didn't find them
16 particularly, terribly interested in us at all. The Labour Party really more so - but again the
17 anti-apartheid movement did its best to alienate the Labour Party. A famous occasion when
18 Ronald Segore and I can't remember who the others were - had a meeting in the House of
19 Commons Committee Room and they had all these people like Barbara Castle and Harold
20 Wilson - Harold Wilson I think ceased when he became Prime Minister in '64. But a lot of
21 very good MPS - Labour MPs and they did the old trick of going - making the meeting go
22 on and on 'till they were all left and then - then voting them all off the committee - daft - on
23 some disagreement you know. Just as well that they had no public meaning - unless you
24 have a strong British Labour ? you would ?...
- 25 N: Now which Committee was that?
- 26 R: No, that was the anti-apartheid one - I've forgotten what the issue was - they wanted the anti-
27 apartheid to take a certain line of these British MPs were prepared to go along with it and so
28 they voted them off. I think there was a huge row and some of them came back on - but, no,
29 no it was never the same - but for years and years and years they had never- they had this

1 chap Bob Hughes, who - Scottish - a Glasgow MP who was president I think and one or two
 2 other chaps - a chap called Dick Cable? - I know that was all quite good. Oddly enough one
 3 of the - no, sorry this is on Namibia - but they did have one or two MPs but nobody
 4 substantial after that period. But I mean you know if you wanted to go to the - if you wanted
 5 to go and get a fuss made about something you usually went to the Labour party rather than
 6 liberal.

7 N: What happened to Segal?

8 R: Segal, after the Oxford thing, he rather subsided, he wrote a very large number of books, I
 9 mean not a large number, a number of very large books, books about - he wrote that book
 10 about India which ended up - it's had the classic line that what Indian needs - is not less
 11 communism but more - and things like that which didn't go down frightfully well. And his
 12 most recent book is I think all about the African Diaspora and it's all about the Africans
 13 round the world and so - but it tells...

14 N: ?

15 R: Oh yes, he came back to Cape Town and told the Coloureds they were all wrong voting for
 16 the NATS, probably won a few more votes for the NATS that time - great way for rubbing
 17 people up the wrong way. No the last time Ronald sort of re-appeared was after Ruth First's
 18 death and they had a public meeting in the homestead and which he chaired, I think, or main
 19 speaker to start the trust. I would have gone because I had a great admiration for Ruth but
 20 I couldn't - somebody sent a message of ?

21 P: Turn it off...

22 R: Not the exile, before that...

23 P: No. It's partly exile and the ...

24 R: Because I want to add a little ? thing that I've left out..

25 P: All right well you do that first.

26 R: No, um - are we on?

27 N: Yes.

28 R: Now the one thing that happened before I got to England was that - a lot of things had
 29 happened in the exile world from the days of Patrick van Rensburg and Jonathon Paton had

1 chaired the committee was ? I mean there's been various attempts to keep it a London end
 2 of the Liberal Party going but I think the most vigorous thing I was aware of was I think it
 3 may have been '63. Just before I was in London - not too long before I arrived. Which was
 4 that Bill Hoffenberg? and Merle Lipton rounded a terrific sort of campaign - and got - and
 5 saw a lot of people - I - reading these papers recently it saw that - I think it was the '62 or
 6 maybe the '63 Party Congress - it would have been the '63 because I was at the '62 one that
 7 there was actually a resolution that there should be - while not committing the Party in any
 8 way, there should be more effort made in - to set up an organisation in Britain to you know -
 9 promote South African Liberalism and the rest of it and you know that was sort of Bill's
 10 mandate I think and so he and Merle had done quite a lot and very - really quite effective.
 11 Talking to all sorts of VIPs and so you know - that - but then in fact it wasn't long after I got
 12 there that a friend called Richard Kershaw, who edited that thing known as the 'Blue Sheet -
 13 Africa Confidential' - you know originally called Africa 1960. you remember - run by this
 14 little group of kind of Tories Africa fans and Richard was editing it and he was actually a
 15 Labour Party person and he told me that Piet Cilliers and some - one or two other important
 16 NATS had been on a visit and - just the time I arrived, just after I arrived I think, and had one
 17 of the things in there - on their agenda - was to smash any idea that there was a Liberal party
 18 in South Africa of any account whatever - because there was quite a - Bill and Mel had been -
 19 and it was - it had got around you know - had been doing this and he attended one of these
 20 briefings where apparently they just sort of tore this whole thing to tatters you know - it was
 21 just - which was tough but it was nice that they bothered in a way because we were in very
 22 bad shape in '64, '65. So that was - that is the thing that I don't think so - we aborted that
 23 little ?

24 N: But you wanted to go on - I'm interested to know what happened in the Congress Movement
 25 where during the period when - before they all became ANC, because the ANC held out
 26 against? NSAC for a long time..

27 R: I do know the story - I know that the Congress - the South - the - the SADC, which became
 28 the CPC - the Coloured Peoples'' Congress, the leadership - except for Reg September - they
 29 only body this side and a fellow called can't remember his name - very important theoretician

1 and all that - he's actually never been - he only joined in exile - never come back to me -
 2 Cardiff Marney and others all joined the PAC and it was some fierce disagreement there.
 3 Barney's remained in the .. Barney was a very brilliant and central figure in Cape Town
 4 politics and he's remained with PAC although I don't think he does much in public. And so
 5 that bit of it wasted away. I don't think there was a COD in exile - I don't think they existed
 6 in exile and when the change came I couldn't say but when I arrived - you know - when
 7 Norman and I were involved in the ARM days. the Congress Alliance still upheld - well
 8 that's not strictly rue - I mean it was from the launching of Inkonto at the end of '61 that they
 9 no longer upheld non-violence as an absolute basic principle - which they always have done
 10 and it was still - I mean it was still deeply, you know, subject of considerable disapprobation
 11 to be involved in this kind of thing and in England as well it did not - you know - I don't
 12 think, it wasn't until - I mean the sort - I suppose the glamour side of guerilla - urban guerilla
 13 stuff came with Reggies' de Bruin and all these people - do you remember that - Gavara
 14 became a sort of cult figure? You know - you'd have a poster - the students would have a
 15 picture of him on the wall and so on.

16 N: Yes, well as the '60s proceed..

17 R: Later on in the '60s, but at that stage it was still deeply, not liked at all if one considered any
 18 kind of figure taking this course and so the ANC, the Congress in England still maintained
 19 rather a sort of - they didn't make a great noise about supporting Inkontu at all - it wasn't
 20 even Inkonto for God's sake - they were all in prison weren't they - from '60 - from '60?
 21 Well Nelson was first taken n '62 - but not for that - the Rivonia Trial was '64. And so you
 22 know they didn't really have a - there wasn't really a Congress Alliance public image
 23 promoting anything in particular I think in the '60s that I can recall and when - I remember
 24 it wasn't until 1980 - I remember going to Exeter and staying a night with this man Mervin
 25 Lennin - who had been an old - very staunch CP family from Port Elizabeth - the other half
 26 of Liberals..

27 N: Yes, what year is that?

28 R: ? Perrerr, were the Liberals. And of course his father, no Ruby was his father I think - I can't
 29 remember - they were tremendous communists - dedicated and I remember old Mervin

1 saying 'Oh I don't have any problems about these issues - I just pick up the 'phone and I ring
 2 up the ANC and I sat "hello comrade, what's's the line?" and he tells me.' Obviously an
 3 incredible admission? slightly ? this story. Oh, I don't know - 'I never bother - they just tell
 4 me what the line is.' He was then - and he kept saying 'I am a member of the African
 5 National Congress.' You know - he as delighted with himself for being a member of the
 6 ANC and I remember being quite surprised because - that was the reason in 1980 that I
 7 hadn't really caught on that you could be a - you know people were in exile - you were a
 8 member of the anti-apartheid movement or you worked for one of their ? Defence fund or
 9 you were just a private citizen - you know talking about Whites and Coloureds. There wasn't
 10 actually much of an Indian presence in Britain that I can recall. Of course Dr Dadoo was
 11 there - he was there a lot - yea. Anyway, he lived, but he was in England a lot and I suppose
 12 he was the Indian - the South African Indian Congress and Joseph and others.

13 N: I suppose one of the - what's his name - ? is it?

14 R: Oh, yes, that's right - Aziz Pahad - yea the Perhard? Brothers, yes, yes - I often used to see
 15 them around - yes, yes, there were - I don't know what they called themselves. I suppose
 16 they did speak for the South African Indian Congress. But as I say the CPC had virtually
 17 disappeared, the COD didn't seem to have an existence in Britain so at some point it must
 18 have been agreed by some ANC body that they did - be members. I think I told you the story
 19 about how when Denis Brutus - who left Robben Island and came to England - a carload of
 20 his CPC friends - like his mother Wilfred, and others - drove up to Heathrow to meet him
 21 and the first thing they said to him when they got together - the ? was 'Dennis, the Stalinists
 22 are in power.' Not meaning Ted Heath of course, but you know - sorry I think I've told you
 23 that story before. But - so that was I think their - that was the time that they broke away and -
 24 so the Congress Alliance didn't exist as a force.

25 N: When you say it broke away you mean...

26 R: They joined the PAC.

27 N: PAC..

28 R: Dennis didn't but most of them did. Kenny Jordaan - that was the name I couldn't remember
 29 who ? always thought so highly of... I think that about wraps it up?

- 1 P: Yes - can you think of anything else Norman?
- 2 N: Did, you know just on the Liberal remnant as it were - when Neville went into the ILO did
3 he - did he have special responsibility for South Africa or any of those issues?
- 4 R: Not for quite a long time - no, ...
- 5 N: Did he end up? Or?
- 6 R: Then he took the place of a man whose name escapes me - a Dutch - from Holland who was
7 a very capable chap and very much part of the ANC, the CP - the South African CP world
8 and Neville took this - this chap didn't want to give up the job and he was sort of moved
9 sideways to get Neville - got the job and then Neville had years and years of attack from
10 these people - they tried to block him at every point you know - they'd send word to
11 conferences that he was going to represent the IRA - so saying that he'd be denounced from
12 the floor and all this sort of stuff. The excuse they used I think was the IUEF paper. Neville
13 was the chap who introduced Lance ? Ericsson? Who, look - from the ? sort of proteges and
14 things - national student world and he became AMNESTY's national university exchange
15 fund which of course harboured the frightful Craig Williamson and in - and Craig
16 Williamson - amongst with all the other documents that he stole and leaked was this sort of
17 slush fund arrangement that Leslie and Neville had worked out for the IUEF, which every
18 big group like that has to have - you know - what do you do with money you've never ?
- 19 ? Will you settle please?
- 20 P: Yes, I think we better...
- 21 R: So, es I just mention that's a point - I mean - how you - if you fell out with them or if they
22 decided you weren't the desired article they could give you a very bad time and he had years
23 and years of victimization which all suddenly stopped at a certain point. I think you know
24 when things began to change here. He really had a bad time. Luckily he was helped - he had
25 an extraordinary boss who was actually from Gabon - the sort of - perhaps I shouldn't be
26 recording all this - a - you know - a Black French-speaking ILO figure who had been some
27 kind of Minister in the Gabon Government and was - typical of these ? Franco-phone
28 Africans one doesn't know about - he was also a terribly important person in Free Masonry
29 in France - you know he was Grand High master or something. And he stuck by Neville -

1 just used to swat all these people - they really got through some really ugly scenes actually -
 2 could have - there was a threat at the annual general meeting or whatever they call it - the big
 3 annual thing of the ILO when there was a threat that he was going to be opposed of his job
 4 or something and..

5 N: You see - what we have here I mean is a straight forward perpetuation of the kind of "
 6 communist ..I mean - they've perpetuated here.

7 R: One mistake - just to end it - I think I personally made when I came to England and we got
 8 the 'New African' started. I'd say this to Neville if he were here - I wish he was - but I think
 9 I was wrongly advised by him that we had to count our - that - ? power - you know the start
 10 of this red Power game - you've got to say nice things about them - you've got to sort of say
 11 they're okay and so on - you can't oppose them. And I mean what did we have to lose -
 12 certainly our Farfield Foundation grant would have lasted longer - probably if we had - but
 13 we didn't know and instead of which I did - sort of subscribe - well the 'New African' did
 14 subscribe to the big ANC myth. Anyway, that happened....

15 P: Excuse me...

16 N: Well, shall we?

17 P: Looks as though that's it?

18 N: I mean, are you - what I'd love you know is for you to say a little bit more about this - the
 19 Namibian thing after you kind of tailed it off - but there probably isn't time ...or enough tape
 20 with...

21 R: About the Liberal party connection?

22 N: No. I mean you - Randolph Vigne and ...

23 R: Oh. in England you mean?

24 N: ... yes. and ..your connection with you know Namibia. you know...

25 R: Yes, yea, no my connection more was - as a sort of a dinosaur figure who was preserved by
 26 SWAPO while generations of sort of mad you know kind of left wing zealots joined it and
 27 how communists incidentally joined the committee and so on but they always backed me to
 28 stay there you know..

29 N: The Coloureds, the SWAPO people?

- 1 R: Yea, hut then I had one or two friends - but all too often I mean I felt completely at odds and
2 I just didn't know how their minds were working?
- 3 N: And these were - this was English men, basically.
- 4 R: Mostly - there were South Africans too - particularly the South Africans were as strange - the
5 ones who sort of came - that sort of - what was that organisation called - the people who
6 didn't join the army?
- 7 P: 'The End Conscription Campaign' ?
- 8 R: Yea, those sort of people - there was an English - actually a chap called Anderson - he wasn't
9 actually a member - I've forgotten his name - he was a sort of leader I think but they
10 published a magazine called 'War resistor.'
- 11 P: Oh yes, I think - then Jimmy Corrigan must have put - Reality on the mailing list.
- 12 R: Oh, right, ja, ja - ja - no they were - one or two of them were quite good actually - on it - no
13 we used to get the odd South African one who turned out to be a policeman or a sort of agent
14 - but actually that was rather good because the anti-apartheid movement - I suppose I
15 shouldn't be recording all this - the anti-apartheid movement had sort of pushed him onto our
16 committee - I didn't want him and then we managed to get rid of him and he went back to
17 the anti-apartheid movement then was found - so it wasn't our mistake - ? it was damaging.
- 18 N: The - I mean the - this clearly is not the whole of it but there was some point in having Lord
19 Vigne on their committee...
- 20 R: Oh, yes, oh the man who wore a suit - ja, ja, no.
- 21 N: I must say at a recent celebration or something of that sort - when you were there - the
22 newspaper carried the story that Lord Vigne was there..
- 23 R: Well, they - what it - no it was a local newspaper - the fifth anniversary of independence last
24 year they carried a list of VIPs who were attending which Lord Randolph Vigne was - I
25 wasn't - I didn't attend anyway - hut that was newspaper licence. No I remember at a
26 committee meeting, once when I really felt that I'd had enough and I said 'I don't know -
27 perhaps I've - I ought to - time I retired from this committee.' Or something to that and
28 Brian Wood who was one of those sort of zealots, you know, ran the thing - did all the hard
29 work. Said 'oh, no, no.' he said 'we were talking to Pat Keatley the other day and he said

- 1 which community - which group are you and we started explaining..”Oh he said no you mean
2 Randolph Vigne’s outfit.”” So you know, so I became the sort of indispensable person.
- 3 N: Is Phoebe bringing in the ? um, you know I’m just - anyone - kind of personal curiosity and
4 so did you go into British politics at all - at a local government level - for instance you
5 weren’t - I mean I have that picture in my mind, or just a story about you showing SATSHA
6 around Greenwich or something...
- 7 R: No...
- 8 N: Is that pure fabricational myth?
- 9 R: That? No, no I didn’t have a very - no..
- 10 N: You didn’t get involved in the local?
- 11 R: I voted, actually on - I have the only Party I ever joined on and that was the ? DP which
12 didn’t last very long - I never even joined the British Liberal party - I used to vote Liberal -
13 um I think always... sort of sentimental way really. No, I never, didn’t take part in British
14 politics at all.
- 15 N: Ja, ja . If one you know looks back - to those years I mean you’ve spoken about the Farfield
16 Funding ? huh, if as it were the thing being you know the events that we won with kind of
17 hind sight and so on - you know - is there any way that the Communist party role - you know
18 in supporting the ANC and at some stage, I presume, the - you know - splitting up with funds
19 and so forth from this overdue and all the rest of it that that could have been either derailed
20 or you know that’s an alternative - world thing - I mean at the time ..
- 21 R: Good question...well...I mean at the time I would have said ‘Yes there is a way.’ But as you
22 say, with hind sight, I doubt if there was a way - it was seemed kind of fore ordained - I mean
23 I think Canon Collins was an enormously important figure in this from ‘54 when he came
24 to South Africa - he decided to back this one and I think Oliver Tambo was frightfully
25 important to get exactly the sort of image they wanted - outside and they were - and the
26 Communist Party were extremely hard working and clever and they had people like Rita
27 Hodgson and for example, Phyllis Altman - well it’s the other way round - ? really did an
28 excellent job you know and we didn’t have that sort of thing - we were - you know too much
29 sort of part-timers really and this is PAC. I mean I’d - well I mean I backed the PAC in those

1 early years.

2 P: Oh did you?

3 R: Oh, ja.. Yes, I did and I mean having had this very close link in Cape Town and getting to
4 know some of them in London and all the rest of it and I was their sort of intermediary with
5 the anti-apartheid - with what's its name - Defence and Aid at one stage Matthew Newala
6 was the local representative - but there were some absolutely - some self-destructive - I mean
7 it was hopeless - they did everything possible to wreck that ...Thanks...

8 The tape is switched off...

9

10 The tape is switched on again and Joy Leslie-Smith ('L') tests the recorder first.

11

12 L: You see how the lights are flashing...

13 R: If we'd ? this we would have been alright

14 L: Yes, you would have been fine you see - as long as those green lights are flashing -(the tape
15 is switched off again.)

16

17 There is nothing more until a little later... but the tape is switched off again.

18

19 (Someone is testing the tape)....it is then switched off again.

20

21 There is nothing more on this side of the tape.