

J.F. Where did you grow up?

W.H. I grew up in Pinelands, which is a largely English speaking suburb in Cape Town - very middle class ... and, until I left school, we were very much part of quite a closed Afrikaans community - there were probably about 100 - 150 families in a suburb of probably 10 - 15,000 people.

J.F. Because you felt you needed that....

W.H. It was a very - I never particularly felt that it was a closed community, as such, but all my parents' friends were Afrikaans speaking - all your school mates and so on, and the English people were always fundamentally different.

One of the things I thought about later, is that when I left school I actually had no concept of the Jewish community as such, which is quite a big thing, I think in the English speaking community, but everybody was just so foreign to me that - it was all just - the people out there -

and I could barely speak English - my English was academically quite good, but I could barely string two words together when I left Matric - just because ... I didn't have a single English speaking friend, basically - never spoke English unless we had to in school and in the shops.

J.F. Can you tell me what the stereo-type view you have - one thing I wanted to say was people have been - my only complaint is that sometimes people have been very, very dry and it's just going to read - kind of, my development, but without those stories, and I'm just wondering - did you have a kind of caricatured view - what were those people out there like - that wasn't like you?

W.H. It's difficult as a sort of caricature - they were just like - very different - they were not us, in a way - and there was underlying political differences, obviously,

although, by the time I left school I was probably nearly a prog. supporter

My parents were quite anti-elitist in a lot of ways, and a lot of the fancier kiddies in Pinelands - Afrikaans speaking kiddies - went to the better Afrikaans schools, whereas we just went to the closest one,

and, in a lot of ways, my rebellion was quite elitist, but - I started rebelling in school - Standard 9 - 10 - against Afrikaans values, or what I perceived them to be.

J.F. Which were what - what were you rebelling against?

W.H. Conservative - I mean racism, quite a lot, which I think in a working class school, is much more virulent - most of the kiddies came from Observatory - Woodstock areas and the kids were just much rougher than we were in terms of swearing and sleeping around and taking drugs and all those kinds of things, so there were, like

W.H. a little group of us who felt quite superior in a lot of ways, I think - and that got translated, partly into a political rebellion

when I went to the Army was when I first really met English speaking people, and I don't think I had any big preconceived ideas, and within the Army the Afrikaans stereo-types were a lot worse -

I was in the Transvaal, and most of the people there were Transvaal Afrikaaners who make Cape Town racists look mild! So I ended up, basically, having English speaking friends, because Afrikaans people were just so horrible!

That's where I started to speak English.

J.F. Was there any inferiority complex associated with not speaking perfect English?

W.H. Not much - I mean, I did very well academically at school, so I didn't doubt my academic abilities or so on

and most of the Afrikaans speaking people couldn't speak English at all - at least I knew what the right words were - I just struggled a bit with my "wases" and "weres" and things like that.

J.F. the fact that you weren't as racist and conservative - did that come from your family - from religious values - what were your familys' values?

W.H. My family were ... my parents were rebels in small ways in their families - my mother comes from quite a her father was Moderator of the Dutch - her father was a (.....) 059 - he was Moderator of the Dutch Reform Church in the Free State, and he was on the anti-nationalist wing - there was a big split in the Dutch Reform Church in the '30's, and he was in the sort of anti-new kind of nationalist wing,

and there was very, very bitter fights in the Church at that stage - so my mother always had these kind of memories and that - she was never a down-the-line nationalist, and always brought up on these kind of fights and things, and

this was a sort of perceived bigotry of the Transvaal northern people.

My father's family was probably less explicitly rebellious, but he, himself, got disillusioned with the Nationalists very early as well, and he was more anti-Nationalist

My parents were very much a classical patriarchal family, in a way - my father is a rational man, and my mother's an emotional woman - and my mother will still talk about the Coolies, when she talks about a youth, even though she's now - will vote for the Progressive Party, whereas

my father, once he decided that he's a Liberal, he'll discard all these old values, and have a consistent view

W.F. whereas my mother's view is very much a mixture still, but

one of the most important things that probably changed me is starting Standard 9 & 10 when I got interested in politics, we had really massive fights in our family about politics - we used to sit down at supper table and start talking about politics, and all the children would tackle the parents, and we were in the sort of more Left position -

..... even then - we were probably more Right wing progs, and my parents hadn't quite made the leap - but we used to sit at the supper table and rise hours later pistol fighting (?) 084 - so we had really long political discussions, starting when I was in Matric, and then - especially when I got to Varsity and got involved with

NUSAS and things like that.

J.F. How many generations back in South Africa do your family go?

W.F. I don't know - I think we go back to 1740 or something, so we've got a long history. Our family had one Cape Prime Minister and a sort of Deputy - Smuts' Vice Premier was also a Hofmeyr - they're part of the same lineage - sort of distant cousins of mine - grandfather - second cousins or something.

J.F. What is your father's job?

W.F. He's a mechanical engineer, although the last few years he's also been director of the company that he works for, so he's mostly been doing admin kind of work. He's been working almost his whole life for English speaking companies as well - he is very much against a sort of Afrikaaner Financial Establishment - and the kind of way that power is wielded and manipulated in the

so he identifies quite a lot with those kinds of - with the English kind of values.

J.F. Is he active in the Dutch Reform Church?

W.H. Yes, he is actually - neither of my parents has really pushed us, religiously - one aspect of my Grandfather - we never really knew him because he died just after I was born, but he was never very dogmatic about religion and so on, and we only had to go to church every second week, whereas quite a lot of children had to go morning; afternoon every Sunday, which was a big thing -

and my parents only went, by and large, every second week, as well. Being such a sort of closed community, my father almost inevitably became a deacon at one stage, and then had to go every week, and I think at the moment he's an Elder - not hell of a willingly, but they both do work for the church and so on without

W.F. there's a big ethic in our family that you mustn't go overboard with anything - but with religion particularly.

J.F. your parents - do they vote for the Progressive Federal Party?

W.F. Yes ... part of the product of these long arguments was that they did vote for the progs, starting in 1974 when I was first year Varsity.

Before that there had never really been a choice in Pine-lands, because it was like a very safe U.P.C. - the Progs had stood there once, and they didn't vote - they'd never voted Nationalist - either of them, but they never had a meaningful choice -

they probably would have plumped for the old United Party at that stage.

J.F. What changed you - how did you move - was it a steady progression - and did you remember deciding first the P.F.P. was a good option as opposed to - at school - not thinking about it?

W.H. Well, my first political view, in a way, that I can remember, is thinking - I was a big sports fan in school, and I got I always thought that - my first political thoughts were that we should have a nationalist government, but with a Progs sports policy, which is more or less what we've got now! - or what we had soon afterwards,

but that started changing, and part of it was that we were fed a fairly direct line in school - in history classes and so on, so a lot of the contradictions started coming out, so

at school I probably would have supported the Progs with reservations they were too Leftie for me - in the Army I became more convinced Prog supporter - at my first year Varsity I was really big on the Progs, and I was on the verge of working on their campaigns in the election,

but my inclination at Varsity was always Leftward - my first year at Varsity I always identified with NESUS and Left, but I basically thought they were the same as the Progs, more or less

J.F. When were you born?

W.H. 1954 ... Varsity in 1974. It was just after the big student demonstrations in 1972, around which there were a lot of debates in our house - all us children identified with the poor students who got beaten up and so on,

so I went to ordinary (.....) 147 talks, and Francis Wilson was my hero - big Left Liberal, and he lectured me for some of my courses. Then at the end of my first year - more or less by accident, I started reading a lot of books about the American student Movement in the '60's, so then I discovered that there was

W.F. another Left as well, - the Socialist Left as opposed to the Liberal Left, and I more or less converted myself into (?) 155 to this, and it was a weird kind of process, because I couldn't find anything about South Africa to read,

so I went back to Varsity the next year, with Beatie, my sister, determined to get involved in politics, so we both got involved in NESUS and so on, which by then

J.F. from politics before?

W.H. I hadn't quite - being at Varsity in my first year was quite a strange experience for me - I just had one friend - one person from our school actually went to U.C.T., and I was the only other one, and I didn't really make any close ... well, I made a couple of close friends in my first year, but they were Proggish types - I never got involved with NESUS or NESUS kind of people

J.F. Did you ever think of going to Stellenbosch?

W.H. Never - really. With my parents ... were fairly pragmatic about these things - Stellenbosch was just ridiculous, because I'd have to go to a hostel, so I was always going to go to U.T.C. while we were living in Pinelands.

J.F. ...you'd have to go to a hostel - meaning you could live at home at U.C.T.?

W.H. Yes it's later, when I got heavily involved in politics - my younger brothers did get threatened that they would have to go to Stellenbosch unless they stayed out of politics! - Fairly discreetly, but that was the tone.

..... it was quite a foreign kind of environment, and I was very shy at that time, so I didn't get drawn into any kind of social circle that was involved in student politics -

then, in the beginning of my second year, and also when Beatie was around, and another friend of mine who also came to Varsity with Beatie - and the three of us trooped into NESUS offices, and then got head over heels involved in a whole number of projects,

and gradually discovered Socialism and all that - it was also SUS was, in quite a lot of ways, discovering Socialism at that stage - the 1972 demonstrations and so on had been, quite a lot, based on counter-culture-ish kind of ideas - a lot on the American Student Left from the '60's and so on

.... those kinds of people were the intellectuals - the gurus that people looked up to - people into alienation and the young Marx' and all that, whereas by 1975, when I got involved, there was more rigorous kind of Marxists developing in NESUS.

J.F. What were the 1972 demonstrations about?

W.H. There were some students demonstrating about education on the steps of St. George's Cathedral, and they got beaten up, and then there were massive boycotts and demonstrations throughout the Country -

in Cape Town there were about 10,000 people marching through the centre of Town.

J.F. These were all demonstrations about the treatment of those students

W.H. Yes, it was, then, largely that - the original demonstration had been around African education - or the lack thereof.

J.F. So you got involved, really, in 1975 - the second year - what direction did you take - when you said "various projects?"

W.H. Firstly, I - in my first year, I just got so involved in everything - I was involved in a literacy training seminar, when (.....) 208 taught literacy.

I got involved in Wages Commission, which became my main involvement later in the year, and in the next year, and just in NESUS - general work - working for the SRC elections and those kinds of things.

J.F. What was wages commission supposed to be - how was it set up and why? These were set up all over the Country?

W.H. Yes ... the initiative ... post 1972 there had been some kind of initiative within NESUS to move out of student politics and into the community to some extent - not to be exclusively involved in white politics -

also when demonstrations and those kinds of things were banned, and there was a limited amount of things which students could do by themselves,

and the Wages Commission was set up to try and get some unions off the ground, basically - so they were set up in Durban especially, and Jo'burg, Cape Town - and they were really crucial in getting, what is now, the Federation Unions off the ground -

in Durban

FOSATU/and what became the General Workers' Union here.

So by the time I get involved, there's a lot of emphasis in doing off-campus work - that the main - the sort of ideology is very much that students can play a supportive role for struggles off-campus - that there's not that much to do with students - it's to do with the mal - (?) 232 coherent kind of Socialist approach and so on

W.H. so in Communities Commission we're doing - which is a Wages Commission counterpart - we're doing literacy programmes, which is for people off-campus, and then, in Wages Commission -

the original people who had done the work in setting up the Western Province Workers' Advice Bureau, at that stage, had moved off campus by that stage, and were still involved, and we were just doing support work for them - we were helping with admin. work in the office -

trying to solve problems; simplifying wage agreements so that people could understand them - and our main activity was to bring out a newspaper every month - it was called M'sibenzi - it later changed its name to Manyalo, and that got banned

J.F. What does that mean - workers?

W.H. M'sibenzi is "The Worker." - and Manyalo is "Unity" or it sometimes gets used for "Unions."

J.F. this was getting into the Wages Commission
 what did you mean when you said the idea was to get some unions off the ground - is that the role of whites - are whites doing it, or how do they fit in?

W.H. It's not quite my era at that stage - post 1972, I think there's this awareness of NESUS - that it should be doing more relevant things, rather than just playing around with students -

there were no unions at that stage - the union movement had been totally repressed in the '60's, and the unionists today say that SACTU abdicated its responsibilities to quite a large extent by going overseas and trying to operate under-ground, which is just not feasible,

so, basically, people - there was a greater awareness of the importance of the labour issue, and people thought that unions were an important thing to try and encourage.

J.F. White people thought that?

W.H. Ironically, Yes.

J.F. But to speak about that irony - was that glossed over - did people discuss how can we tell whites how to set up the union or

W.H. I think there was quite a big awareness of the problem - to some extent it was easier for white intellectuals to go in and do it, because there's always a very obvious contradiction - the white intellectuals could never pretend that they were the leaders of whatever would emerge

there was, I think, a fairly constant awareness that leadership needed to be assumed by the workers - by the structures that came out of whatever was set up, which is a problem which faced a lot of the criticism that can be levelled at a lot of later unions that were set up by black intellectuals in a way that they see themselves

W.H. and problematically as being able to be the leaders, so there's quite a large emphasis on worker democracy within the early structures that are set up - they're not explicitly unions at that stage - they mostly operated Advice Bureaux or Benefit Funds of some kind to try and, first, draw together a significant amount of workers, and then to transform that into a union when it was bigger -

and I think there was quite a lot of awareness of the problems. It's not an initiative that comes from the white campus, exclusively - there are in Cape Town and other centres the old union people around who had been involved in the unions in the '50's, who do get involved again, and

some of them had been involved in SACTU and so on - I think there are people now who try to over-emphasise the importance that those people - of the role that those people played in getting the unions off the ground again - they played an important role, but I would certainly see the decisive impetus as coming from the white students

J.F. As opposed to which people?

W.H. Old SACTU activists. basically.

J.F. Inside the Country?

W.H. Inside the people who hadn't been involved in any kind of activity throughout the '60's, largely, but when new initiative started up, got drawn in again, and not all of them had been involved in SACTU, but most of these funds and things that started off tried very soon - tried to draw in black - they only employed black organisers, by and large, for instance.

J.F. Which fund?

W.H. The Workers' Advice Bureau and, in Durban, they had a Workers' Benefit Fund, which pre-dated the unions there.

J.F. Was there something in Cape Town - Johannesburg?

W.H. Something called the Industrial Aid Society -

J.F. Was that the same kind of initiative?

W.H. Yes - the initiative in Jo'burg was not quite as strong, I think, as in the other centres. In Jo'burg there was also an initiative by church related liberals - Left liberals - people like Doug Decker and the Tyaks - they got banned in 1976 in the urban training project.

J.F. The who?

W.H. Something called the U.T.P.

(Urban Training Project)

J.F. I know about that - the Tyaks?

(Eric Tyack)

W.H. it's Mr. and Mrs. Tyacke, I think. I can't remember even what their name is - I never knew them.

J.F. was it a problem - was it discussed or was it just in any way something that people felt deserved a lot of attention - kind of "What are we whites doing - what must our role be and we must think about" or was it just a feeling that this was an important thing to do, and we're going to do it and we'll just make sure there's democracy, and if blacks are in the positions?

W.H. I think probably, more the latter view - I think that people saw it as very important, and the view was very much that whites would act in a supportive capacity - especially at the time I got involved, there wasn't really much room left for initiatives in any kind of sense -

that initiatives had been taken. The original students who'd been involved in that, by that time weren't on campus any more, so for the people who were students on campus, the most we could do was to go out and sit and write out cards and to do research related to problems that - advice kind of problems -

as I said, the main function was to bring out the newspaper, which we could do with some kind of protection from the University, and also from funds from the University, basically.

J.F. Write out what kind of cards?

W.H. Membership cards - just menial admin. jobs.

J.F. when you got involved it had already been going on - what was it you got involved with - did you go right into an existing paper or what?

W.H. Yes, Wages Commission had produced M'sibenzi - not M'sibenzi - Ava-sibenzi from 1973 - very periodically - by 1975, when I got involved, it was coming out fairly regularly - virtually every month, and that was our main project at that stage - whereas earlier the Wages Comm.'s main project would have been much more in the initiative kind of field.

..... once, in middle of 1976 Ava-sibenzi got banned for future editions and we changed the name, and brought it out again, which probably brought about the banning on the heads of three of us - and once that happened,

Wages Commission collapsed to quite a large extent, because that had been our main project.

J.F. When what - the second one got banned?

W.H. Yes, at the end of 1976, about 28 people got banned for their involvement in the union movements throughout the Country, and

J.F. Can you think, with me, who they are

END OF SIDE ONE.

W.H. In Cape Town it was me, Debbie Budlinder, John Frankish, Jeremy Baskin - somebody called Elijah Lawsa, who I worked with in Canning Workers, which was just getting off the ground again at that

J.F. How do you spell it?

W.H. Loza

J.F. When you say somebody - is he not doing much these days?

W.H. No, I think he's dead - I'm not sure if he later died in detention in fact - I can't quite remember what happened to him, but he wasn't somebody in our kind of circle.

In Jo'burg there was Gavin Anderson - also from here were Pat Horn and Judy Favish, who were the literacy people, but were working very closely with the unions as well - and Gavin Anderson and ~~Doze~~ ^{Dons} Decker, the Tyacks

J.F. You don't know their first names?

W.H. I've probably got a clipping somewhere that I can pass on, so I'll give you the names afterwards.

J.F. Unless you just want to finish up the exercise

W.H. Who were the Durban people? You see, a lot of the Durban people had been banned before - Dave Hemson and Robert Dyer, or something - they'd actually gone into exile already, and I think they were banned post to the Durban strikes.

J.F. Was Rob Dyer banned?

Copelyn

W.H. I'm not sure - I've got a feeling he was. Johnny Copeland was another person - Chris Albertein - I think he was in Jo'burg that's more or less

With us we were - in Cape Town was the only place where students were banned, interestingly enough - in the other places, the union activity was completely divorced from the Wages Commissions were, by that stage, much less involved in the unions than we were here,

so other places it was mainly union organisers or people of importance in running of the unions that were banned.

J.F. It happened in 1976 - what month?

W.H. November.

J.F. And did it come as a surprise to you - were you worried - what was it like working in that field at that stage - was there fear for your safety, or for anything happening?

W.H. We ended up being quite conspiratorial in a lot of ways throughout 1976. Initially the grouping that were writing the newspaper was fairly open - it was up to 15 people or so would come to the editorial meetings -

it was fairly closed initially, but in 1975/76 it became a much wider grouping, but then, when it was banned for all future editions, we set up, basically, a grouping of 6 people that nobody knew who they were, more or less.

There were only two people who took responsibility for that - that was me and Debbie Budlinder - I was nominally the Editor and she did most of the typing - so we did all the running around and organising distribution and so on so that the other people wouldn't be identified, basically,

which, sort of worked - in the sense that only we got banned at the end of the year - I didn't really expect to get banned - Debbie was actually working for the union as an administrative assistant at that stage - part time secretary/typist -

J.F. Which union?

W.H. General Workers' - it was called the Western Province Advice Bureau, still, at that stage.

J.F. It was also Western Province Workers' Union.

W.H. Yes - in 1977, I think, it changed into a union, and called itself the union -

so in that sense, we were fairly aware that there were dangers of repression - they'd just brought in a new public relations control act, so our fears were more around that - nobody knew quite what was happening with that, because they could prosecute you retrospectively for bringing out undesirable publications, and we were more worried about that.

When they did the bannings, they started off in Jo-burg on a Monday, and on the Thursday people in Durban got banned and on Saturday some people in the roads got banned, so by the next Monday, they were probably on their way here!

so by that stage it wasn't so much of a surprise ... I was a bit shocked, personally, because I hadn't been that closely involved with the union the newspaper Manyana had just been banned for all future editions,

and we'd requested the reasons, and it was everything from being a big Communist conspiracy inspired by the writings of Lenin, and this sort of thing, so we were a bit intimidated, and had actually decided to stop producing it

- W.H. it wasn't really an issue at that stage, because it was the end of the year most of us were moving off campus, and the new people were coming into it.
- J.F. What was it called - Manyana?
- W.H. Umanyo.
- J.F. What does that mean?
- W.H. Unity. Actually, in Umanyo we started to once '76 started happening in Cape Town from about August, we started printing in Afrikaans and Xosa
- J.F. What was the reaction in your family?
- W.H. My father was in Jo'burg at the time, and I'd just moved into a new house with Debbie Budlinder, and we got our banning orders delivered at 6 o'clock in the morning, so that I got banned to the Goodwood magisterial district, which is basically Pinelands and Goodwood, whereas most of the other people were banned to Cape Town, so the police picked me up and took me to Pinelands and dumped me on my mother's door-step! - because my father was away on a business trip in Jo'burg, and my mother took it remarkably well - she - tends to act rather emotionally - and here I was in distress and - she was very supportive and everything my father was quite angry, in a lot of ways - he had to fly back, and, I think, was much more aware of social censure and those kinds of things - although my mother got the sympathy cards like "God be with you in this time of your hardship" and things like that! and "We're praying for you"
- ironically enough, my parents had actually feared that this might happen to me, much more than I had, because Umanyo had got banned regularly, and I just really told them that I was heavily involved with them - I mentioned it once, so every time it got banned, it made this major impression on them, you see, and De Boger (?) 480 also started taking pictures of us distributing it and being harrassed by the police and so on - so they saw all this in the papers and got quite incredibly worried about me, so it wasn't a total shock to them - but I think socially it was hell of a difficult for them ... and my father had to go and speak to his boss about it and ... it was in the newspapers and everything and he went to speak to the Head of Security Police about it as well ...
- J.F. He, of his own volition went? What did he think he was going to accomplish?

- W.H. Well, he just wanted they don't give reasons or anything, so he wanted to know why, and the guy wouldn't tell him ; and he wanted to know what I'm allowed to do and what I'm not allowed to do and that sort of thing.
- J.F. What was the worst thing about it, really?
- W.H. I think the social pressure, much more than anything else - just being in that kind of close community and ... all their friends knowing about it and it not really being talked about to them, I think -
- at work I think my father was in a much more supportive environment - and my mother - her own network of friends which are usually very supportive - but just when the bigger community gathering - like church, I think you're always very aware of what other people think.
- J.F. did you distribute these things yourselves?
- W.H. Yes.
- J.F. ... didn't you even have blacks going into the townships to do it?
- W.H. Well, ... we distributed in two ways - through the Advice Bureau - you see, the Advice Bureau had various worked through factory committees at that stage, so if people from a factory came to the Advice Bureau, the Advice Bureau employed organisers and so on, so the organiser would go back with the people to the factory and try and organise around whatever particular issue there was, and sign up people as members of the Advice Bureau - set up a factory committee - try to get it recognised by Management and so on ...
- so operating quite a lot like a union, but a fairly de-centralised kind of union -
- so some of our or half - I can't quite remember the proportions - but we distributed directly through the factory committees, which we just delivered to the Advice Bureau, and they handed out there.
- The rest we took to the industrial areas and handed out, which was quite an interesting experience
- J.F. So what was it like?
- W.H. The reception was very good, always - there was almost no hostility that I can remember - also what we tried to do was have the same people regularly at the same place - and by the end we were bringing it out regularly once a month - so you actually got to recognise people and so on and police always
- there was a lot of problems getting people to actually hand out, because '76 got progressively heavier and

W.H. every time we handed out, everybody, more or less, at least got their names taken and pamphlets confiscated. and most people got dragged off to the police station and kept there for a couple of hours and harrassed so

the volunteers sort of dropped dramatically! - and there'd been a march in Cape Town in '76, in protest, and a whole lot of people had got arrested for that, and were scared to be arrested again I think 4 or 5 people were detained afterwards,

so all the people who were heavily involved in student politics, or in the union movement, didn't want to get arrested, because they might, then, be detained - and questioned -

so, increasingly, I was going out with this brigade of innocent, young, first year students, who were told to say that they know nothing about the paper, or about Wages Commission or anything, and they just got everything from me, when they were questioned by the police.

J.F. So you were the instigator.

W.H. so I was the big, bad boy, yes.

J.F. How would you define that role - did you - had you, certainly not in your youth or before sitting around in industrial areas, and dealing with black workers on that level?

W.H. No, before I got involved with the newspaper, I'd been involved with the Advice Bureau, where we'd had some contact - and I was teaching literacy at the same time, which involved some contact with blacks -

and it was all a very new experience for me then - by '76 it wasn't so new.

J.F. Did you write the articles, or did you write them in consultation or

W.H. Well, we had an elective (?) 540 editorial group, yes

J.F. Were there blacks on it?

W.H. No, it was all Wages Comm. people - we got articles from the union as well, but we didn't really edit that or anything - we just printed it as we got it.

J.F. Did you get criticisms or questions from people who would say "What are you whites running a paper for blacks?"

W.H. No.

J.F. And if someone said that, how would you answer it - if you talk about worker democracy, or this or that - why weren't there blacks on those committees - on that editorial committee?

W.H. Well, we were printing articles, although to a very limited extent - that were written by the organisers in the union and so on, but there wasn't any kind of working sitting together in the same grouping -

between the students and the people more involved in the Advice Bureau, so we just printed whatever we got from them - we didn't edit it, but basically, we wrote the articles

that was something that we were fairly aware of, but there didn't seem to be any kind of practical way of overcoming it - other than trying to build up a viable union that could actually run its own news-letter and be divorced from campus totally - which is what all of us, I think, were aiming at.

J.F. what was your contact with blacks then - just people who came to fetch the newspaper and to buy the newspaper?

W.H. Well, the people more involved in Wages Comm. worked at the Advice Bureau itself fairly regularly, where we met people, and worked with people -

we - for the newspaper, we went out to various committees to speak to them about stories - if there was a strike somewhere, we'd go out to the people and interview them, and try and write a story around that, so that was primarily the sort of contact that we had -

the people who were running the Advice Bureau itself were running an education programme, so people were involved with that, but that was mostly the initiated kind of people - had a lot more contact with the people from the various factory committees and so on.

J.F. How would you describe the way you saw the role of whites then?

W.H. As I said earlier, I think I would say as a supportive role - at that stage we had certain kinds of resources that we could offer - that we wanted to try and build a union movement, basically - not build it, but to strengthen what little there was of a union movement at that stage -

and that, hopefully, we would phase ourselves out - and that's very much how I see my role - I think other people probably had less stress on the phasing out process.

J.F. This is a huge question what was your understanding of why you were looking at that area - why unions - did you feel like that was a particular forte of yours or interesting, or did you just figure "This is it - the black worker unions - it's the only thing worth getting into!"

W.H. ... I was involved in a whole range of other things - I got elected onto the executive of Wages Comm. at the end of '75, so that was the main thing - I was working for S.S.D. - Students for Social Democracy, which is aimed at students on campus -

I was doing a fair amount of NESUS work and so on, so I wasn't only involved in that, but I think Wages Comm., in a lot of ways, was the real relevant part of NESUS at that stage, and I think that emphasis came

quite a lot from a more rigorous kind of socialist analysis - emphasis on the importance of the working class, and I think that was my feeling as well - that's basically why I saw the unions as being really important.

J.F. You talked about your parents' reaction to being banned etc. - did you think they were taking it too seriously?

W.H. Well, on the basis of the limited kind of information which I'd given them about what I was doing ... it was

J.F. I'm saying the government you sounded as though you thought they were being a bit dramatic to have banned you - how did you feel about the banning?

W.H. I felt that it was largely punitive, because I was actually going to go teaching the next year - I wasn't going to be on campus, or involved in Wages Comm. - I wasn't quite sure how my relationship with the Advice Bureau would work out then

J.F. Where were you going to teach?

W.H. At a coloured school and a couple of other people were also leaving Varsity at that stage ... thinking about what kind of jobs to do and so on,

so in a lot of ways the banning was more as a punishment a deterrant for other people to actually talking specifically about the grouping who brought out the newspaper - they were saying "We definitely don't want that to happen again" -

in the wider perspective, I think they were partly looking for scape-goats in the union movement for '76.

J.F.

W.H. but, as I say, I don't - I can see why they banned me - because I obviously look like a leading conspiratorial figure in this little grouping, so I don't think it was silly in that sense, but I think it was more punitive than

J.F. And what effect did it have on you?

W.H. It was quite effective in a lot of ways - it really cuts one off from open political activity, and the political scene in Cape Town got really transformed during the time that we were banned, in terms of setting up civic ... the whole rise of the civic organisation - the real emergence of a strong trade union movement in the country, and so on - and a whole lot of other projects - like community news-letters and so on -

none of which we could be involved in, and it was a hell of an isolated feeling coming back five years later - it was very nice in some ways - all these new people that you don't actually know - being involved,

but in terms of politics, it's quite effective, I think - I mean if it really were aimed at people who are operating at an underground level, then it wouldn't really be effective,

but we all saw our roles fairly self-consciously as not underground - as being open political activity.

J.F. What was the date you were banned?

W.H. 23rd. I think, of November, 1976.

J.F. What did you do during that time - just briefly?

W.H. Well, the first three months was the most dreadful time - I was banned to Pinelands, so I wasn't allowed into Cape Town or Wynburg, which means that you're not allowed to communicate with other banned people - one of them was my lover,

and if you're allowed into the same area, you can sit in the same house behind locked doors and closed curtains, and it's fairly difficult to prove that you were communicating with the person, but it's much more difficult that one of you had to be in the wrong area to be in that house, or two of you aren't allowed to be in the same area.

J.F. She was banned to where?

W.H. She was banned to Cape Town, and that was also a bit of a culture shock for my parents, because they didn't actually know that we were having a relationship at that stage,

and the only way that we were allowed to see each other was to ask to get married, and Debbie was Jewish - and she'd been living in the same house as I was, and my parents had told me when I moved into that house - "You know what will happen!"

W.H. and her Surname was Budlinder, which, in Cape Town, is not a good surname to have, because her brother had been in the forefront of the '72 demonstrations he was news-maker of the year in that year -

so she was a Communist who'd led me down the garden path so we had a rather bitter fight about that anyway, eventually we got permission to get married.

I couldn't do any kind of relevant job, which was also fairly shit .. if you've done a B.A. and you get banned, you're not allowed to teach; you're not allowed write; you're not allowed to do research for any publication,

so there's not too much left do to - it's a real problem finding a job ... when I went to Varsity originally, I got a bursary from Life Assurance Co. - I was going to do real (?) 688 science, but I changed my mind after one year - just did a straight B.A., so I still had the bursary commitment to work off - so they, sort of, had to give me a job,

so I worked full time for them for a year, and then I managed to persuade them to give me a part-time job, and I started doing an M.A. at the same time - quite a lot of us started doing M.A.'s at that stage - just to be doing something constructive.

J.F. In what field did you do it?

W.H. I started off doing something on the history of the working class in Cape Town in the '30's, but changed it eventually, to looking at rural organisation in the '20's and '30's

..... the A.N.C. started organising farm workers in the rural areas, and the people that were kicked out of the A.N.C. because they were too militant - they organised all along the coast to Craddock up to (?) 705 Middle burgh.

J.F. What department?

W.H. Economic History, which was when I was at Varsity, the only Lefty course was CAGAL, which was Comparative African Government and Law - which everybody did, and

later Ian Vermister (?) 711 got a job in Economic History, so that became the leading thing - it still is, I think - the leading Lefty department ... so a whole lot of us ended up doing M.A.'s - in terms of political involvement, I was doing very little -

more or less keeping informed of what was happening - towards the end of my banning order, I got involved in a few writing groups and so on - but we were fairly careful about our banning orders, by and large.

J.F. What kind of writing groups did you mean?

W.H. Producing Popular Histories, basically there's a group producing (.....) 724 group and an Economic History group, which does general histories.

J.F. Did you ever compare - or ever chat with someone who's black who was banned to seeif there were differences in terms of the way it immobilised you or do you think for a white it's especially effective to be banned - with blacks, if you're in the townships, you're still in touch with something by definition - or is there not much to be in touch with in Pinelands do you think that there was differences - did you ever speak to blacks - did you ever sense that that was a real way to immobilise white activists?

W.H. Yes ... I didn't speak to any at the time, but I spoke to some people later on, and I think there is a real difference, in that I think as a white you feel a lot although there's a fairly big Left white community, so, in that sense, you don't feel all that isolated,

but you feel a lot less in touch with what is happening on the ground, than if you're in a black area - theoretically we weren't allowed to go into black areas - that was one of the things about our banning orders,

so I think there are very real differences - I think people - black and banned have a more rigorous police presence to cope with than we had, although we were watched a fair amount of the time, but I don't think quite as much.

J.F. Did you ever break the order, or have any trouble or anything like that?

W.H. Well, I was never caught - I think most of us were fairly good and careful about it - we did see each other on occasions, but we just locked the doors and closed the curtains, and made sure there were enough people in the house so that each of us could be seeing somebody else, and

the most problematic thing is that you're only allowed to be with one other person at any time, so that restriction you break the whole time

J.F. As far as your parents getting upset about ... the act of having been banned you were in for five years - and all through that time they worried about the social stigma? They got used to it?

W.H. they also got used to Debbie pretty quickly - they ended up liking her quite a lot - by the end of it, it wasn't really a particular hassle

J.F. What about family gatherings and that kind of thing?

W.H. Well, we more or less ignored it there - that was one of the things my father got from the Head of the Security Police - that family gatherings are O.K., although they basically aren't - but we decided to ignore it for family gatherings.

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W.H. but there were about 20 orders due to expire in the next six months or so, so it was obviously an opportunity time to have a propaganda exercise.

J.F. So you figure it was purely for propaganda reasons that they decided to do

W.H. I think there's been real changes in the banning policy - that they're banning a lot less people than they used to, and I think that was the beginning of the switch, but I think they just tried to make some propaganda out

it's much less spectacular if peoples' banning orders just lapse than when you can stand up in Parliament and say you're withdrawing ~~city~~ banning orders.

J.F. So you didn't feel a terrific sense of relief when it happened ...

W.H. No, it was actually quite shit, because in Cape Town we were a fairly close group of about 8 people, who'd been very good friends, and worked together really hard and everything -

and two of us didn't get un-banned, which was three months before the banning order was due to expire, so it looked like they were going to re-ban them

J.F. Who were they?

W.H. Judy Favish and Jeremy Baskin - they didn't re-ban them in the end, but they were the two people the police liked least, so they obviously just wanted to make them sweat it out for another three months to

J.F. Why did they like them least?

W.H. They were the white Communists, I think they just take a dislike to some people, you know.

J.F. So you were un-banned - just tell me about that process of re-involvement - did your parents lecture you that "O.K., now you're unbanned, but don't you think you shouldn't get involved" or did you think to yourself "Well" or were you just dying to get back into society - what was it like?

- W.H. I think we were all very keen to get back into society - my parents didn't give me any they sort of made little noises about taking it easy and all that, but they weren't particularly heavy about it.
- J.F. Having the banning order and going back into politics - as a white - looking for a place to re-involve - did you feel like you were entering into a new era - that you were just in a totally different time and space than when you had been banned five years before - what was that like?
- W.H. It was very definitely very different - politics in Cape Town anyway had been very much transformed in those five years it's quite an ambivalent kind of feeling, because there's this whole thing about having been banned, and people knowing about it and, like, being a heavy, and
- so we both got drawn into things, Debbie and I - got drawn into things fairly slowly - initially, largely around the kind of things that we were doing before
- neither of us got directly involved with the union movement again, but we were doing work around - union support kind of work - industrial health groups and
- for which we had been doing some computer work and research work while we were banned, and health care trust, and the grass roots community letter I got involved in
- but one feels a bit ambivalent, because you're quite out of touch with the people who are now in the struggle, and what's happening in the struggle, and what the dynamics are,
- and at the same time, you're supposed to be this big shot - this heavy - it's quite a strange kind of position, which one is quite a lot aware of the whole time - I think after about a year or so, it starts to fade.
- J.F. Did you get that M.A.?
- W.H. Yes, I've actually just finished it! - many years later!
- J.F. So what did you do for the rest of the time - those other years?
- W.H. Well, I was working the whole time - part time - I only left the job in the middle of last year ...
- J.F. The Life Assurance?
- W.H. Yes - I was doing quite interesting work by the end - I was doing a lot of computer work and so on - it was a very convenient job, because it was half day, but once I got un-banned, I got so involved in politics that my M.A. got left, by and large..

- J.F. So what was the politics that you drew yourself into - was it a year of going a bit slowly?
- W.H. There was various kinds of mostly support kind of activities, I suppose - I got involved in grass roots newspaper fairly early then I did a lot of
even while I was banned, I did a fair amount of work on transport - research on transport - there's been quite a lot of opposition to bus fare increases, and there are public hearings to motivate it, so I did quite a lot of research for that, and work with the people in the communities who were doing that,
and I got involved much more hecticly in things like labour history group and economic history research group and so on, so a lot of that was around activities - labour history group supplies education booklets to the unions, and we go and speak to the unions about it; sell it and so on.
- J.F. Do you think, over that time, your view of how whites should be involved changed at all?
- W.H. In some ways - I don't think very dramatically - I think that for me there's still a fairly acute awareness of the problem of white domination of the struggle, and I think that the universities churn out quite a lot of Lefties - probably more so than any other place at this moment,
and I think it's important for whites to be involved in the struggle, but I think there's a real need to be aware of the problems of white domination, which can happen hell of an easily
for me it's not the white domination as such - it's domination by intellectuals quite a lot, which I think is really the problem in a lot of ways I think for black intellectuals - quite often they can say they are just ... it's easy for them just to have a look at the class differences and say they are the people,
and I think there's probably less sensitivity today - both amongst whites and blacks - about the issue than there was in our days - the mid '70's my theory is that it's related to the kinds of struggle -
when white intellectuals go and organise working class people, there's very clearly a difference - and there's very clearly a need to set up structures and ways to ensure that there's workers control, and that the intellectuals don't - or which intellectuals-come-whites don't run the show, whereas
when you're in a kind of popular struggle, where everybody can be part of the struggle, that problem gets fudged over quite a lot - there's not that same real necessity to set up structures to ensure working class control, which for me is quite an important issue, still.

- J.F. And do you think that that's something that whites aren't aware enough of - or do you think it also affects blacks?
- W.H. I think both - in the union movement I think there's a greater awareness of that still - but that's largely from the internal dynamics of the union movement anyway, but I think it's a really problematic issue in the popular movement -
- community organisations and so on, and it's to do with political lines and so on, obviously - that lots of people don't see anything wrong with intellectuals leading the struggle - it's a very vanguard-ish type of approach.
- J.F. And what if someone would say "Well, how can you be critical - look at your role in Wages Comm. - you felt that you could lead and direct and contribute and then phase yourself out - what's the difference with whites being involved - or intellectuals being involved and also saying they're going to do the same thing?"
- W.H. Maybe I'm being over critical, but I think the situation's relatively different - I think within the emerging unions in the early '70's from very early on, structures
- workers control structures were set up to make the final decisions - that the white intellectuals who were involved in the union - they obviously had a say in influencing how people thought, but they didn't have an actual say a formal say in decisions that were taken -
- that structures were fairly soon set up, whereby the workers in the organisations made the decisions, whereas in popular to call them popular organisations - the issues are different, because intellectuals can belong to them as full members - it's not as though they're outsiders -
- black intellectuals, say, but in the UDF whities as well - they can belong as full members, and they don't see any need why they shouldn't participate as full members, and I think that is why there's less awareness, in a way, of the problems.
- J.F. So how can whites deal with this problem - how can they be aware and sensitive and counteract this - what do you do to deal with this problem?
- W.H. I think if one's, say, talking about the UDF in particular - I think the main emphasis has to be on making - on building working class leadership at all kinds of levels,
- and in containing the influence and role of the organisations of intellectuals - that the emphasis has to be on your mass based organisations, in giving them the greater say in how decisions are taken on the direction of the organisation, and making sure that those organisations actually try to draw in ordinary people - that they're not, in turn, dominated by intellectuals

- W.H. and the popular movement is very young at this stage, so obviously one shouldn't be too critical, but I think I am critical to the extent that there are people who don't actually believe that it's necessary to do that - they don't see a problem of intellectual domination.
- J.F. But you're not so critical that you wouldn't get involved
- W.H. I'm involved - I probably wouldn't like to be quoted on this, but I think most people probably know - but I'm involved in the UDF in a fairly dissident kind of position -
- that I will push for those kinds of things, which aren't particularly popular positions in the UDF
- J.F. But you didn't feel that you should boycott it, or you weren't so critical as are some people, who took that position that they just wouldn't want anything to do with the UDF - did you think at the time, very carefully about involving yourself first?
- W.H. For a long time I wasn't particularly I'm still not really heavily involved in the UDF - for a long time I wasn't, because I was just too involved in too many other things and I didn't have time ...
- I've always been involved in UDF related projects and things like grass roots ... I think there's a strong argument that the UDF belongs to the wing of the liberation movement that's going to win, and that one has to work within that, and try to make it as democratic as possible, basically
- J.F. Why is there that strong argument - why are you so clear that they're on the winning side?
- W.H. I'm not so sure that they're going to be on I'm pretty sure - but I think fairly strong arguments have been put up - that because of the congress tradition and so on, that ultimately they are going to be the people that take over the power, but there is a strong right wing within congress, and that it's important to build a Left position within congress that will ensure a democratic and a socialist solution to the problem.
- J.F. you figure Right and Left is very apropos - that there's a Right wing within
- W.H. Yes, definitely I think there's a very self-conscious Right wing - socialists who adopt specifically Right wing position, because they feel that is what should be done at the moment, but at the same time, I think there's a real straight nationalist wing, basically, that is conservative to a greater or lesser extent

W.H. I don't think they're hell of a conservative, but I think they I don't think it's incorrect to talk about the Right wing in congress.

J.F. it's interesting that you say there's almost an historical inevitability factor do you think that's something that's inevitable - that a thrust in South African politics kind of questions I ask everyone about when they first heard of the A.N.C. - what their initial reactions were do you think that's something that asserts itself and you have to deal with - a framework underlying things?

W.H. Yes again, I wouldn't particularly like to be quoted on that, but what I would like to see is actually a strong, independent Left position built outside the A.N.C. in the country -

and I think that depends fairly crucially on where the unions go and what kind of position the unions are able to build outside the A.N.C. - I think there's a lot of hostility in the unions to the A.N.C. and the A.N.C. positions -

and there are also strong supporters of congress in the unions at the time - in '75/76, when I got involved in the ethic of the people who got involved in the early union movement - was that congress was a non-issue -

which it pretty much was at that stage - there was no viable guerrilla war - and Mozambique, Angola, Rhodesia were all intact - there was virtually no internal presence of congress, and in the union movement, and there was very little friends of SACTU,

and a lot of the unions set out to organise, fairly consciously, in a way, different from the way that SACTU had organised, and I think that they saw SACTU as basically a political organisation that claimed to be a union, more or less -

that they took up union issues - that that would be a crude characterisation, whereas the emphasis in the new unionisation has been very much on building shop floor control, and a strong factory floor organisation, which was seen as the real weaknesses in SACTU -

that you can chop off the leadership and the organisation just collapsed that's also a whole analysis of the relationship between SACTU and congress - that SACTU was very much subordinate - that they didn't attempt to build any kind of socialist positions, basically

- W.H. largely just supported congress campaigns that were largely nationalist,
- so I think the people who got involved in the union movement in the early '70's were all committed socialists and saw themselves organising very much outside the framework of congress and congress tradition.
- J.F. the important thing I'd like to pull in is ; do you acknowledge that principle of black - of working class leadership - what are the implications then in the future governmental system that you would envision - for the role of whites - for the role of non-working class people is that a way that I can ask you the question of what you foresee whites' position being in the future?
- W.H. Lefty whites, or whites in the
- J.F. I guess I'm saying whites generally - if the leadership is black working class.
- W.H. are you asking about a free South Africa, or
- J.F. Yes.
- W.H. I don't think we're actually going to get working class leadership without a fairly long process of struggle - I think - if there's a fairly serious threat of a socialist society, or a strong socialist movement, there's going to be a deal with nationalists within congress - and there'll be a - I think there's already moves towards building a non-racial Capitalism in South Africa, and that will happen, which will obviously
- I think will, for whites, involve probably a greater adaptation than the transformation of that society into a socialist one - I'm not sure
- but to a large extent I would adopt a fairly standard UDF position - that what one tries to do whites is have them, at least, sympathetic not actually sympathetic, but at least to neutralise them, and that they're not actively hostile to the new society.
- J.F. When you were thinking of which way to go, back in the early stages you got right into Wages Comm. - you came out and UDF was happening because of UDF happening you got involved - did you ever think back then of working with whites, or did it just seem that why not?
- W.H. I can't say that I discounted it totally - I can see that it's important to do some kind of work in the white areas, but I would say the kind of work largely around specific issues - to try and inform people - to basically, conscientise them to some extent about what's going on in the Country, so it would be pamphlets;

- W.H. public meetings and so on but for me, the struggle in South Africa at this stage is so weak that, I think it's a real problem to say that all one's efforts should go into organising whites, because I think organisation amongst black people is pretty poor at this stage - as well as the fact that I feel fairly alienated from white society - I have a much greater affinity and closeness, often, to black people
- not Africans, to that extent, but Coloured people, certainly just in terms of feeling politically comfortable with people, which for me is fairly important.
- J.F. Why more with coloureds and not with Africans?
- W.H. Because I think the class differences are probably much greater I don't really have good African friends - I have people that I know and who are acquaintances, that I know relatively well, but I think the differences in background and culture is just fairly immense at that kind of level - so I don't have real friends but, working in coloured areas, certainly, I feel that I can build up friendships in the process as well - that it's not only a process of organising, and slogging away and whatever.
- J.F. What kind of work in the coloured areas would that be?
- W.H. Through grass roots there's a certain amount of things - like selling grass roots from door to door - selling at stations and so on I'm involved in SACOS quite a lot - in table tennis which involves a lot more on-going contact with people, which is nice in a way in grass roots as well, but that's more with activists rather than with ordinary people -
- and then on specific campaigns like the anti-election campaign, and so on, which is going from house to house
- J.F. Is the language part of that affinity?
- W.H. Yes that is probably part of it
- J.F. Would you speak Afrikaans with coloured people?
- W.H. Yes, I can.
- J.F. Would you - mainly?
- W.H. In SACOS not really English has very much been built as the lingua franca, and is very much the meeting language in a way even people who really battle to speak English will speak English, rather than Afrikaans at meetings, so I speak largely English, but

- W.H. it obviously depends - in more working class areas it's very definitely Afrikaans which is the language of the people - but that also helps - being able to speak fairly fluently.
- J.F. Tell me about your involvements how did you get involved with SACOS - do you consider that an important political involvement?
- W.H. I feel a bit ambivalent about it (SACOS) now and then - in terms of the political effectiveness, I'm not always so sure about how important it is for me it's important for that, but also just there are people from a lot of different political tendencies involved in SACOS - they're not only from UDF, but from KEL (?) 325
- and unity movement and so on, so it actually is, for me, an opportunity of building some kind of good relationships with those people, and there's a certain amount of political work that gets done in SACOS -
- I probably spent more energy than it deserves, and I feel a bit ambivalent about that, actually I'm very involved in table tennis administration, you see, which gets me down every now and then.
- J.F. What's the object there - just to show that non-racial sport works?
- W.H. No, there are explicitly in club meetings there are political issues that get raised, and there is a move in SACOS to becoming more involved in activist kind of politics -
- up to now it's been very much dominated by unity movement tradition of fairly abstentionist kind of politics, or emphasis on educating people - but that is changing
- a certain amount of organisation took place around the anti-election campaign - probably some kind of ... I don't know - there's a bit of a debate about this All Blacks tour and things like that.
- J.F. Did they affiliate to UDF?
- W.H. No - definitely won't.
- J.F. I heard that they - there was some report about them affiliating.
- W.H. No - they've had talks with ... had some kind of peace talks with the UDF in the middle of last year, when some kind of more cordial working relationship was established -
- initially relationships were quite cold between SACOS and the UDF.
- J.F. But I'm sure I read that they were affiliated.

W.H. No. I think it's possible that one of the provincial units might have affiliated, but I doubt it - SACOS took a reaffirmed its decision recently - that it shouldn't affiliate to any political organisations, and WEBCOS (?) 367 was affiliated to KEL here, and it's actually been forced to disaffiliate.

J.F. Do you think that there's any argument - that any of your motivation that one should get involved in organisations just so that there's contact across the race - that you're dealing with blacks in some activity, or is that not any kind of motivation

W.H. In general - or me?

J.F. Both.

W.H. I think both are important - for me it just seems very anomolous to be saying you're working for liberation struggle in South Africa if you don't particularly have contact with blacks -

I think it gets very isolated and very prone to the kind of undemocratic practices that emerge out of student politics, which..... one loses one's sense of what one's fighting for

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W.H. because that ends up with the leadership having the contact and telling you this is what the townships really want - which happens in a lot of organisations, and it's not profoundly democratic, because it's normally a specific kind of interpretation,

but I also think there's quite a hot debate in Cape Town, and there has been over the last few months - about whether to set up a KAYDAK (?) 401 which would be similar to JAYDAK (?) -

and the idea has more or less been thrown out, and I think I don't think that you can draw people into I don't see what the purpose of an all white organisation is -

I think if you want to persuade left liberals or whoever - to become more sympathetic to the liberation movement, you've got to for them, I think, it's also important to have the contact with blacks - not to get involved in an all white organisation,

because most of the Left liberals have their own kinds of organisations anyway, where they have contact, and I don't think a whitie only organisation is going to have any great attraction for them, firstly, but also

- W.H. that they need to have a sense, and get a sense of what the real demands are, and where people are and so on - and not just get told that second hand or third hand, which is always a lot less - makes a lot less of an impression on somebody, I think.
- J.F. But aren't there areas - UDF areas - area committees all white?
- W.H. Yes. So far they've haven't worked that much in the white areas - a lot of their work's been in doing work for campaigns in black areas - like in the anti-election campaign - there was no work done in the white areas
- the white area people worked as individuals in various other areas, and even day to day handing out pamphlets - largely handing out pamphlets in industrial areas - stations and so on, where it is to blacks, so
- in going to meetings and so on it's not whites only meetings, basically.
- J.F. So you think that the JERLAKS and all those are mis-directed - you don't think that's of the future? 423.
- W.H. No. I think there are stronger arguments in Jo'burg, probably, for JODAK.
- J.F. Why?
- W.H. Well, I think in Cape Town the argument for non-racial organisation is much stronger, because there's a long history of non-racial organisation - that there hasn't been separate organisations for coloureds and Africans, even - up till the '50's, when the A.N.C., or
- when the congress movement decided to split it, and the so-called coloured peoples' congress was set up quite a lot from imperatives elsewhere in the country, and there was a lot of local opposition to the idea
- just in terms of the reality of what's been happening - that there's been very little problem with white individuals working in coloured areas in anti-election campaigns or whatever - there's been very little hostility or any problems about that - other than problems of domination.
- J.F. I don't think JODAK was set up because of problems of campaigning in lands (?) 437 I don't know that that's directly related.
- W.H. Well, as far as I know, they have done nothing in Lens (?) 439 around the election campaign - they were told to stay out and they did.
- J.F. Whereas what - here coloured people said come in and help us organise?

- W.H. Well, in Jo'burg, I think the line was that they shouldn't - that it was not actually possible -
- J.F. And is there a line here?
- W.H. I think here the line's much more muted, because there's been a much greater tradition of working together things like grass roots and those kinds of projects pre-dated the UDF, and in those kinds of projects, whities have been working in black areas,
- and in meat strikes and those kinds of things, so there is a history, so it's not so easy to reverse that, whereas in Jo'burg there's much less of a history, and the line is also much stronger than it is here,
- and I think here, there's a stronger Left opposition.
- J.F. So what are you doing - are you a member of the UDF?
- W.H. Yes - in the Observatory Area Committee.
- J.F. Do you have any relations with the Cape Action League?
- W.H. Not formally I don't belong or do work for the Cape Action League, but I know a fair amount of people who do work for them or are very active in it.
- J.F. Are there whites who work for them?
- W.H. There are other whities as well, although I don't know them particularly, and I know of people - mostly blacks.
- J.F. So would you feel it would be important to also be involved in CAL, or do you think you shouldn't just only be involved in UDF - you should have relations with various organisations?
- W.H. I'm a bit of a maverick in that idea of relations with people in most organisations - my background being the union movement more than anything else, and through table tennis, I know some unity movement people as well, although not particularly well.
- J.F. And what would they be members of?
- W.H. Well, the New Unity Movement's just re-launched APTUSA (?) 463 was in Maritzburg, but they've joined something called the New Unity Movement, which here there's a federation of Cape civic associations is a Unity Movement organisation, which is fairly strong here.
- J.F. Are you involved with them also?
- W.H. No I know a couple of people who are fairly active, but I don't really have much contact with that.

J.F. So why are you keeping your options open?

W.H. No I suppose my long term aim - or vision of what should happen in the struggle is that there should be some kind of coming-together of the Left - some kind of socialist party, rather than just a populist party -

and so I think it's important to keep bridges or paths (?) 475 open to Leftists and other organisations - I also think ultimately that we're not going to win liberation of any kind without a fairly broad Left movement,

and without a broad liberation movement coming together and working together, and I think for that it is also important that people don't only have similar policies, but actually have working relationships

that there's some kind of mutual trust, and it's hell of a difficult to promote that in a climate such as we're in sometimes, but that is my position.

J.F. So tell me you just don't think that there's a point for you to go into your community and try to organise whites?

W.H. No, I think there's some point - I think it's limited personally, to me, it's not hell of an attractive, but also I don't think it should be the main focus of white area committees,

because I think if the UDF, as such, decides that work should be done in the white areas, and it's not only whites doing it - I don't have a problem with that at all,

but I think, if you're organising in the white areas, it's important the whole time, to not to pretend that the UDF is a white organisation, or to try and draw

I think if you want to draw people into the UDF - to sympathise with it - at the very least, what you must get from them is a commitment to working in a non-racial - sort of, non-racial, organisation, and that they've got to see real live blacks around them.

J.F. So you'd bring them in - to help?

W.H. If you have an - a meeting or something, for instance, I don't think you should have the Left Liberals speaking on your platform only - I don't mind one or two

J.F. JERDAK and all those always have a black.

W.H. Yes, but I think they should be the dominant or main speakers for one I'm not quite sure how one overcomes that in practice, but ... for me JODAK just has

ended up working like against the anti-election campaign - I don't think they even brought out pamphlets - the whites didn't even hand out pamphlets to blacks

W.H. who were in the area, and they didn't even go to Jo'burg Station, or the bus terminuses and hand out pamphlets there that was the extent to which they were kept out - by both their own leadership and the

leadership of others, whereas - that could never happen here, and I think it's important if somebody comes - actually wants to come and join UDF - I don't think they're going to be particularly chuffed at having to work in white areas only,

or not bumping into any blacks, because I just remember from when I first got involved in politics - that - in a way, you really need to feel that contact - and to be in contact with what ordinary people want,

and what you're really fighting for - and not to have other whities telling you what the blacks are fighting for

things like going into peoples' houses and seeing how shit it is, and just realising those kinds of things.

J.F. Did you think a lot of your views are very Cape rooted - you talk about the tradition of non-racialism

W.H. I think it's more views that are more strongly held by a larger section of the UDF in Cape Town and elsewhere so to that extent it is

I think a lot of the people - a lot of the Left in Jo'burg stayed out of JODAC, basically, and those would be the people who, by and large, would insist on a more principled kind of non-racial organisation.

J.F. I'm still going to push you, because I just think there've been so many - what will later seem to me like contradictions How you do see the role of whites - do you see it as primarily to be involved with blacks in just a minor way, to organise whites - do you think there's any point in organising whites if I just give you that open question, what would you say their role should be?

W.H. I think whites' role has to be essentially supportive - I think one needs fairly strong kind of structural organisational safeguards to ensure that there's not domination by whites, but I would say, more broadly, by intellectuals

I think that there is an important role to play in white areas, in terms of organisation, both in drawing more people into the UDF and just into popularising it to some extent - work which will obviously be done largely by whities, but I think it's important to try and evolve

ways and means of actually making that presence not only a white presence the UDF has a Cape Town region, which includes Boerkaap (?) 550 and Woodstock and

W.H. Kensington and Observatory and Garlands (?) 551

and to work jointly when one can, so that the presence isn't only a white presence

so overall, I think there's a fairly limited, but important role for whites in the struggle overall, and then probably a more important role in terms of working in the white areas,

but, I think it's important to keep that non-racial presence the whole time - or as much of the time as possible anyway.

J.F. So was the Congress of Democrats a big mistake?

W.H. I would say so, yes.

J.F. Do you see any hope of moving Afrikaners you talked a lot about it, and it seems that you have thoughts about it - do you just write-off Afrikaners moving - do you think they're just a sprinkling - yourself included - that the rest are hopeless - how would you feel about it?

W.H. I think there's a sprinkling - I think amongst the youth - the problem of talking from Cape Town is that I think that I (.....) 568 in the Transvaal's very different, and that's where most of them are -

I think if you go to Stellenbosch and so on, there's a fairly active kind of Left there, and I don't have much contact with them, but I had vague contact with them -

I think a sort of Left that's quite a lot into counter-culture-ish kinds of things, rather than any kind of coherent socialist positions

it supports things like UDF and so on, probably with a little bit of prodding, so I think there's a potential for some kind of movement in places like Stellenbosch -

but I think also there, the line has changed substantially - it was the place that turned out the ideologues, and the ideologues have changed their positions quite a lot ,....

overall I really don't know what's going to happen to the whities - I think my impression of the Transvaal is that the youth is quite reactionary in a modern way - the Afrikaner youth -

I think the intellectuals may be less so, but amongst people who don't go to Varsity and so on, I think there's a really very elite racialism still, and I don't know how one's going to cope with that in a liberated South Africa - I think things are going to be fairly bloody

at some stage or another in Zimbabwe they seem to have coped to some extent with the racists, I suppose, but at some cost, but I think, eventually it's going to boil down to some kind of level of

- W.H. trauma that's basically going to mean that it'll be more acceptable to have blacks around, and to have - than to have to go on fighting.
- J.F. In Zimbabwe they coped at some cost - to what?
- W.H. I think to the broad aims of the liberation struggle.
work
- J.F. What/are you doing now and - how do you see your role
..... what areas are you going to get involved
in that you think would be where whites can do something?
- W.H. I've started studying Law, where I think there's a lot of work that needs to be done I suppose it fits in broadly with my conception of the kind of support work, broadly, that whites can do in terms of
- there's a lot of union litigation going on at the moment in the Industrial Court and so on - just in terms of even helping ordinary people, and helping to build organisations that operate through Advice Bureaux and so on,
- and helping to win small victories, in terms of helping politicians and political trials and so on, and I think it's important
- Next year I'll be studying part time and working for the Industrial Health Research Group part time, which is a more directly support activity - most of their work involves research and education training programmes for unions around the Industrial Health issues, so
- there's been this whole MOSA (?) 626 Act, and - safety committees now have to be set up in factories and so on, so there's a lot of work that needs to be done in training worker representatives in safety procedures and what things are important.
- J.F. What does MOSA stand for?
- W.H. Machinery and Occupational Safety Act..... so that will be broadly working with the union movement, which will be, for me, quite exciting, I think, but again it's fairly limited - those kinds of things - as to how many people can do it and so on
- If it came to the push, I probably could get a job in a union, just because of my back-ground and so on, but firstly my position is that there are too many whites in the union movement, and that there are too many intellectuals in it - it's time that those kinds of people started pulling out of the unions,
- so I don't see myself moving into the union movement - into a paid job there..

- J.F. With all the hopelessness of moving Afrikaners, do you think you've moved at least two - being your parents - do you think some parents will move because of their kids - do you think
- W.H. No, I think they my parents in a way fairly explicitly announced it (?) 648 because - in '74 when we were having these long major debates - in the end they sort of said "O.K., well they've decided to vote Prog" and that the only reason why they would have considered voting for the National Party or the United Party would be to safeguard the future of their children the children they/don't seem interested in safeguarding their own future! (Not clear - too much laughing!) 655 so ...
- I think that kind of thing probably will happen to some extent.
- J.F. My last question is this an interesting exercise - is this at all useful - is it a valid thesis - have you heard some people going around trying to look at white resistance - would you say "This is not useful" or do you think it could be in any way?
- W.H. I don't know how useful it would be - I can see some use for it - I think it'd be hell of an interesting, anyway, and important in trying to trace some of the dynamics of white resistance, or white opposition,
- and I think the white Left is playing a hell of a crucial role in the liberation struggle even excluding the Liberals like Helen Susman and so on, within the liberation movement as such, I think whities are playing quite a crucial role at this stage in terms of lines and things like that, and in terms of that it'll be both interesting and quite important
- I think it'll be quite difficult to try and I don't know to what extent one can write all this in a book, but I think it'll be quite interesting to try and trace the kinds of developments that have taken place,
- because as far as I know, this hasn't been documented at all
- J.F. But it's interesting to hear you say because you believe in working class leadership and emphasis, and black emphasis, so how could you say that this is important?
- W.H. I think it's politically important - mostly for the white Left, probably, but also I think it's important in terms of the kinds of issues that it raises -
- around those things I was speaking of earlier - an awareness of the problems of domination, and for me like the way that NESUS operates is a huge problem,
- and I think for a lot of people - there's quite a great awareness ^{ON THE} off-campus white Left, even within the straight UDF camp

W.H. of that - that in NESUS people get trained quite a lot in a fairly un-democratic practice - just because of the nature of NESUS being largely unrepresentative , basically,

in trying to pull along the mass of students on some specific issues, and knowing pretty well that you don't actually represent them, and just a kind of (.....) 702 behind the scenes politics, and things that go on there,

which has had a really terrible effect on the way that the liberation movement operates inside the country - lots of those practices have just become entrenched in

the struggle from those kinds of people coming off campus and operating in the same way, and I think, just awareness of those kinds of issues and ... it's hell of an important to try and build - I don't know if you can do that,

but I think you can raise some of the issues around that, which, for me I think a hell of a big divide within the white Left at the moment is between to characterise it in terms of Left of going to Communist movement would be what would be, roughly kind of new Left Euro-Communist kind of people,

which is quite a lot my generation, who place quite a lot of emphasis on democracy, and against the way that the Communist Party operated in this country earlier, and the way that those practices operated within the C.P. - I mean within Congress and SACTU,

and the newer generation, which have fairly uncritically embraced the modes of operating of the fifties, haven't come to terms

in the South African Communist Party, have never come to terms with Stalinism - it was still one of the most thoroughly Stalinised parties in the world -

and there's fairly uncritical acceptance of those kinds of ways of organising and operating, which gets entrenched to some extent, by the practices within the student movement,

and, politically, ideologically, that is the big divide in the Left at the moment - between people who push traditional Communist Party positions - like internal Colonialism; like National Democratic Struggle; like

keeping the leadership of the struggle in the hands of the Socialists, but not really talking about socialism at a mass level, so that, once liberation is won, then the Socialists will have control and they'll make sure that we get Socialism, which I think is very different from the kind of vision that other people - in the unions in particular - have about how Socialism should be attained - it goes together with the critique

W.H. of Eastern European society, or the adulation (?) 761
of it

J.F. And the what?

W.H. The sort of, uncritical acceptance of it I think
the solidarity kind of a lot of the union move-
ment people would see solidarity as as a kind of model,
almost as a really mass based working class move-
ment -

it had membership of 80% of the working class effectively

J.F. How do you keep the C.I.A. out?

W.H. Well, you can only try - how do you keep the C.I.A. out
of Congress?

..... not embrace necessarily all the political lines,
but the anti kind of authoritarian positions within
solidarity, and quite a lot of the ways of organisation

I think not serve as a model - that's putting it
much too strongly, but people would look for inspiration
much more to solidarity - the union people - than to the
daily (?) 787 regime, or any of the Eastern European
countries.

END OF INTERVIEW.