

P.O. Box 71,
Hilton, 3245.

8th March, 1980.

Miss U.S. Dhupelis,
P.O. Box 2001,
DURBAN.

PC16/5/3/2/13

Dear Miss Dhupelis,

I am sorry it has taken me so long to reply to your letter. I am not very sure whether I am going to be very helpful to you.

To the best of my recollection your grandfather joined the Liberal Party of South Africa at about the time of its 1955 Natal Provincial Congress in Pietermaritzburg. He and Patrick Duncan joined at about the same time and I am fairly certain that Pat joined at that Congress. They were certainly both at it because we have a picture hanging in our house here, of the two of them and some others of us, taken during that Congress.

Manilal made some good friends in the Liberal Party but, of course, by the time he joined it, he was coming to the end of his life, so he was not a very active member. In any case, although he was a member of the Liberal Party and the Indian Congress he was, I think, a person who liked to do things in his own way, rather than to be bound by the constraints of a particular political programme. He was also, of course, a person of exceptionally high principles, and he would not deviate from them just to suit what an organisation to which he might belong might consider its best interests at a particular moment. There was no conflict of this sort during his Liberal Party membership but I suppose such conflicts might have arisen over how to implement policy had the Party existed and had he been a member of it in earlier days. I am just speculating here. I don't know what his relationship with the NIC was latterly but I have a feeling that he perhaps thought it was not living up to the principles upon which his father had founded it. I don't know if I am right about that. As far as the Liberal Party was concerned I think its main attractions for him were its non-racial character, its commitment to non-violence and possibly also the fact that no Communist Party members belonged to it.

Manilal would not have been popular with the White Community because of what he stood for, but he was admired by some, even if not a great many. As far as the African community is concerned, I would have thought he was very highly regarded. I am sure some sections of the Indian community regarded him as an embarrassment, others as a hero --- and what his precise relationship with the NIC was I think you'll have to discover from sources close to it.

Yours sincerely,

Act. Manu