



J.F. So what kind of name is Geswint?

P.G. You see, Geswint comes from - I believe my - my great grandfather he was a German fellow, you know (Laugh) - that's on my father's side now, and that - that's where the name comes from because it's German, you see - he settled in Humansdorp - Humansdorp is a little - it's a town like say, 80KM outside P.E., you know - that's how i managed to get the surname - in fact there's a hell of a controversy in the family also with regards to the surname.

J.F. Why?

P.G. Some people even my brothers of my father and my cousins they spell it differently, you know - some insist there must be a e where the i is, you see - others insist no, it must be d t at the end - and others wants - wants a s - no, a c h after the s, you know - people most probably (.....) on that (Laugh)

J.F. So tell me when you were born and where?

P.G. In Port Elizabeth, '63.

J.F. In what area of Port Elizabeth?

P.G. It's down - it's a little place - it's called Calvandale, you know.

J.F. Calvandale?

P.G. Calvandale - but I grew up in (.....) specifically like after the Group Areas Act like, you see - that's called - it's called Schauderville and....

J.F. What's that?

P.G. Schauderville.

J.F. How do you spell that?

P.G. S c h a u d e r v i l l e - that's where I grew up say, until - until I was 13 years old when we moved to Uitenhage for some - for a year, and then back to P.E. in a new suburb called Chytt - Chatty,

J.F. And that's where you've been living since?

P.G. Mmm, ja, since '78.

J.F. And what was your family background like - what did your parents do and what were they like?

P.G. Basically they - basically working class like, you know, my family I mean - both my mother and father - father left school at about say, Standard Seven, went into a shoe factory like - my mother left school when she was in Standard Six like, you know - like both of them had to leave school because of conditions like, you know, so 14 in families and things like that - so that's basically (.....) - they started off like, you know, for my mother and father like, you know.

J.F. And so what work did they do?

P.G. Now - do you mean now?

J.F. Ja.

P.G. Well, my father is working for this transport company - I mean bus transport company, Tranmes - P.E. Tranmes, you know - he's been there for about ten years now, apart from working for Ford, and summer (somer) a number of shoe factories like, you know, as a - first a machine operator, now he's in the (.....) now as yet, (.....)

My mother has been doing quite a number of luxury (?) jobs like, you know, also - also working in a shoe factory at some stage - but say the last couple of years mainly working at curtaining places like, you know, doing curtains and things like that.

J.F. And what is their politics like - as you were growing up what did they kind of tell you?

P.G. My father's the type of person, you know, he's very - he's the type of interior (?) type of person like, you know, he won't come out clearly and - and say like what he wants like, you know, but I think he supports like say, my type of say attitudes and views like, you know -

My mother however, she's a little automatic (?) you know, but I think that's just (.....) of like that - I also stipulate (?) and say (.....) trying to protect like - like me, you see, or some - like being involved, knowing the dangers of being involved with them - so she's very negative like, you know, trying to keep me away from things like that - especially things -

Especially like since '81 I mean we had a hell of a lot of clashes, like my mother and I in particular like, you know, about say, my involvement like, you know - I don't think they - they reactionaries, you know, or supporters of government or even the Labour Party or - but that's the basic problem like with them, you see - they very conservative -

(This chap is very difficult to make out - tape is very noisy - hissing etc., background noise - I may not be able to get it word for word.)

My mother in fact - I mean they were around in '55, you know, with the Congress of the People, you know, the campaigning, you know - and they know about these things and it's not like they ignorant like, you know - and in fact she - she kept that information away from me that she knew about things like, you know, because her aunt was one of the volunteers in that campaign like, you know, in '55 in Port Elizabeth and, you know, going round from ourselves - things like that -

But I think as - as time went along and they saw the banning of the movements like, you know, in 19 - 1960 and subsequent like the lull period like, you know - they also tend to fall into this whole line of - of the government being superior like, you know, and very submissive like, you know, and drawn into like - into themselves like, you know, saying that it's no use fighting this government like, you know, because they always so - they superior, you know, and - and they said this a dangerous field that you entering, you know, you just going to have like trouble and you can get killed like, you know -

So that is basically the problems with - especially my mother like, you know - my father however I mean he's just a silent quiet guy, you know - he never goes on with me or never disagrees with me, you see, so ja, you can say he's more supportative like, you know, with what I'm doing in fact like, you know.

J.F. (Tape off) - so your parents were - you explained where they were politically - what about their understanding of their Coloured identity - what was that like?

P.G. I mean - I think I mean they - they quite - really think of themselves as, you know, separate group also like, you know, Coloureds like I mean, you know - that's the picture I get like, you know, all along - even when raising like - like certain like issues like, you know, you find them making statements like you know, the Coloureds are say they backward type of people like, you know -

These questions of unity like, you know, and uniting them in the (.....) - how can I say - all along all these years, you know, the Coloureds have been having known to be like say, very conservative and like - like they sell-outs like I mean, you know - that's one of the reasons why my mother like in fact say I mean what's the point of struggling like, you know, for these Coloured people like, you know, I mean -

They don't know anything about - about say, the struggle and - and they always like selling out like, you know, I mean you know, but I mean realising that I mean you know I mean - I mean but she still sees herself I think basically - specially my mother like, you know, she's the main spokesperson like (Laugh) in the family like, you know - like the thing (.....) they still see themselves as Coloureds like you know, as a separate group like you know, separate entity, and I think we trying to move away from - like say, I'm trying to get them to move from that type of thinking like, you know, but they see themselves mostly like or mainly as - as a separate entity Coloured group like, you know, as.....

J.F. So would she use the word sell-outs - would she say Coloureds are selling out?

P.G. Mmm, mmm - ja, I mean - I mean every time like, you know, when we have say - say a fight like, you know, about say my involvement like, you know, she says : No, man, there's no point of of - of struggling for these Coloureds like, you know - and that's how she's - and she can't really go beyond that like, you know, or think like beyond that or through (?) that, you know.

J.F. But if Coloureds are sell-outs then what's she - what does she see herself as?

P.G. No, but I mean she sees herself as Coloured also like, you know, and in saying that I mean you know, that Coloureds are sell-outs, you know - this is a quite interesting thing (Laugh) you know, that I.....

J.F. It's quite what?

P.G. It's quite interesting point like, you know, or thing like to note and.

J.F. And what about when you were growing up - do you remember how you saw yourself, and when you were young what did it mean to you to be Coloured - did you feel like you're part of the Coloured community - what did that mean?

P.G. Like say, being - say, having grown up I mean in a - these Coloured townships like, you know, I mean I mean your whole thinking like, you know, developed like like that I mean that you are a separate type of person like, you know, and you - you type of pick

P.G. .... up and like develop that mentality I mean, you know, of being like something - something different from the Africans and say, the whites I mean, you know, and I mean after (.....) say, very late stage in my life I mean so far I mean, you know, say to about (?) 17, 18 years old I mean - that was still the attitude like, you know, of - of me like, you know, that I was like something separate like, you know, different like, you know, Coloured like, you know, and I ended (?) that same type of mentality also like, you know -

It was only afterwards when I became involved I mean I could say, move beyond that type of say, thinking, you know....

J.F. How did you move beyond it - what - were there any experiences or anything in particular that happened to you or was it any kind of anything you read or somebody explained to you?

P.G. (.....) when I was 18 I mean that was the time of - that was in 1980 like, you know, 17, 18 - that was the time with the 1980 school boycotts like, you know, and it's only then when - when these type of questions were thrown at - at - at you, you see - at me - and it's only then then I started thinking it's more - it's more over like (?) - it's more really that event 1980 that took place like, you know, that it - so it made me like say, think much -

For the first time I was actually made to think like, you know, about all these questions like, you know.

J.F. And can you tell me at all more specifically it made you think - were you part of the boycotts or was your school talking about it or how did you think about it?

P.G. Yes, interesting thing, you know - at first well, for long say, parts of the 1980 boycotts I was completely anti - anti this whole thing, you know, because I didn't understand I mean, you know, why the Coloured students I mean were actually also boycotting, you know, because they didn't have any problems like, you know - I mean that is the way I saw it like at that stage, you know -

Also the influences of - of my other friends (?) like (.....) you know - my one uncle in particular he was at - he was teaching me at this school like, you know, and they very conservative like, you know, and - and he was trying to keep us away from - from - from getting to the mass meetings like and things like that, you know, so for a long part of the boycott like I was - I wasn't actually part of this whole thing, you know -

Also was a prefect at school at that time, you know, and one day I walked in - I was walking in town and I met this African fellow, you see, and he called - he called me like, you know, asking what these whole prefects are standing (?) and things like that, because that - that was the time when these type of questions like came up like, you know, prefects (.....) and the role of the prefects at school I mean and the way they are seen like as being superior to - to other students at school like, you know, doing the dirty work of say, the principals and say, the authorities like, you know, at school like, you know I mean trying and keeping maintaining discipline at school and - and the whole thing work uniform like, you know, the prefects well, they had to enforce I mean or try and, you know, enforce this whole thing of people wearing like the correct uniform at times like, you know -

So it's actually then I mean then I really - then it's questions like, you know, about the whole prefect system like, you know, questions that like and I couldn't give answers like, you know I mean really (.....) because that was the first time I was actually made to think about these things, the boycott I mean ....

P.G. .... like, you know, trying to make me see that this thing wasn't just an African issue like, you know, it affects the African masses like, you know, but the whole education system like where there's no Coloured and Indians I mean, or Africans or whites I mean, it was unequal like and - and the whole fact that the education was - was separate also like, you know -

All those questions were thrown at me like and it's then actually, you know, that made me realise that I mustn't just see this thing in terms of a say, Coloured issue like, you know, but it goes beyond them - it affects us all like, you know, in the country like, you know - you know, these divisions that's been created say, between the Coloureds and the African people and the Indian and the whites I mean, you know, I think to a large extent, especially in the Coloured community has been very effective, you know, into the Coloured people realising I mean or developed in that consciousness of being like a separate like that type of (.....) because you find that the Coloured people more privileged like, you know, than the African people -

Economically they were - they were much more better off than say, the African population, the African people, and then again the Indians were a little bit more privileged than say, the Coloureds in fact like, you know - those whole point of - of co-opting the people like, you know, in that way, having more privileges than - than say, the - the Africans I mean -

Somehow sense that you've got more to lose like, you know, like, you know, and.....

J.F. And this African guy called you from across the street - did you know a lot of African people in P.E.....

P.G. Ja.

J.F. You did?

P.G. Ja - I mean I wasn't I mean say, racist like, you know - even my mother and father they not racist I mean, you know - I mean they - they - they would like I mean - the way they think like also like I mean all along I mean as I've grown up I mean we've had say, African girls working at - at our place like, you know, as maids like, you know, but even their attitude towards them and the way they instructed us also to - to behave like towards say, these people working for us I mean was something that these people are humans like, you know, I mean, you know, and so I was never racist like, you know, in - in like - as I grew up and the practices - even my mother and father like, you know, they - they've never been racist like, you know - we've always -

They've always had African friends even like, you know, in the townships I mean you know - they had a hell of a lot of relationships with - with African people in fact like, you know - so it wasn't a question of not getting into touch with these people - it's just that not thinking about like like the issues like, you know, that's - and the issues being raised like, you know - that's the only problem like, you know, in - or say, having kept us away from - from - from looking like at our situation like, you know.

J.F. And when you say you weren't racist what would other Coloured peoples attitudes be - what do you mean by racist attitude on the part of Coloureds - what was their point of view?

P.G. You find many Coloureds I mean that's racist like, you know, I mean thinking like of Africans being inferior to them like, you know - I mean still today you find a lot of people like, you know, talking about this kaffir like, you know, and those type of things like, you know - many people like (.....) even the working class people, middle class I mean, say, Coloured middle class people I mean - many have still got that mentality, you know.

J.F. And what is the view of Indians - were there many Indians in the Eastern Cape.....

P.G. In Port Elizabeth there's a small community like, you know, of Indians like, you know, and (.....) the town they live in is Malaba, you know, Malaba, and I think I mean they - they haven't got more serious problems like, you know, than we have, you know, because many of those people are - are say, these traders like, you know, and - and say, merchant (Laugh) merchant class like type of people -

But there's say, the working class, Indian working class as a - especially in P.E. now, you know, Durban is the place where you find a lot of like say (.....) class people, but in P.E., you see, this is I mean more and more people like - like those working class areas like growing like, you know, and - and the type of housing and things like that, because in the past you always used to see these posh houses like in - in Malaba, you know, but you see more of these like sub-economical housing schemes like being erected like, you know -

But I think they - they even much - even more problematic like, you know, and more racist like in fact, you know, and they are sometimes more prejudiced like than was Coloureds in fact like I mean, you know, in - and.....

J.F. How so - have you experienced it or what - what do you mean?

P.G. Ja, I mean they - they - they think of themselves as being say, because (Laugh) of the privileged position that they (.....) I mean of being say, they are more superior than Coloureds like, you know, because they - they - they've got more privileges in fact like, you know, than the Coloured people like, you know -

Not more privilege in the sense that as far as they say (?) they say they are particle (?) of South Africa I mean - in fact every - everyone whether you black now I mean, if you black - but because of the economic position like, you know I mean and that's more or less what it's all about.

J.F. And in terms of a conservative or racist kind of point of view how did they, the Coloureds see the Indians?

P.G. Ja, I know of I mean you find a lot of Coloured people like, you know, that - that can't I mean come face to face with Indians like, you know - there's - it's - I mean if (Laugh) - it's the same as - as sometimes Coloureds like attitudes towards Africans like, you know, you find the same attitudes someone towards - towards Indians like, you know - they always - they always see Indians as - as - as exploiting them also like, you know, like because of they they have the shops and every - or most of them have the shops (?) like, you know, where there's the whole thing of Koelies I mean that they're being called like, you know - these Koelies exploiting us like, you know, because they have the shops and they are - I mean the Coloureds have this thing that the Koelies are very - how can I say - what's the word now - this urge to - to - just to make money ....

P.G. .... like you know I mean, and then that's - that's the Coloureds say, view of what Indians is like, you know - for instance, like when I was still say, early on when I used to go to the schools and things like that you find the Indian chaps coming to - to course (?) and like, you know, to this place, Ali Bama (Alabama) Hotel for their schools like, you know, where - the same place where we went like - and then these - when these Indian guys who were trying to get to (two) Coloured girls I mean they used - people were - they say the Coloured are Coloured folks and we were very few that like, you know I mean saying oh, those people just want to exploit our Coloured girls like, you know, these Indians -

And (Laugh) (.....)

J.F. So did you when you started getting to be more aware - did you then have more contacts of a political nature with Africans as well as Indians or did the one come before the other or did you still mainly organise in the Coloured community or - just tell me how it went from the time that you saw that guy and discussed the prefect system - did you then get involved in the boycott or what happened?

P.G. Ja, after that I mean I got involved in the boycott like, you know, and supported the whole thing by - not really understanding fully I mean still I mean - I was still very - it was still very - very much unclear to me like, you know - but then I moved to - to Cape Town for university like - I was studying at university and it's actually there where my real involvement started like, you know - it wasn't in P.E. - it was actually in Cape Town....

J.F. At UWC?

P.G. Yes, like, you know - and the Coloureds say that the Coloureds being more militant also in Cape Town like, you know I mean, with - but it - ja, in Cape Town basically where I really started becoming involved like when I started (?) but that was also only after I went into a Coloured area in Bellville - it was really - was almost like a sub-economic housing scheme, you know, but the conditions of the people there really shocked me like, you know, as the first time I actually saw people living - I mean Coloured people living in such bad conditions like, you know, and living there it was just the final straw that really moved me like, you know, towards so it - urging me to try and develop a better understanding of our society like, you know, in a South Africa like, you know, how the apartheid like system like - and affects the people like, you know -

So that was Bell I mean that really moved me like completely like, you know - the boycotts were to some extent like played a part in - like in shifting say - say my stance - but that - that place in Bellville like, you know, really moved me, you see - and then that was say, over two - two months after I've been at Bush at UWC, you see - then....

J.F. How did you get to Bellville - did somebody take you - why did you go?

P.G. Ja, I mean you know, that time I mean you - where students were I mean I mean pushes along history (?) like of - of say, like say, political struggle like, you know, and there's always - and even now I mean the strong presence of say - say, politically say, active people like, you know, on campus - and say, the first time, the first two weeks at Bush you had these groups of - of say, activists like, you know - I was at the hostel - just coming to the hostels ...

P.G. .... like, you know, organising there - just finding out who the new guys are, what are they like I mean, what he's thinking - and especially like they could come much more easy to us because of the 1980 boycotts I mean I (?) raised in 1981, you see I mean so that was the like basic entry point like or starting point like, you know, getting to - to know us like, you know, what our thinking, you know -

So you had these groups of - of students organising us like, you know, having discussions with us like every night just to find out I mean whether there's any possibility of recruiting us like, you know, into some of these organisations on campus - then you had this community action - action group on campus like, you know, most probably (?) on the hostels that -

These are groups that say, organise new students into different groups like sending off to different parts of - of Cape Town like Elsie's River, Bellville, Valhalla Park is a new township that was - that was built just a few years before 1980, you see - and then they introduced us to - to community organisations like, you know, organising in the community.....

J.F. And so did they have success in recruiting you?

P.G. Ja, ja, no, definitely, but it didn't need much to convince me like, you know I mean - most of us were very - even say, after 1980 like most of the students like that were say, recruiting in say, say, the first - the batch that I was recruited with, and were still a bit apprehensive like, you know - we didn't really want to get involved like as we knew (new) go to places like and see actually like, you know, what - what the Group Areas Act and other things like do to people like, you know -

I mean that really convinced a lot of us, you know, and they didn't need a lot of explaining to me afterwards I mean that - and then I developed this urge to find out things for myself like, you know, reading up like, you know, on say, the history - history and things like that, you see, the South African people like, you know, development of the society and things like that - so they didn't have to push me like - like or try and - and convince me what things any more like, you know, that was - it was coming (?) from my - for my own part like, you know, afterwards.

J.F. And so then you got involved at UWC?

P.G. Mmm.

J.F. And was there anything - what about your understanding of non racialism - would you have considered yourself non racial - did you - were you BC?

P.G. Ja, no, I was one of say, many people that had - didn't experience the BC era in fact like, you know - O.K., you heard these things about BC like, you know, but then I didn't understand anything like, you know - I didn't even think about BC at that time also, you know, so I mean I grew up like completely like - I started off like in this whole non racial like - like say - say school like, you know, the political training I got like, you know, the - because the people at Bush at South (?) they were quite clear on - on the whole non racial say, issue then like, you know I mean - so say, the political training I received I mean afterwards I mean were just like - like completely like in the non racial fold (?) like, you know, the non racial say - say movement like, you know I mean, so there was



P.G. .... never in fact any BC like - like say - say, leanings or tendencies like within me, you know - I never had....

J.F. What do you mean the political training you got - when you saw Bellville you didn't feel in any way anti white or - what did - when you say political training was it what people said to you or was it stuff you read?

P.G. Ja, I mean the - the type of literature that you receive from the group say - say on campus like, you know, quite clear I mean - say, since 1979 say, in - in like - especially in Cape Town, you know, you had this shift from - from BC like to - to more progressive like - like say - say, outlook like, you know, the non racial outlook - and the people that was our - that I came into contact with at Bush I mean were already like say - say, trained and - and - and had an understanding of the non racial like say, aspect of our struggle like, you know -

You could say I just feel a bit anti white like, you know I mean at first like, you know, but then it was - it was quickly tackled like, you know, within these groups like, you know - I mean people were really active at - at Bush at that time I mean, you know, organising into groups like, you know, having discussions I mean say, on a weekly basis like, you know, and the material that you read at the time, you know, were explaining quite clearly the nature of South African society, how it developed like into say - say, up till 1948 with the say, apartheid like government coming into power, and then the developments beyond that I mean the - the outlook of the A.N.C. I mean, you know, immediately were - you were say, you say, got training and literature like about the A.N. - not about A.N.C. specifically (?) but - but the outlook of the A.N.C. like, you know.

J.F. And had you been aware of the A.N.C. before that?

P.G. Let me now see - no, I mean like, you know, no - say, when I was at high school, you know, you heard about the A.N.C., but it never really made me to actually find out and think about the A.N.C. like, you know - it was only at Bush I mean you know, that you really became familiar I mean with the - that I became familiar with the - with the organisation, you know, A.N.C. like, you know....

END OF SIDE TWO.

J.F. And can you remember at all what influenced you more specifically if there was any particular - anything you read or - when you said you initially were a bit anti white was there ever any - can you remember at all ever expressing an anti white feeling and having somebody say no, but this is how we see it?

P.G. Look, man, I mean for - for any say, black person in the country like whether you politically aware or not I mean and you not - and you not say - say, politically conscious in any way I mean it's natural to have this anti white say - say, tendencies like, you know, because I mean with the experience I mean with whites .....

P.G. .... I mean like, you know, with this baaskaap mentality like and things like that (?) I mean that's - that naturally make you - makes you anti white like, you know, but - I was thinking of something else also now -...

J.F. I'm just wondering what somebody would have said to you if you'd said ja, but look at this baaskaap mentality, what the BC people say makes sense - or even if you hadn't had a BC - some feeling - I'm just wondering how that evolution developed?

P.G. Ja, I mean look, say I mean - this wasn't like - it was quite clear like, you know I mean - I mean coming to Bush I mean having - still had this - having this anti white, this natural anti white feeling like, you know, and - especially like anti National Party feeling like, you know, but that weren't really translated into - into anything positive like, you know, I mean that anti white feeling or like or getting involved or making you think like, you know, as to why there's choices (?) like that I mean, you know -

I mean I was really I mean a very naive person like, you know, and I didn't think about questions like, you know, because say, my - my early age (?) in development I mean I was never made to think about or to say these - I mean why the whites are - are so in a more powerful position I mean, you know, in the country how they developed into that way -

The history that you learned at school I mean were quite convincing, you know, at some point (Laugh) I mean you know, learning about the - the white history of the country I mean, you know, you - you tended to understand I mean the position of the whites like, you know, and why they - they've - why they were like that, you know, and you didn't really question I mean because it was distorted history like, you know, and -

And you weren't made to think critically like, you know, like in - at school like, you know I mean to think critically, you know - and say, the black history of our country was very much distorted like, you know, and say - say, the history say, of the wars, Shaka, Dingaon those people were murderers like, you know, of Piet Retief, and you really felt sorry for Piet Retief, you know (Laugh) and things like that, you know -

But - I must say I mean the people that say, that we worked with initially like at Bush I mean were very - were very convincing like, you know, and - and made you - made you study like I mean the true history like of - of the country like, you know, exposing the real truth I mean, but also at the same time, you know, like I mean in explaining this whole thing like, you know, when - when looking at say - say, the struggle in our country like the revolution like I mean you soon also realised I mean not to at that stage I mean - I mean it was when I was getting involved (?) not to be - be racist like in your outlook like, you know I mean - I mean that thing - that's how we - I mean that was the type of political training that you received like, you know.....(Tape off)

J.F. I guess what I'm also saying is you came to this awareness - you saw people living in those conditions - did you go through a phase of saying I'm not Coloured, I'm black at all or did the people that - the Cape (.....) immediately tackled that - in terms of did you not have any phase where race was a factor or did they immediately say look, you must see it in class terms.....

P.G. Ja, I mean - I mean you had this whole thing of - of I mean rejecting

P.G. .... this whole thing of being classified as a - as a Coloured like, you know, I mean that was - that was the first thing like I mean the first say - say, part of this whole development like, you know, rejecting this whole classification I mean to Coloured like, you know I mean, actually realising that your roots I mean lies both within (Laugh) within - derived from the white - the white - the whites and the African people like, you know I mean - that's your roots I mean, you know, this mixed - this mixed group like, you know, this Coloureds I mean, you know -

But then again I mean - in training like I mean the - the whole nature of the society was quite clearly explained like, you know, the class position in like say, divisions within the society was explained to you like, you know I mean and you read about these things like, you know, in literature and like, you know -

And say, I mean the - the only position that I - I say, developed into was the whole question of - of seeing the struggle in terms of - of class struggle like, you know I mean - that it I mean the basic say, of point where I started from like, you know, because people were - really worked through these things like, you know, say - say, before my time like, you know, and the people I came into contact with I mean were clearly like say - say, following that line, you know, and - and that's the type of training I got like, you know I mean - I never really was exposed to like say - say the BC outlook like, you know, at any time like, you know -

So it was I mean - it is like a type of - it's a hell of a rapid like say - say - say, development - or not rapid but - but a complete jump like, you know, from this conservative say - say background I mean and thinking that I had like, you know, into (.... ..) say - say, completely different like say - say, outlook like again, you know - I didn't have an intermediary phase (Laugh) like, you know.

J.F. Did they actually - do you remember ever hearing the expression non racialism - was that something that was mentioned - I'm dwelling on non racialism - did you at any stage dwell on non racialism - was that part of the training - did they actually say this is it or did they just divide it into class and capitalism and all that or did they actually have a stage when they said look, the way forward is non racialism?

P.G. Ja, look, man, I mean one realised in that I mean the whole question of them (?) you can't wish the whites away I mean from - from this part of the country like, you know - this question of chasing the boers into the sea like I mean that - that type of like say - say, tendencies that people had like, you know, before like, you know, you became to - you became to realise that I mean the whites I mean despite of say - say, their history like, you know I mean they have played an important part in say, in developing like - like our country like, you know, and they are much - much as - as all the other people say the Africans, the Coloured people that has - that's in the country they just as part of our country like, you know, in our society - many of them -

Many of them are - are born South Africans like, you know, and they're South African like, you know, despite I mean the - their history like, you know, and you can't just wish those people away like, you know I mean, that is I mean our - our - our - I also like - like began to think also like, you know I mean these people played a tremendous role in developing our country into (Laugh) into what it is now like, you know, so I mean that was basically my outlook like, you know, you know - say - say, within the ....

P.G. .... first say - say - immediately like, you know, in the - in the first year of my - my involvement like at campus like, you know I Mean I developed a perspective as well, you know I mean that - that the white people they are - they are just as much South Africans as we are, you know.

J.F. And did in your political training and understanding - was the phrase non racialism mentioned, was the philosophy?

P.G. Ja - ja, I mean that was - that came out quite clearly like, you see, in - in our discussions and things like that I mean the whole aspect of non racialism and in fact that was considered to be a principle like - like, you know, in our struggle like, you know I mean, this whole aspect of non racialism.

J.F. So it was a principle?

P.G. Mmm.

J.F. And did you ever have any trouble with that principle yourself - did you ever feel that it wasn't something you could support?

P.G. Support, mmm - no, no, no, it was I mean I - I immediately like accepted that whole thing like, you know I mean, thinking I mean - you - obviously you were thinking like about - of say - say, not supporting this whole thing like, you know, and - and thinking like really into what it means like, you know, this whole question of non racialism - but in I mean - it became quite clear like to you that that was the only way forward like I mean like, and because you met - you met with (.....) of white people like, you know, in Cape Town -

In P.E. in fact like although there were this anti white feeling you - you got in contact with some - some really nice white people I mean - it's not necessarily politically like - like - like conscious like, you know, or where - but you find that - you found whites that weren't racist like, you know, and - and that is type of things like that makes you realise I mean, you know, that this is the only way like - like ahead like, you know -

That even that you - that you must in fact like try and win the whites over to - to the struggle also like, you know I mean, that - that things became quite clear like, you know, in a short space like of say - say, my political development like, you know.

J.F. And did you ever remember arguing with people who didn't support non racialism - were there people at Bush who said ag, this is nonsense - was there an AZAPO kind of or BC grouping - do you ever remember what you would argue with those people at all?

P.G. Ja, at Bush you - you found some of these people like, you know, arguing say, in that way like, you know, even - even back at home also, you know I mean some of my old friends that I've met have actually like turned to BC like, you know I mean BC like, you know, and you were made to think now I mean and you came into contact with those people and - and had like discussions and arguments like, you know, with them -

But the way you - you presents your arguments were more in terms of say - say, the practicalities of say - say, our struggle like the revolution like forward ahead like, you know I mean, where does this whole philosophy of BC actually lead to like, you know I mean - it doesn't in any way plot I mean say - say, exactly like the way our struggle like - like should develop like, you know, and it - BC never really made me - made sense in terms of that like,

P.G. .... you know, for me like, you know - BC I mean we all realised that BC had an important role like, you know, within - within - in our struggle like, you know, it played a hell of a tremendous role say, especially in the '70's like I mean in trying to - to revive like the whole spirit of resistance like, you know, but it couldn't move beyond that like, you know - that is more how we - we tackled this whole question like, you know, having read history like, you know, realising the - the role of - of - of whites like, you know, with - within our struggle like I mean, and challenging them say, BC orientated people with those - with those like - like aspects like, you know, with people like I mean -

You - you read about people like Helen Joseph, Denis Goldberg - all these other - other - those white people that had to - that were involved in the struggle like, you know, and I mean those people, let's say the BC people couldn't like really explain to me like why the whites should not be like involved in the struggle like, besides I mean the whole question that they - they not part of the oppressed and therefore they shouldn't be like, you know -

But then again the history like - like of our struggle like proved them (?) and pointed out to you that no, you - you do get genuine white people like in a revol - even revolutionary white people like, you know, and things like that - and the whole question of say, even the - the white working class like, you know I mean - the whole question of - of them like came up also - are they always going to be like, you know, in the foreseeable future be part or support I mean the - the white ruling class I mean, you know -

And things are developing like I mean - and only now I mean people are - are seeing that thing, you know, that there's even potential in organising the - the reactionary white working class like, you know, because they are being affected by the economy of the country like, you know, drastically now, you see, and that even we should look at - at organising those people like, you know, and winning them over to the struggle.

J.F. Do you - did you at any time when you were getting this political education and learning at Bush, or afterwards, or before, hear of stuff like the Coloured Peoples Congress or the Unity Movement and some of the historical organisations - even things like the anti CAD and the National Liberation League, some of the historical organisations that the Coloured community's been involved in?

P.G. Well, never before like, you know, but only when - when one started off like - like getting more involved like, you know, and reading up in history like, you know, you came across things like the Coloured Peoples Congress like, you know, and (Laugh) it was funny when I went - when I came from Bush like holidays I asked my mother about this Coloured Peoples Congress, does she know about it - she says yes I mean she knows - she knows about those guys because : Correction : - she knows about those Coloured Peoples Congress - and I asked her why didn't you tell me and, you know, I didn't want to still (?) inject more like - like (Laugh) the things into your mind like, you know -

Ja, but I mean then you came across Coloured Peoples Congress and Unity Movement specifically like, you know, because they saw that some - some presence especially in Cape Town like, you know I mean evidence (?) of them still like being present in Cape Town like, you know - in organising in Bellville you came across these ....

P.G. .... Unity Movement people, you know, who were really problematic like, you know, like you know, in say, to - I mean for us like, you know - you read about anti CAD and all those things like, you know, so I mean you got from where with these organisations also like, you know.

J.F. What was the problem with the Unity Movement for you?

P.G. Ja, was this whole question of - the same thing - same thing about say - say, whites - involve enough whites in the struggle like, you know (?) where you being - having this non racial say - say, outlook like, you know, and more - being more supportative of the A.N.C. position like, you know - you know, this whole (.....) of all whites being liberal like, you know, and - and that is the point like - that's the worry or the concern that they supposedly express like, you know - these people are -

These people will sell out at any time like, you know, and they even informers like, you know, many of them are informers and they cite the example of Craig Williamson in fact if they have (?) - in fact that were member of NUSAS like, you know, for some - for some time, you know, and these con - this destructive role that he actually like played like, and they cited quite like - like examples of this nature -

n But then you tend to - then you counter these arguments by - by saying no, but you get Coloured liberals, you get black liberals I mean, you know, and you get black middle class people I mean and not as - you don't - not all the black people in the country are progressive I mean and they - you find a lot of reactionary black people like, you know, so that is where we (Laugh) we actually like - like tended to say - say, counter these arguments (.....) like, you know.

J.F. And what about the very kind of strict congress position of four nations or separate organising in the - historically the (.....) (.....) was there, but how did you feel about like in Johannesburg the JODAC organisation or the NIC and the TIC?

P.G. Ja, that - that was no - no problem like I mean for - for - for me like, you know to really internalise also the whole question of - of say, the separate development of people like, you know, being classified simply in terms of specific - the specific race like, you know, and - and living in specifically and defined communities like, you know - I mean, you see, you - you tend to see this problem like, you know, of - of having difficulty in organising like the people like across these broad say - say, perspective like of I mean organising Africans and Coloureds into one organisation like, you know, seem to be very, very difficult like, you know -

And even now we still find - we still have the same problem like, you know, in - besides of the trade - even the trade unions you find that (.....) where the Coloureds although they are part of (.....) trade union like, you know, still tend to think of them as being I mean Coloureds like, you know, and being very reactionary sometimes like, you know -

Also like in our political - in our - in the way I mean that we - we organise in - in our area specifically also you realise that there's still - those people are very much backward still like, you know, the Coloured people like, you know, and you have to ....

- P.G. .... organise them as Coloureds like, you know, like you know, in order like - like to inject like progressive content like, you know, into the whole thing.
- J.F. So then when you - did you finish at Bush - did you get a degree?
- P.G. No, no, I left Bush two years ago now in '84 - I still need one course - one final year course I must still do - but I didn't go back - but then (?) you know.
- J.F. Why did you leave?
- P.G. Many things when say, as you become more and more involved like, you know, there's a lot of more (?) say, responsibilities like as being - being placed on your shoulders - more a question of - of say, your involvement being hampered like, you know, whilst one is studying in fact like, you know, and.....
- J.F. Your political.....
- P.G. Ja, and my living in Port Elizabeth and seeing that things were developing like say, quite rapidly there like, you know, and significantly in our areas like, you know, I really felt I wanted to be back like, you know, in - in Port Elizabeth like, you know, rather than being in Cape Town like, you know.
- J.F. So you went back in?
- P.G. 1985 I started off in P.E. again I mean.
- J.F. And what did you do?
- P.G. Well, I just slotted into like the structures that were set up like, you know, that (.....) over the time the Youth Organisations trying to - to start I mean in my specific area where I live in P.E. there's no like - like structure as there weren't structures yet, you know, so trying to set up structures like, you know, youth organisations within our area, you know -
- That was the prime motivation like for me not going back to - to - prime reason not going back to Bush again in '85, you know, although I failed this one subject like, you know, and realising that I have to probably at some stage complete the course, but I think the political say, responsibilities like, you know, was the over-riding factor like, you know, in my decision not to go back, ja.
- J.F. So did you succeed in setting up some structures?
- P.G. Ja, I mean - although it was very difficult like, you know I mean because - but the climate that was created after the - the anti election campaign of '84 like, you know, really opened up a lot of possibilities like, you know - that's the way like we see - I in fact saw it also like, you know, that the people have been organising with - within our areas like on the anti election like like campaign, so the possibility of finding people like, you know, that have been say, sufficiently politicised like, you know, with that campaign with - with the - the prospects (?) were quite good like, you know - in fact we did in fact manage to find quite a lot of say, Coloured chaps like I mean and people in our area like, you know, that - who were willing to come into organisation ....

P.G. .... like, you know, and we have set up structure like, you know, in our area (?) like with a group of people.

J.F. And what about a job - what work did you do?

P.G. Ja, no, I - I started teaching then when I came to - to - to Port Elizabeth, also with specific like like intention like, you know, of say, the - we had a student organisation it's also developing like within the Coloured areas like, you know, and going to school like, you know, I saw it as assisting like and developing like say, student organisation as well like, you know, within (.....  
.....) -

Being in a position to - to be in touch with a lot of students like every day like, you know, finding out I mean looking round and - for students like, you know, and helping their (these) things - then also the question of organising teachers - that also became important like, you know, especially now it's very crucial like in fact like, you know, and that is where I play say - I'm more active like, you know, in the teachers organisation like that has emerged last year in '80, '85 like, you know.

J.F. Which one is that?

P.G. Eastern Cape Teachers Union - it's mainly a Coloured like organisation like, you know - you have these Unity Movement people within the organisation, and then of course us also like, you know, but it's confined mostly to the Coloured high schools like, you know.

J.F. And your involvement with the church?

P.G. With the church very limited in fact like, you know, besides last year during the EYY campaign - at that time I was quite - quite involved with the - say, the church youth structures like, you know, during - during last year, you know....

J.F. Catholic?

P.G. Ja - and when (?) I went to the Catholic youth immediately when I came from Cape Town I joined the Catholic youth because I mean there I knew a lot of people like within the Catholic youth like, you know, but they were so conservative I moved out, you know, when - instead of working with other youth groups, church youth groups like, you know, like the Moravian (?) and the Lutherans like, you know, because they tend to be more progressive like, you know - so especially (?) with the (.....) International Youth Year campaign I mean we saw it as a - quite an opportunity like, you know, to really get (?) to these people like, you know, organising like around the International Youth Year campaign like, you know -

So a lot of - a lot of my work last year was concentrated on - on say, in that area like, you know, on church youth groups like, you know, especially getting into church youth activity like off the ground like, you know, because you find I mean still this tendency of say, different denominations like, you know, sticking like - sticking together like, you know - you not really coming into contact with other church youth groups like, you know, so that was the type of development that we tried to establish like, you know, or to create like within the area like, you know -

But say, now I've moved say, more out of the church youth scene like, you know, and mainly concentrating on building the youth organisation and - and the teachers organisation in fact, you know.



- J.F. And what was your home language?
- P.G. Afrikaans I mean, ja - but you had this tendency now developing among specially the Coloured people moving away from Afrikaans like, you know, towards say - say, English like, you know - and (Laugh) I found that in my family as well, where the first (?) - we six - six children - the first five were brought up with Afrikaans language and the sixth one they started using English like, you know, into the family like, you know.
- J.F. So does he not speak much Afrikaans, or she, the youngest one?
- P.G. Ja, she's in - at an English school in fact like, you know.
- J.F. And does that - is there a rejection of Afrikaans (.....  
..... background noise) - what is it?
- P.G. In my family I don't think it's that way like, you know, that's many other people like - like see this whole thing like of rejecting Afrikaans like, you know - many people see it that way like, you know, Afrikaans (Laugh) being the language of the oppressor and things like that, you know - but my mother was - I mean apart from speaking Afrikaans at home I mean she's always been say, English speaking like, you know - my father's more Afrikaans speaking than (.....) like, you know, and say that - also my mother she's very much involved in the church structures and things like that I mean, and the basic language there is English like, you know I mean.
- J.F. But what about yourself - do you - would you not speak Afrikaans on principle?
- P.G. No, no, no - no, I've got no problems with Afrikaans (Laugh) in fact - I think it's a beautiful language also - it's not that type of reaction in fact like, you know.
- J.F. And do you think in South Africa in the future that it'll still be around?
- P.G. I think so, most definitely.
- J.F. Just one other thing - what were you telling me initially about your background - about this German grandfather.
- P.G. Well, I don't really think much about him - I just know that - that - that he came from that place I mean - that's where it ended in fact like, you know - I never really felt a need to really go into that like, you know - it wasn't (Laugh) important for me.
- J.F. So - and do you have any knowledge of the different backgrounds historically in your family - whether there was always Coloured or whether it was Malay or African - anything like that?
- P.G. Ja, say, my mother's - my grandmother I mean she's a Malay I mean you know - in fact my father's mother also, you know - my mother's great grandfather he was a French I mean, you know, things like that - O.K., that type of things you - you investigate like, you know, just up to a certain point, not really wanting to really go right back into your say - say, background like, you know - just - but it was just mentioned like, you know, at times - you just ask these questions like, you know.
- J.F. And what does it say in your book of life?

P.G. No, I'm Cape Coloured.

J.F. And is there much Labour Party in your area?

P.G. Right say, up before the anti election campaign I mean they still had a quite strong presence I mean, you know, - I mean people I mean used to think that they were very progressive at one stage like in the Labour Party, you know - in fact if I can remember the elections that were held I mean for the CRC, the Coloured Representative Council, in those times I mean Labour Party were very popular I mean, you know - they had majority support like within our communities like, you know -

And I mean that Labour Party would have : Correction :

And I mean the Labour Party were definitely like say, the dominant like say - say, political force I mean for a long time now I mean until this anti election like thing came on, and significant in P.E. I mean the support has dropped tremendous like - they've only managed about 30 percent support of the people like, you know - that was with the anti election campaign, and even after that I mean I think it's decreased even more like, you know, because (?) there's a big difference between Cape Town and in Port Elizabeth like say, the Labour Party influence like, you know, but that's -

That is still their stronghold like in fact like or the place where they have the strongest base like, you know, is Port Elizabeth like, you know - but I mean my mother and father used to support Labour Party - my whole family and anybody they knew were Labour Party people like, you know, because they were to some extent were progressive at one stage like, you know, but now this whole - how can I say - organising (?) people as Coloureds like, you know, I mean people are shifting like, you know, away from that position like slowly, you know, but it's more over the - the issues as they come in (?) and mistakes Labour Party made like into going into a tricameral parliament knowing that I mean it's going to be a useless exercise and that - that is what people actually made - what made people to shift like away from Labour Party like, you know -

And also they have tried many things like, you know, intervening at some stages like in the community with regards to rent increases - they are involved with the management committees, you know I mean - the Labour Party's (.....) on committees like, you know, and they weren't in any position to - to block I mean the rent - things like rent increases like, you know, and other type of things like, you know - but yet they tried to intervene like, you know, to - to calm people down like, you know, when these issues like came up and they made serious blunders like in doing that like in promising people that they going to do something about this rent increases and have actually - they were living in the boots (?) like, you know -

And people are clearly seeing themselves now - seeing the Labour Party is collaborating I mean with Botha now I mean, you know - you get this type of like - like (.....) like, you know.

J.F. And your parents now, would they support the Labour Party?

P.G. No, no, my parents are completely UDF supporters like, you know.

J.F. And just one last thing - would the young kids that you encounter in the school - are you still teaching?

P.G. Yes, yes.

J.F. Do you find that they're - what is their view in terms of non racialism - do they support it?

P.G. Say, with the young kids that - that type of say - say - say, things haven't developed like yet, you know I mean - you find they are very - very militant many of them like, you know, but I don't think they understand the issues like really - and in fact on a broad level also I mean I think there's a lot of - many people don't understand the whole question of non racialism in fact like, you know I mean -

I think the whole concept of non racialism is more like say, concentrated into - into say, the activists like, you know I mean - say, it's the - the understanding of non racialism and the principle of non racialism is more like concentrated on a activist type of level like, you know - but apart (?) from the more militant say - say, politicised African areas like, you know I mean where the UDF is effective like say - say, organising the areas like I mean and they've injected like this whole question of non racialism like, you know -

But say, in our area still people don't have that - necessarily that understanding like, you know, as say, as we - we have like, you know I mean of the whole question of non racialism like, you know - the kids at school I think they very racist still like, you know, in outlook, anti white like, you know I mean - that is the position in fact like, you know -

But then again their attitudes towards - towards Africans hasn't also developed like, you know, into a progressive like understanding like also like, you know - many of them are (Laugh) are not - many of them I mean take - take part in student boycotts like and things like that, but then they still talk about kaffirs and things like that, you know.....

END OF SIDE ONE.

P.G. And that is the things we trying to - to - to say, educate the - like - like and conscientise the younger students like - like about like - like, you know - but also we don't have the problem of say, BC within our area like, you know I mean - it's like - like say, instilling that - that type of say, attitude into - into our students like, you know, this whole BC idea like, you know, of being - of being anti white like, you know, and - and - and - so the people who organise in our area are basically all say - say, proponents of say, the non racial like say, principle like, you know.

J.F. But I thought you just said that some of them haven't moved....

P.G. Yes, yes I mean they haven't moved yet like, you know I mean but I mean - but as I say, the basic they are being organised around like I mean these - these positions like, you know, but they still got a long way to go in fact like, you know, say, the Coloured

P.G. .... students within our area like, you know.

J.F. Do you think they're moving in that direction?

P.G. Ja, depends like, you know, the - I think it'll depend on - on - on the strength of organisations like, you know - at this stage I wouldn't - are not really very strong like in the Coloured areas in P.E. like, you know, but I mean as I mean we gain say, more and more support I mean, you know, I mean we can say, conscientise people like, you know, politicise them along - along those lines in fact like, you know -

I mean we see like as - almost like the same thing that - the - the students have a basic like, you know, type of say - say, BC outlook like, you know, that students that we find at school now they have a - the basic BC outlook like as that developed like say, in - in say, past years like, you know, almost as a natural development of people like, you know, from a conservative (?) into a BC type of say, outlook into a more progressive like type of thing like, you know.

J.F. Maybe you could just say one thing about the future - how do you see the future South Africa in terms of race?

P.G. Well, I think and - I think that's what we going to always try to ensure like, you know, to uphold this whole principle of non racialism like, you know I mean within our future society I mean - that is going to be a tremendous like say - say, battle I mean that we will have to like fight and - and - and I mean I think that (.....) everyone to create is one completely truly non racial like I mean despite I mean the different like even the African like groups I mean, different ethnic say - say, differences like, you know, and - and there's the question of these puppet homeland like people like, you know, trying to move back towards this say, African - not African but these different strictly like rigid like African or - or - or say, ethnic groups like, you know, instilling that - that type of say - say, consciousness (?) of gaining (getting) to people like, you know I mean, because I think our struggle has - has developed in such a way that people have moved like away from - from strictly defining themselves as say, Xhosa or Zulu like, you know -

But with these problems of say, Gatsha Buthelezi like, you know, really organising people around I mean along those lines, tribalistic lines I mean, you know, but I think the - the - the democratic movement is quite clear on that like, you know, and I think and I'm sure that in the future South Africa that's - that's one struggle that I mean that we going to ensure like, you know, is going to be one like, you know, that we - that we develop into a truly non racial like - like society like, you know -

These questions of minority rights being protected I think that is bullshit I mean, you know, that - that won't be say, I mean the - I mean different races I mean that - that won't be a factor like I think, you know, in a society like, you know, of the future like, you know.

J.F. And why do you say that's bullshit to have minority rights protected?

P.G. No, because I mean we not - how can I say - this whole question of - of - of say, different races like in the country and different like say, ethnic groups like, you know I mean - I don't ....

P.G. .... think the emphasis should be on that - I mean we should respect I mean the different cultural say - say - say backgrounds I mean and.....(Tape off)

END OF INTERVIEW.