

Interview: ROLAND WHITE

JF Ok, so can I just start asking questions?

So are you from the Eastern Cape?

A No I am from Durban originally.

JF And when did you come out here?

A 1980.

JF And what brought you out here?

A I came to Rhodes to do a Degree in Journalism, it was the only English speaking university which does a degree in journalism.

JF And when you arrived did you find it a different political environment? Had you been active politically in Durban?

A No, I came straight out of school so I hadn't really been...I'd had contacts with people who were politicised, who were politically active but I hadn't been involved in any organisation at all. I was 17 when I arrived here.

JF And did you come from a liberal English speaking S.A. background or what kind of background?

A Ja, relatively speaking; my family was I suppose your average upper middle class kind of PFP type of thinking ideologically. Two important early influences I suppose, one was the fact that I went to a sort of..not alternative education institution for...as a primary school. A place called Kings which is run by a chap called Carlisle Mitchell, who was a member of the old Liberal Party and it is not fundamentally alternative in what it teaches but its style of schooling is very different. There is very little corporal punishment, very little ... all masters are addressed by their first names, no uniforms etc. That was an important influence..it was a general liberalising kind of thing.

The other was that I had people who I was really..relatives of mine who I was quite close to, specifically my uncle, at that stage was very close to people like Ric Turner etc. in Durban at the time.

And so I had from fairly early on some sort of contact with, I suppose alternative understanding in terms of ideas.

Interview: Roland White

JF What did Rick Turner represent to you?

A Well, Rick Turner...I didn't know him very well. I met him on a couple of occasions; I was in Durban at the time of his death, when he was killed by...or assassinated. So as an individual I don't think he had any great influence but it was more a contact with that kind of thing which was important I suppose.

My uncle who I was quite close to, Uncle Tony Morfat, is his name, he wrote 'Introduction to ...he worked on the Raven Edition of The Eye of the Needle which is Rick Turners book; he wrote the biographical introduction to that. He was really influential I suppose in my early development.

JF What did he do, Tony?

A He was a lecturer in the English Dept. then; He is now at UCT in the extra mural studies department.

JF What did the Rick Turner that influenced you and so on? You are saying that kind of thing. What is that?

A Well I suppose it was basically some sort of access to a liberal left ideas which was important...which I was, from fairly early on, in a complex of coordinates. My, that schooling experience, Tony Morfat himself and the people and so on that used to be at his house and that kind of thing. Generally, those, as a complex of things, I think allowed me access to ideas and so on that I wouldn't have otherwise had, coming from the kind of background that I did. Something more than your average PFP sort of understanding of the situation.

JF And when you got to Grahamstown what was the political situation or what was it like then?

A Well, there were two..I moved into a...onto Rhodes Campus. There were 2, for me anyway, fairly important organisations on Campus. The first was NUSAS and the other was a group called Phoenix, which was really a non racial student organisation, but one was really dominated by black students, but in a non racial constitution. It had very few white students in it, but at that stage I for various reasons, was fairly attracted to..was more attracted to Phoenix than I was to NUSAS, at that stage.

Phoenix representing in a fairly ultra leftist, at the end of the day

Interview: R White

A a fairly leftist kind of organisation. And being dominated by people like, I don't know if you know much about..the background of political tendencies of S.A. but dominated by people who would have some allegiance to Unity Movement ideas. And so for a while I was involved in Phoenix but by the end of the year I had in fact due to various experiences I had had in the organisation, I had actually moved out of Phoenix and became far more involved in NUSAS and other things, like DELTA, which was an organisation of campus which was oriented off towards the community and so on, than being specifically a student organisation.

JF And your political development, I take it you clearly moved further from the liberal ideas you came to campus with?

A No, I think it would be mistaken to say, I came to campus with liberal ideas. I was influenced by left liberal ideas as a..child I suppose. But then later on, by the time I was 16 or 17 I had come increasingly into contact with students and so on in Durban and around, who were very very solidly left wing. And had become increasingly influenced by their ideas.

I used to go home and spend time, not so much at home as in just student houses etc. during my matric year, my last year at school. So I actually came to university with a fairly solid...with a fairly perhaps, not that well grounded or academically, well based but an understanding of myself as more of a leftist than as a liberal.

JF And do you feel it has moved since then; You have been able to come into..or see yourself fitting into some kind of opposition politics structure since then?

A Well, it is true to say I have politically matured tremendously since then. I came in there with a lot of broad sort of feelings and so on seeing myself <sup>there</sup> as a left wing person as distinguished from a liberal. In terms of actual political maturity and that kind of thing, there is a huge difference.

JF So can you tell me..I want to focus if I can, on Grahamstown and also that I am looking at whites per se (Sure) so what was that experience for you? With the events that happened..I just wondering if the townships and resettlements areas that are around, the general political landscape affected you? Did anything happen over the years

Interview: R White

JF you've been here that made you think politically or shocked or moved you?

A No, I don't think that that...that it was that kind of external or something say, was external to the organisations or the immediate political milieu in which I moved, which actually influenced me.. I think that I came here with a certain..understanding, that I had resolved certain things at a base line level. I was committed in certain directions at that stage, even though in a fairly crude manner I suppose and a fairly immature manner.

But I did...being...moving into the organisations and..it is really the organisations themselves which from that point on, their activities etc. which are really important, I think; which for me were really important in actually maturing me politically. (NUSAS?)

Well, NUSAS was very important; there were also various incidents which not directly organisationally based, but were part and parcel of that organisational experience. EG. The trial of Guy Berger and Pele, for ANC activities in 1981. Which for me was a hell of an important political experience; not so much in terms of committing me more to the what national democratic struggle of S A, which at that stage I was fairly clear on and committed to, but more in terms of achieving an incredibly important, um...at the level of strategy and organisation and the implications, clearly complications, broadly of various things. It was a hell of an important experience.

JF It is quite vague what you are saying though? I don't now if I understand what you are saying.

A It is very difficult without going into the whole story about the trial itself I suppose. The point is really that (Sorry)

End of tape.

Side B

Roland White.

A Ja, put it this way. The point is that during that time in Grahamstown Guy and so on visited part of the political leadership at that stage for, certainly amongst NUSAS circles etc. and point to bear in mind that NUSAS then was different to what NUSAS today is, at least in Grahamstown, at Rhodes. It was nothing like a developed organisation like it is now. Never the less there was a grouping of NUSAS people on campus and Guy himself was very important in that given he had also

Interview: R White

A been very involved in Phoenix and that kind of thing.

Now there are a whole lot of experiences which that trial threw up. For eg. <sup>people</sup> had to confront issues like whether they gave evidence to the state or not, or for the state in the trial. A lot of us were subpoenaed in the trial to give evidence for the state against Guy and Devin.

JF Were you?

A I was subpoenaed at that stage. Now in the <sup>end</sup> it never came to it because in fact no one was actually called to give state evidence because the case was....admissions were made etc and so charges were changed slightly and the trial never ran the full course as was planned initially.

But the point is that issues like that, one actually having to confront the issue and work through it and work out in terms of discussions with other people etc. exactly what your position was or why should one give evidence to the state or why should one give evidence etc. Grappling with a political issue like that. For me certainly, for other people who were involved then was a hell of an important experience, and was really influential in terms of developing my understanding, my political understanding etc.

The point I am trying to make is that it wasn't...it was experiences like that, on the basis for me, of certain kind of premises or certain commitments which should have already been made; experiences like that which really emerged out of...for organisations...or the immediate political context within which I was involved. It was those kind of experiences which were actually important for developing me politically. Rather than a whole lot of external influences like a big shock in the township and so on which suddenly woke me up or something like that. It was a different kind of thing.

For eg. in 1980 in Grahamstown there was a lot of shit here in the townships caused by cops; there was a lot of unrest etc. That was important in so far as maybe it brought things home a bit more to one and that kind of thing but I don't think it made any fundamental...had any fundamental influence on the political understanding I had.

The other point is clearly there weren't nearly as many links between my immediate political context, which was NUSAS, or Phoenix, at that time and the townships as they are today.

SATA So tell me how those changes came; to take you to the point now where

Interview: R White

JF you are working with the UDF structures? What were the political developments? Again, looking at what I am interested in (Sorry) What and how a white, in an area like Grahamstown, since I have never tried to explore why it is different from Wits or other places.

A The res wasn't important for me individually.

JF Well, maybe you could talk a bit like about, since I am not going to meet so many people here, I would like to just know a bit about the climate of the whites here.

A A general picture of whites...

JF Well, let's take it from the point of view, ok, so you were saying you were in NUSAS and then, are you now a masters student or are you..

A I am registered as a masters student (do you like your job?) Ja, I have, this year not so much. Last year mainly.

JF In what field?

A Well, last year I was teaching in the Sociology and Politics departments But I am employed in a part time capacity for a resource organisation which works with mass based organisations, like the civics, and unions and so on.

JF What is it called?

A It is called the Labour and Community Resource Centre.

JF Ok, so how did you move..what did you see as your position? You talked about that trial; I am still not clear as to what you are saying, if you had to put it crudely or more blatantly than you have said it, more concretely, what would you say the trial did? For you?

A Look, I mean...maybe we could move on from that. I can only say in so far as that trial threw up, for one, for an individual like me, a whole lot of very important political issues like for eg. the issue of whether one gives evidence for the state or not in that kind of situation. That was an issue which is very sort of, unconfined in its ramifications as far as a whole lot of broader issues, like um..it

Interview: R White

A takes you into a whole lot of other areas in terms of trying to develop one's own understanding about priorities, concrete priorities in political struggle and so on. And how ones individual actions have concrete implications for those sorts of things; it brings up a question of relationships of principles, strategies and tactics etc. So it that issue takes you to a whole lot of other areas which I think are crucial for the development of any political activist. Now um, so that is really the point that I am trying to make.

JF Well, ok. What I'll ask is..let me just go right in to it and maybe pull back after this. What do you see as the role of a white S.African in the democratic struggle? I mean how could define for me how you have come to find that for yourself?

A Well, I think, that question will vary, the answer to it, will vary at any particular time according to the individual firstly and the broad conditions under which the individual is operating. For me it has meant different kinds of things; it has meant being involved with something like the Community Labour Resource Center which used to be called the Labour Research Committee, by the way. And actually playing a role there, using the resources that I have access to given my back-ground and so on and so forth.

JF Tell me specifically what you mean. A community group comes to you (Yes) and you do what?

A Well, involved in broad sort of areas..one is look there are ongoing things. If a trade union for eg. wants us to find out a particular, if it is going for wage negotiations, or other kind of negotiation, with a particular company, they want to find out a particular bit of information for that, they come and ask us, we find out and give it back to them.

The same for civics, civics need no particular bit of information, we go, we find out and give it to them. Other projects, broadly, at a more general level, say is a very, well not under present conditions, but a while ago when things weren't quite as turbulent as they are at the moment, housing was a very crucial issue for civics; they wanted to know a lot more about it. At the moment we are involved, and have been for some time now, in a sort of research information gathering project, around housing to give to civics the information.

We are involved in a bit of education and training as well. Activist training in areas like organisational skills, admin skills etc. 155

Interview: R White

A So for me it has meant actually playing a role in that sort of area. Um, with GCD, Grahamstown Committee of Democrats, something a bit different. It is...has become over the last couple of years, increasingly important area for whites, is that to basically get involved in the development of organisation in white areas with a broad, or under the broad, and with a broad, allegiance to the extra parliamentary opposition movements. Specifically in this case the UDF. And that has meant for us concretely, the organisation development of GCD, which is being launched tonight.

JF So how did that come up? UDF was formed and did that give this spurring? How did you...you are quite seemingly usefully involved with this centre. Did you feel that was one way you could contribute; that you had a duty to or responsibility to give to the white community? How did that come up because, just thinking when I first came to S.A. no one talked about whites and working with them (Sure..

A I think there is every...at a contextual level very important developments have taken place since then. Broadly I think those have been manifest in the development of the extra parliamentary movement and again specifically the UDF. That began really with the...what.. explosion flowering of organisation; use these terms; post '79 up until now particularly, I mean the whole youth organisations movement, community organisation, the unions which go back to '73 in their current form but nevertheless actually really began...it has become particularly prominent on the political scene in the late '70s early '80s. and with the development of those organisations in different areas and so on that actually culminated in the coming together of one broad uprear body, i.e. the UDF, in October 1983. Within that context it became; people who say whites particularly coming out of the student movement etc., prior to then had been involved in very low key areas. Not only low key areas but in little bits and pieces, for eg. they have been quite influential in the development of the trade union movement. Dave Lewis and people who have been involved in some of the independent unions today. They have been involved in the kind of areas which I am involved in now like resource work and so on. But the whole question of organising amongst whites hadn't been opened up as you say. With the development of UDF it actually...its development itself, in and of that, it raised the issue at first of what do whites do. As a matter of fact there was an increasing number of whites, relatively speaking it was small, but never the less relative



Interview: R White

A to itself it was actually getting bigger every year. Of whites who were coming out of the university etc being influenced by NUSAS, which was, had already picked up post 77/78 to become a far more vibrant opposition organisation. So an increasing number of ex varsity people saying well, what can I do, how can we get involved.

So on the one hand there was that development, on the other was the development of the extra parliamentary opposition movement; specifically manifest in UDF and that inevitably raised the question of what kind of gains can we make amongst the white community. The UDF baseline is a very broad baseline; an anti apartheid baseline. It is an extra parliamentary baseline. In that sense it is quite clearly distinguishable from the PFP. And the question is immediately raised, well what kind of gains can be made against whites here.

So it is within the complex of those two developments that, I think nationally was questioned an actually came to the forefront of the political agenda for people like myself and other white democrats in Grahamstown. Concretely what actually happened is that that already came together around the UDF Signature Campaign where again in every concrete form this question was raised. In general terms the the question is well, what kind of gains can we make amongst whites, on the basis of the UDF...concretely it was, well listen, where can we find as many signatures as possible; lets try the whites. I am obviously simplifying it now but still, you get the general picture.

So as a result a grouping of people got together, at that stage they called themselves Windsog, terrible name in which stood for white non students of Grahamstown. I was not involved in Windsog then simply because my political activity centred on NUSAS; at that stage I was on the UDF Regional Executive here, but had come in there from NUSAS. I was the only white in there for the Eastern Cape Executive and so I didn't really have time etc. to get involved in Windsog at that particular stage. But never the less I kept in close contact with the people who were putting it together and so on.

And then personally I joined...when it was formed as GCD. A certain amount of debate took place after the Million Signature Campaign was nearly over as to what we should do and people, I think felt that certain gains had been made; they had been able to actually make...to penetrate an area which hitherto had not been penetrated; alot of people who were the active participants and that as opposed to the passive audience of whites in general; people felt that they actually had an area here to become involved with, they hadn't actually been

Involved before and for that and a couple of other reasons it was decided

Interview: R White

A to actually turn Windsog into something more permanent, something which was not hinged to a particular campaign; which had its own dynamic to it.

JF But you say GCD is only being launched tonight so why do you say something about the past?

A Well alright the GCD exists at the moment as a steering committee and it is the job of this committee; it has been open, it has not been a closed steering committee at all, to those people who actually wish to join. GCD...windsog was that Windsog was specifically around the Signature Campaign and was hence almost ? bratted as a mini sub area committees in the white areas in Grahamstown. GCD it was then decided should actually be an independent organisation but an affiliate of the UDF, which it is. The Steering Committee has then played a role at two levels: One, in putting the organisation together in a proper sense, which is what is going to be lauded tonight; so the constitution, it has got one already, now and so on and so forth. A hell of a lot of energy has gone into structuring the organisation, to working out a programme and that kind of thing. On the other hand there have in the meantime been particular issues which people have to respond to like the Uitenhage Massacre for eg. I mean organise particular things around there so the development of GCD up until now is basically the development of the steering committee, on the one hand creating the preconditions for a more full organisation to develop, and on the other hand actually propagating itself as a particular political force in the white community; which force, hasn't up until now actually been represented in G'town.

JF Ok, a lot of what you have been saying is quite dry. I still want to get that sense of G'Town; This could be say setting up the Rondebosch area committees, a lot of what you have been saying. What's.. can you give me any story, anything more experientiel or anecdote about what it has been like doing this in G'town? What is G'town like; is it different, is it more of a challenge..what are the reactions, what is the white community like? What are you up against? Do you think it is a tougher task than the areas that are supposedly more liberal or do you think that because of its being a more intimate place, and smaller that...I just don't know what does it mean? Why did I come here to find out, what is going to be different about this place? And about whites.

Interview: R White

A I don't know if there is going to be very much. There might very well be. I don't have a concrete organisational experience of C.T., and Jo'berg and...

JF You don't have to compare it. You can just tell me what it has been like going out to whites for (Ja) to now, where it's like trying to launch this thing..have you had any..if you were to tell somebody to indicate it is all worthwhile, that some white we found, what would you tell like a story how difficult it is..

A Um, I see it as a whole range of things. Firstly, there is not the most general level; I don't..ah, I think it is different to every other place. Whether it is easier or difficult, I don't think one can say; it is entirely a relative question. In a place like C.T. for eg. you have a far broader, far bigger pool of white democrats to draw on in the first place.

I was at a meeting of the white Observatory Area Committee in G'Town, which is really ? to the UDF but is one that organises in the white areas in C.T. ja. And now..that meeting..it was actually a joint meeting of the different..ja, it was the joint meeting of the Observatory, Gardens and Claremont areas committees; Gardens one was not really there but there were a lot of people at that meeting. Must have been about 50/60 people; those are the people who are prepared to become actively involved in that kind of thing. Now for us the people who are prepared to become actively involved, to the moment, are, is the steering committee which is 14 people, right now. No 14 real ones and say 16 sometimes. It might get a bit bigger tonight when we launch..the Steering Committee itself but there is obviously a huge difference between an amount of 60 people and 14 people who can actually become involved.

So that is one of the important differences between here and the other places. But I think the same goes for Jo'berg as well. Jo'berg has a far bigger <sup>pool</sup> of white democrats to be drawn, who can be involved in the organisation.

G'town is a far smaller place though. To a certain extent I suppose a specific thing with G'town is the dominance of the university. That does have a..implications; you are already up against a fairly..the whole sort of liberalist establishment syndrome. I don't know that is not very clear I suppose but you are up against a kind of liberal ....tradition that is fairly well established. Which is not necessarily..which is not manifest in any really concrete organisational way

Interview: R White

A but which is nevertheless a force which you have to constantly grapple with. And that is very much university based. [The PFP is quite important there as well, it is important everywhere I suppose, in that particular regard. I mean clearly we are competing to a certain extent with the PFP; we are trying to win people from the left of the PFP for eg. over to our kind of position which we are not too keen about at the moment, that it would make a big difference out of but that is for tactical reasons. There is clearly a big difference between us and the PFP; fundamental difference. So there is that tension as well.

In P.E....as far as repression goes, you know...it is difficult... in Joberg there has been...<sup>clearly</sup> there has been very little repression at all. In Joberg...they...by repression I mean also these kind of right wing attacks as well, what one imagines to be right wing or security branch attacks, not open repression as it were, overt repression.

Agh, I was beaten up last year collecting signatures etc. There have been other bits and pieces of...incidents like that in G'town but it has not been too much of a...Simon Burton another quite a prominent person in the organisation, had his car burnt out last year. I have had my tyres dashed and stuff like that you know. The kind of things that people in Joberg run into....that makes things...that doesn't really make things very difficult for us. I don't think anyone is really intimidated by that and it actually gives us something quite useful for us to bounce off. We can make political capital out of those kinds of things.

As far as you know...ja, I think it is..let me explain it..we don't see ourselves, I don't think..we need more discussion nationally on this kind of thing. It is a very new area, the organisation of whites. I don't think that we are all that totally clear on exactly what theory or we have not developed a theory that coherently and so on, so we need more discussion on that. But I think there is a feeling amongst GCD that we are not developing as a mass organisation but there is no way <sup>which</sup> we are trying to organise amongst..on the kind of bases or to the extent which for eg. the civics and trade unions do. It is totally different, your class context is totally different. We are organising members of the ruling class; to put it quite crudely members of the ruling classes against their interests. GRACA and the civics and the trade unions etc are organising members of the oppressed classes in their interests.

Interview: R White

A The kind of issues that you..the basis of your organisation is entirely different. The basis of GRACS and so on - they are picking up on immediate day to day issues which effect peoples' lives directly and are trying to organise in some political direction and trying to organise around those kinds of things. Not organising around rents and wages and so on. We are organising on an ideological basis; we are trying to get people committed ideologically to something which is not in their immediate ? political interest at all, necessarily. Which is the breakdown of apartheid and so on.

So I think, you know it is..we have very very different kinds of... we are a really different form of organisation to that which exists in these things and although we..it is very important to be as wide reaching as possible, to be as outreaching as possible, we are not a narrow group of sort of hard intellectuals as it were which operate on a sort of exclusive support.

It is very important to be as far reaching as possible but we don't have any illusions as to what our..what the sort of strategic and organisational limits of ECD are. I don't think that we..we are fairly different from mass organisations in that respect but clearly we operate..we have the same goals.

JF Have you learned anything from the stage so far, with a lot of work ahead of you, about the white population of G'town? You have been here for a long time. And you know a bit about it..can you describe a bit about what the white population is about, as different from other white centres?

A Look ja, I think maybe I could flesh out a bit what I was saying earlier. I think it is probably different in that most of our area of support or what is going to be support in the end is going to come from university based or university related type institutions; we look at occupational categories for eg. the people who are going to support us are going to be people from the university, ex students etc. Academics, people who are employed in things like university, A lot of people who have been through some kind of university experience. I think that is important.

We have had very little contact, I don't think we are going to have any contact for the foreseeable future at least, with for eg the Afrikaans speaking population of the town. In so far as that is not a university population; with your white sort of petty bourgeois which is independent of the university; your small businesses and

Interview: R White

A and that sort of thing. I think that it is sort of unrealistic at the moment to think about us actually gaining any real support there. Although maybe...we will explore it certainly.

But our process of building has been very much based around the kind of people that I have mentioned; the university kind of related, in one way or another. I am just trying to think, the other sort of person will be your professional type, lawyers and stuff like that who are sympathetic and all of which have been through some sort of university training but which actually, at the moment exist independent of the university.

JF Can you think of anything specific to tell me about in your experience of trying to organise, do that outreach..I mean I am interested because I think at one point you mentioned that you kind of grappling with liberals and liberal ideas; there was a stage a few years ago where one didn't ever consider that and now there is this effort to do that outreach. I mean how did you go about approaching them, some white liberal in G'town; what did you say?

A Ja, ok. Look with the process up until now, has been, the Steering Committee has been formed by those people who are really, have moved away from an establishment liberal position. So that they broadly identify with the goals and so on of the UDF and that kind of thing with the Steering Committee. So the Steering Committee is our base ..as far as the area between then and now its launching for eg. which we have gone into gaining as many people who can be sympathetic as possible, that has basically been conducted ? drawing up recruitment lists and that sort of thing; some people who we think might be sympathetic, by that we mean people who see PFP, sort of types as well. That isn't people necessarily who we think are left to the PFP at all, at the moment; it is obviously our goal to move them.

The form that that has really taken has been multifaceted. At a formal level it has taken us to approaching individuals and sitting down with them and saying we are launching this, this is what it is about and them asking us questions and so on. And then you actually establish...you grapple with these liberal ideas in a very direct way there. And you are just trying to put where...the important thing there though is what you are trying to do, at the same time as well, is we have put our position clearly, the goals been to get people to the launch; it has not been immediately to ask them to make a choice

Interview: R White

A independent of tonight's meeting. We see the launch as being a very important organisational step which we have to go through. So there is that sort of duality of goals there. Apart from that it has been an informal thing. An eg would be that there was a discussion forum; one of the lecturers in the politics department organised this...hold an informal discussion forum from time to time. which really is a, not very many of about, the numbers at the moment get up to about 10. But of quite important sort of liberal establishment type figures in the university who go to this informal thing in the evening and you know it is...I managed to get to this thing and then it becomes important to make some kind of intervention in that forum and actually put a position in and argue with people and that kind of thing. That went fairly successfully I feel and there have been one or two other examples of that sort of thing that I...other people have been involved with.

I think again the kinds of things that we have organised there, the meeting around Uitenhage, we organised the first meeting ever I think that has not been a PFP meeting; the first public meeting within the white areas in G'town, um, was around the Uitenhage Massacre and that I think overall didn't go as widely as we thought it would; it was not as successful as we thought it might have been but I think people generally judged it as a success afterwards. We managed to fill the hall and so on, though it was just a small hall.

That was quite important intervention, showing us, responding immediately to an issue in an area, which the PFP have not done at all. Showing a level of participation of immediate response to, and a level of contact, or a level of concern that the PFP don't do. They get moving around election issues etc, put a person in parliament and wait around for another five years. I think one of our strengths is precisely that we can demonstrate a level of participation of involvement and so on of people who are concerned that the PFP can't actually do.

AF But again you really are not giving me any concrete...what involvement can you show. I mean when somebody comes and says year what am I supposed to do about Uitenhage, what am I supposed to do to show I am a democrat, what does that mean I am a democrat, what must I do? And what are you doing...what are you telling <sup>them</sup> now, that the PFP at least says well you go and put your little vote in the ballot box you come to our meetings?

A Well, listen our premise is that at the moment the kind of...an you

A will be getting a lot of this stuff tonight but I suppose the premise is that the future of S.A. at this stage rests in the hands of those who are oppressed in the present system. So it becomes our first and foremost task phrased at its most general level, to build concretely or to assist in building that movement. The movement that actually represents the interests of the oppressed, specifically for us now that means building the UDF. That is two dimension...that again is just specifically at a more concrete level, is building GCD. Now what can GCD do concretely varies with respect to whole lot of things. It might mean, you will get a whole list of stuff tonight... it means on particular occasions mobilising as extensively as possible among the white community on a particular issue like Uitenhage issues. I think again a very important point to stress is that to a certain extent we are of as great...that our extent of our usefulness, to the democratic movement and hence to the interests of the oppressed of the people in S.A., is basically to the extent that we are successful in mobilising amongst whites; the extent to which other..and the phrase.. which I like to use is the extent to which we are successful in dis-organising the whites block through actually organising a part of it. Through driving divisions, pet ideologically, driving divisions into it and so on; through us coming and creating ourselves as an organisational force. That might mean a Uitenhage meeting at particular points in time, maybe other things at other points in time. At a UDF level it means us operating in an area committee, and these are not operating now because of the ban on meetings and so on. In concert with other organisations around particular campaigns. And again, what those are and what kind of role we will actually be able to play there is really an issue which can only be described concretely with reference to a particular campaign. It might mean us going to the townships and doing some work there; it again might mean us actually maximising our feet amongst the white community. Concretely it can mean anything; it can be pamphlets, doing a bit of research, organising meetings, attending a funeral; it is I think ja, it can mean practically anything. It depends really.

JF How would you, this is a bit reiterating what I said, now you have said all this, do you think you have ? it an understanding of what the role of whites should be?

A Well, I think we are developing an understanding. I think that, again it is a question of what the role of whites should be is a question



Interview: R White

A which can only be answered with reference to the particular conditions of the struggle. And I think that at the moment we have been able to create and or are <sup>in</sup> the process of creating an organisational force which is to a certain extent appropriate to the present conditions of struggle.

End of tape.