

Subject: Baruch's muddle

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To: "Magnus Gunther" <magnus@intranet.ca>

Good to hear from you. I'd gathered you were doing this piece. I hate to think what the rest of the publication will be like. At least it won't *all* be Congress/CP myths.

I'm astonished that the story of that first meeting in JOh'burg had slipped past you. I've just been through those two transcripts you sent me to edit (1000 apologies - I've several times started to go through them but find them very difficult to annotate. Will find a way.) No mention of that meeting. I've looked up Baruch's p 303. What a muddle!

The sequence of events, as I recall them, was

1. Lang, having recruited me in Cape Town, sent me a ticket to meet him in Joh'burg. He arranged that Alec Cox would meet me at Jan Smuts, which he did (I didn't know him) and drove me to a flat Lang had rented where he and Cox and I and Baruch (our first meeting) met with three or four of Lang's old Freedom Radio/new Horticulturalist-type friends (I'm pretty sure Lang brought the Horticulturalists into being too). We had a long discussion but it very soon became clear that they were interested only in giving the Nats a bloody nose and putting up a last fight for the English-speaking, British Empire connection. That may sound daft today but don't forget that the Empire or Commonwealth, British Crown and Union Jack were what white English-speaking SA was still trying to preserve, though 1961 (when this meeting took place) saw the end of it, with the loss of the Republican referendum and the departure from the Commonwealth. These chaps were ex-servicemen, had a lot of skills and access to dynamite. We were all very friendly but parted with a pretty clear understanding that we would go our separate ways, with Lang as the only liaison, should this be needed.

I stayed the night at Alex's in Parktown and we remained very good friends from then on. He or his mother had a small farm at Botrivier and we next met there when Eddie and I drove out to see him. This was the first time he and Eddie had met. Eddie certainly was not at the Joh'burg flat meeting. Nor was Rhoda.

Baruch's sneers about Alex as the 'Scarlet Pimpernel' were uncalled for. As I think I said in the transcribed tape recording, Alex had gone round SA trying to start an insurrection, with a crazy lack of security, which terrified some of the people he approached. He was no cloak-and-dagger poseur.

Do you want me to wrestle with the dates of the Bermans' and Lang's departure? Myrtle will surely do this for you.[]

Thanks for briefing me about D Lavin. It was quite a gutsy thing to do and Baruch is probably wrong about George Lavin having 'government contracts'. Deborah said she was at Wits when she gave evidence for Baruch and others.

I'd be more than happy to read your chapter before you send it in, if this would help.

Eddie is due here in late August. He is to lunch with Adrian.

All best to you both.

Randolph

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