

PC170/111111
R. Vigne
Archives
Personal

135 Park West, London, W.2

26 January 1965

Dear Malcolm,

Here are 400 words for Quoodle about the South African courts and Mrs Price's abuse. I do hope you can use it. I have not ~~referred to her attack on the Liberal Party~~ dealt with her attack on the Liberal Party: you will probably get a letter from the Party in South Africa about this, which I very much hope you will publish. It is a scandalous lie to say that I, Harris and others "were joining the Party, advocating a course of violence and sabotage, and gradually gaining much control of the Party's policies," at the time Professor Price left the Party. He faded out about 1958 or 1959, two or three years before Harris had even joined the Party. "Violence and sabotage" were never advocated at all; though they were forced on people like myself by the course of events ~~since~~ after which made Sharpeville in 1960 ~~whereafter~~ constitutional action against white baasskap ~~was~~ futile (as she herself admitted in her first letter). The Party was ~~never~~ ^{most} involved in this ^{and quietly} in any way, and Liberals involved in the ARM gradually/withdrew from the Party in 1962-4. (I resigned my vice-chairmanship in January 1963 and my membership when I was banned in March.) If Price foresaw this he never said so, nor did any of the other unnamed founder-members who she says also resigned. It was those who stayed in the Party who tried unavailingly to work for our goals constitutionally after Price and others had ~~deserted~~ given up. I was a parliamentary candidate in the 1961 General Election, and was helped by colleagues who later like me realized the inevitability of violence. John Harris was trying to

X

fight apartheid through sport, and worked for nonracial sport in South Africa until he too was banned and his organisation banned.

The Harris story she tells about his asking the old lady to "watch this suitcase for me for a few minutes" I believe he denied in court.

One final point I left out for reasons of space concerned the fact that the judiciary has been compromised by the action of one of its members in giving his blessing to the 90-day clause when Vorster showed it to him in draft form and asked for his comments. I attach the scrapped passage for your interest.

If you could possibly find space for a piece on the South African courts, I would be very pleased to do it. It is not topical, other than for its relevance to the Braam Fischer case which is still on. The story is really that the courts do not matter very much in SA as the Nats have given such wide discretionary powers ~~uncontrolled~~ outside the courts and have whittled away the citizen's rights in a multitude of ways over which the courts now have no say at all.

I do hope you can publish the stuff herewith. Will telephone this morning - Tuesday.

Yours,