

THE PADRAIG O'MALLEY SOUTH AFRICA PROJECT

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&
McCormack Institute University of Massachusetts Boston

2 September 2004

Mrs Hilda Bernstein
503 Horizons,
Glengariff Road,
THREE ANCHOR BAY
8005

Dear Hilda

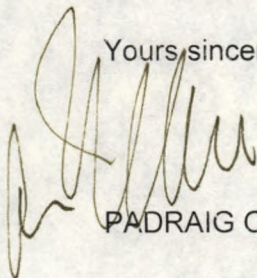
Enclosed is a transcript of our conversation on 25 August 2004. Please review it to ensure that it accurately reflects your statements and views.

I would be grateful if you would correct any misspellings of proper names or place names. You need not bother making corrections for syntax and grammar. I will attend to that in due course. Please return the corrected transcript to me at the address on this letterhead.

Thank you very much for putting aside the time to speak to me and for participating in my study. It is greatly appreciated. I look forward to speaking with you again soon.

With best wishes

Yours sincerely



PADRAIG O'MALLEY

Encl.

PO Box 64, Milnerton, 7435
e-mail: judydrew@iafrica.com
Tel/Fax: 021-5522953. Cell: 072-4314788

INTERVIEW P O'MALLEY WITH HILDA BERNSTEIN ON 25 AUGUST 2004

POM What do you like to be called?

HB Hilda.

POM Hilda. I want to talk about the period around Rivonia first, what your involvement at that time was, what the situation here in Johannesburg was with the party operating underground and now in alliance with the ANC. At that time were you a member of the Central Committee?

HB No I wasn't. My husband was. We operated in small cells and we had a District Committee, I think I was on the District Committee. I've got a very bad memory of that time, I mean a bad memory generally, so you must ask me questions and I will see what I can dig up.

POM Who else would have been on the District Committee that you can recollect?

HB Well I can remember working with Violet Weinberg. Do you know here? Well she's dead now.

POM Yes, I talked to Sheila.

HB You talked to Sheila? Yes. And also I remember either in a separate cell or unit that I was attached to, working with Mac at one time. We had a flat in Jo'burg which was rented by a woman whose name I can't remember, she was a journalist, she wasn't a member of the Communist Party but she made things available for us.

POM This was a flat in Hillbrow?

HB That's right, yes.

POM And he turned up dressed as a -

HB Delivery man.

POM That's right.

HB With a tray of fruit. That's funny, that's the one thing that I remember. Why has it made such a deep impression?

POM Because he was taking precautions.

HB Yes, because it was white's only in those days had these flats in Hillbrow. If you say blacks they were either the domestic workers wearing their suits that they wore, the domestic suits, or delivery boys and girls, that's all they were. So it made meeting difficult for us all. You know I keep thinking about it and I think we risked so much and we seemed to be busy the whole time and plotting and planning and I don't think we made the least effect upon what was happening and the changes that were going on.

POM What were you plotting and planning?

HB What were we plotting and planning? Well there was one branch which was plotting blowing up pylons and things of that kind. I didn't belong to that. I know about them but I didn't belong to them. Illegal literature, getting out literature to distribute among people underground, to organise people and so on against the government, against what they were going, apartheid generally. I've got a book, I don't know if you've read it, *The World that was Ours* and I don't know how much -

POM I haven't, no.

HB *The World that was Ours* I called it. You see these white packets, I've just collected copies from the Post Office. Take one of them and open them. I just got these copies today from the publishers in England. They've reprinted the book which came out quite a long time ago. They are reprinting books written by women that have fallen out of print.

POM And they are reprinting them? That's beautiful.

HB They're reprinting them and they reprint them all with these covers and with different end papers designed for the book. They're nice to handle.

POM This is published by?

HB Persephone.

POM Persephone Books.

HB They'll be available at Clarks. I know that Clarks have ordered some.

POM Terrific. I will get that. You were edit or *The Freedom Fighter*? Or you worked for Ruth First on it, a little paper, a publication called *The Freedom Fighter* with Paul Trewhela. Does that name strike you?

HB Yes, yes. I know he gave evidence afterwards this chap, Paul, didn't he?

POM He what?

HB He gave evidence against us I think, as far as I remember.

POM Paul Trewhela did?

HB Do you know him?

POM I know he's in London.

HB Oh he's in London. No, he fell out politically with the whole sort of communist, the group that was communist and became very bitter about

them. So you might find him interesting if you can get in touch with him. He'd have a different angle on things.

POM He said he spent time in prison.

HB Yes he did.

POM Then he would hardly have given state's evidence.

HB No, he didn't give state's evidence.

POM He said he went to London and he and Pallo (Jordan) and Mbeki's brother left the ANC for a period over the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia.

HB I don't remember that but that must be true I am sure.

POM For a while Mbeki's brother became a Maoist and Pallo came back to the party and Paul went his own way. But he is, he is very much on to the communist control of the ANC.

HB Yes, he was very bitter about it. I get copies from time to time of the New York Review of Books and there was a very angry letter from him there about something. I haven't got it any more.

POM Why would he have become bitter?

HB I don't know. Why would he have become bitter? Perhaps because he thought that the Communist Party was following the wrong policy and wouldn't listen to him or something of that kind.

POM You were in London at that time, right?

HB Yes.

POB And the party did support the Soviet invasion?

HB Yes, it was very, very pro-Soviet, very much - anything that the Russians did in the party's eyes was correct.

POM To what do you attribute this kind of almost slavish acceptance of what the Soviet's did as being correct?

HB Well you see you're entering the area of philosophy. I've often thought about it, about the need for everybody to believe in something, to have something bigger than themselves, something outside of themselves. People are always seeking for the meaning of life and if you're not religious, and a lot of people aren't religious, what is the meaning of life? To us at that time working together in an organised movement that had rules and attitudes and that had comradeship, that you were working with other people who thought like you, gave important meaning to our lives.

POM You have to create meaning in order to live.

HB Yes, exactly.

POM So it was like a created meaning.

HB Yes. However, when I finally – people say, well if you don't believe in God and you don't believe in this, what is the meaning of life? And I say the meaning of life is to live. That's all. And it's very hard for people to accept that. They want something bigger than themselves. We did too, I did as well.

POM But would there be, I'm using the Soviet invasion of then Czechoslovakia because I remember it so vividly myself, I was just at the age of becoming aware of – though I had been aware as a child of the – we could hear it on the radio in Dublin, the pleas coming out of Budapest when the Hungarians rose up against the Soviets. Now what I am trying to understand is here you are, educated, in educated circles –

HB Intellectual but not educated. I was never educated.

POM OK! Some people would prefer to be called intellectual rather than educated. You prefer the reverse.

HB No, I prefer to be an intellectual rather than educated.

POM Living in what would be then a free society with all the amenities of freedom of speech and things like that around you –

HB You're talking about England?

POM England, yes. And yet you could look at, having access to a fair cross-section of the news, not all biased, but here you see a clear invasion of what appears to be a democratic dispensation in the making by tanks.

HB Well I'll tell you, as far as I am personally concerned, 1956 was a key year for me but not because of the Soviet invasion, it was because of the revelations of Khrushchev, the 20th Congress. I can remember that very vividly. I was walking around Johannesburg with a teenage daughter who wanted a special dress. Now if you've ever had a teenage daughter looking for a special dress you'll know that it's a harrowing and wearying experience and I was confronted with a poster, tied to a lamppost, which said "Khrushchev revelations at 20th Congress", or words to that effect. That had an immediate on me. I then knew absolutely whatever it was in my mind, in my heart, that all those things we in the Communist Party had been denying and saying were lies and capitalist propaganda, that they were true and this poster was a revelation of what was going on. I can't go on telling you all the different personal things. I mean there was a stage at which I could have left my husband over this because we disagreed so deeply and I felt so strongly about it.

POM His point was that?

HB He stayed with the Communist Party line and I didn't.

POM That's the Communist Party?

HB The Communist Party supported everything the Soviet Union did.

POM So when these revelations came -

HB I knew they were true and I didn't believe in it anymore.

POM And he said no.

HB Well we had a fight, battle that went on into the small hours of the morning and only ended when I refused to talk any more. The personal revelations these are. Over the years I think that his attitude came to change but exactly at what point and when I don't know but he remained, he was a leading member of the Communist Party on the Central Committee before and underground and everything like that and in exile, and I accommodated myself by refusing to discuss the thing with him any more. It was a question either of leaving and we had, at that time we'd got four children and we had three dependent children, we had no money, we had no jobs, and there wasn't any possible way in which we could have separated economically and so on. So we stayed on and over the years I think he gradually came to accept what I had accepted a long time ago about the Soviet Union and the Communist Party.

POM But come 1968 you still find yourself supporting the - ?

HB Not me.

POM You weren't.

HB No.

POM But the SACP did.

HB Yes.

POM Again, I'm trying to get into the mind of it, why in its inner self would it not condemn it when the Czechs were looking for no more than what they were looking for in South Africa?

HB Why the party would not condemn it, you mean? Because they stuck rigidly to the line that the Soviet Communist Party was - this was the senior party, these were the people who knew everything. When you look at the history of it of course they came knowing as little about democracy, in fact less, than any other country probably in the European diaspora did. But at that time this was the belief of the communists that these were the ones who held the truth.

- POM It was unquestioned. It was in fact a secular religion.
- HB That's right. You're quite right, it was. That's my opinion anyway.
- POM That's fine. That's living at the moment, OK. Mac says that the news of your escape -
- HB Liberated him.
- POM Yes, because he had to find a way out, how to deal with a linotype machine and he used to bring it as an underground wheeler dealer to - he led them to your place once he knew you had gotten out of the country.
- HB That's true, yes.
- POM Do you have any memories of him prior to his arrest other than the one of his coming to the house in Hillbrow?
- HB I also must have met him when - I was in Lusaka for a while as well staying at my son's place there and I think I must have met him at that time. You know I've got a really terribly poor memory, very vague memory, but I know that I knew Mac. I liked him very much, still do, don't see him any more. I mean I'm not one of those who would line up against him or anything like that.
- POM Well he's done a lot for the country. He did more than anybody in a lot of ways. He was the only one here in the end. But do you have any recollections of him when he brought - because he sent Rusty, he had Mandela's autobiography to him. Ultimately it came after he got out of prison, he had it sent to Durban and it was Phyllis Naidoo who sent it to Rusty and then Mac when he escaped from South Africa, got to Lusaka and came to London, then he went to Oxford and got the manuscript from Rusty.
- HB You know, it was funny, Rusty never knew what was in that manuscript. He was asked to take charge of it and he's the kind of man, he hasn't got any - call it prurient curiosity, whatever it is. He was given to take charge of it and that was all he was prepared to do. He didn't ever look to see what that manuscript was and he handed it over without knowing what it was, and looked after it.
- POM That might be pure discipline. He was told to take charge, he wasn't told to look at it.
- HB No, it was also his personality. He was like that.
- POM Do you remember any discussions at the time over whether or not the manuscript should be published?
- HB No I don't remember.

- POM Because what I have gleaned is that Joe Slovo objected to it being published because he said it didn't tell the truth and that in fact Mandela had been a member of the party for a period and that he should have said that in the autobiography.
- HB Well Mandela denies that he was ever a member of the party but I can tell you that he was a member of the party for a period.
- POM You see Mandela says, because Mac says Mandela says, "If I am asked, if you mean was I a card-carrying member of the party, I was never a card-carrying member." But who was carrying around a card in their back pocket saying - so Mandela has a little laugh about it saying he always outsmarts the questioner by saying, well if you asking me was I this, I say no. So he's never been asked - in the same way as Walter Sisulu was never asked whether he was.
- HB So in effect he has admitted to the fact by this -
- POM Well he will obliquely. He will say, "If I'm asked the question, this is the answer I always give, so then you can infer what you want from my answer. If you're smart enough you'll infer the right thing. But if you don't really want me to be one -", you know.
- HB That's right, you could do so.
- POM Can you put a period on when he was in the party?
- HB Well it was that time of great illegality. Did you ever hear about Cecil Williams, the man who was Mandela was driving when they were arrested?
- POM Yes.
- HB It was the time at that particular period, I can't place it.
- POM That would be 1962.
- HB Would it? Yes, a couple of years before we left. I wasn't on the highest echelons of the party. My husband Rusty was and I know that he got news of the fact that Mandela had been arrested on his way back from Durban from some conference or other they went to. That's all I remember about that time. It was shattering, that was all. But certainly Mandela was a member of the Communist Party. If he chooses to deny that he was a card-carrying member, all right, that's fine.
- POM But he wasn't in the command structure?
- HB I don't know whether he was or not. I can't say definitely that he was or wasn't. I can't tell you that.
- POM Who's alive from that period of time that might be able to throw some more light?

- HB I don't know. Who do you know around this Mac circle and so on? Are they all people who had nothing to do with that time?
- POM Yes, basically. You know Kathrada, Laloo Chiba, people who were with him in jail. Well now Wilton Mkwayi who's died. Steve Naidoo. Steve Naidoo is now in Bournemouth. Paul Trehwela is married to the sister of the woman who is married to Steve Naidoo.
- HB All right, there's a connection there.
- POM And of course Vella Pillay just died about a month ago. So that was why they held the book up because Slovo was saying that Mandela wasn't telling the whole truth about his involvement on how MK was founded because he founded MK as a member of the party, not as a member of the ANC.
- HB I see. I didn't know that.
- POM Maybe it's just as well because if it had been published then it wouldn't have been an international best seller. Now he can set up two foundations out of the royalties he's getting.
- HB Yes I know and he's got all these secretaries dealing with all the different departments, Nelson Mandela departments of one kind or another, so it's great that he ended up there. It's only right.
- POM What is your memory of him?
- HB Always a man who had the bearing of authority, which I think that he got from the time that he was born because he was groomed to be a minor chief in the Transkei, a leader of people. He had that all his life and he had a responsibility towards people all his life as a man of authority would have, that he's in charge and he's responsible for a great deal of people. Very positive. In fact, I don't know whether other spoken about when he was in jail, but I heard a report that even the warders treated him with greater respect than any black man they've ever treated in jail at that time because there was something about him; you just had to respect him.
- POM He had charisma.
- HB He did, tremendous charisma.
- POM Presence.
- HB It was something from his childhood, brought up believing that he is a leader of man, even if it was a small tribe in the Transkei or whatever it was, and he carried that with him all his life.
- POM Do you remember, let me go backwards; the party in the UK, you had your husband, you had Joe Slovo, you had Dr Dadoo, yourself, you were still

active in it, who else were the principals in London at that time after you left the country?

HB I'm just trying to put my memory back to that particular time.

POM How did the party work? Did it send people - in the UK was it still very white?

HB When you say was it still very white, it wasn't very white when it was in South Africa. You mean the leadership? Well of course I remember the leadership of when it was people like J B Marks and Moses Kotane who were the leading figures in the Communist Party and they were very black and they commanded a lot of authority in their own circles. So I don't think of the party as being very white. I suppose it was because we worked in different groups. You know a lot of it was purely residential, you couldn't get around into other areas. The party was more or less organised on people within a certain area who could get together reasonably easily. We lived in a white suburb so we were in contact with whites.

POM When you moved to the UK was the party centred in London?

HB The party headquarters were supposed to be centred in Africa and for a while they were, as far as I remember, in Dar Es Salaam and later on I think in Lusaka. The idea was that the party was still based in Africa, we were South African communists in exile. The leadership didn't come from us living in Europe and Britain and so on but came from those who were still in Africa and had more available contact with people in South Africa.

POM But Joe Slovo was stuck in London for quite some time.

HB For some time but then he gave up his, whatever he was doing, and became a full time functionary of the party and was travelling around for them, wasn't he, as far as I know.

POM How do you remember Joe?

HB Oh. How do I remember him? You mean as a personality, in what way?

POM Both, as a personality and as a thinker, strategist. How would you compare him to Ruth First? You put one in one corner and one in the other and it's like a prize fight. In this corner we have Ruth First, Ruth weights 160 pounds, she comes in with megaton brains. In that corner you have -

HB I'd back Ruth First any day. Joe was an extremely pleasant fellow. When he came to our house all the kids would say, "Hello Joe, what do you know?" This was the phrase, hello Joe, what do you know. He was popular with people he was pleasant and so on and he was indiscreet, he like people to know, he would sort of hint at things that he was doing because it's very difficult to keep absolutely - pretend you're nothing and nobody and doing nothing when you're actually involved in something that you consider to be

of primary importance. And Joe wasn't somebody who kept things totally and absolutely under cover to himself.

Ruth was different. You can't ask me anything, to tell you anything unpleasant about Ruth because I absolutely loved her and adored her. I think she was a brilliant person. She inherited from her mother a waspish tongue which alienated a lot of people but underneath she was a very vulnerable person.

POM Was Joe what one would say a hard-line Stalinist?

HB Yes. Yes I think he was, I think my husband was too.

POM I'm trying to get a definition from people of what they mean by being Stalinist?

HB I suppose, because this was the first Communist Party that had taken power in a country and had set up what they claimed was a socialist system, that they then occupied in the minds of left leaning people, they occupied the position of the leaders, the ones who knew and so on. When I now, I mean this is hindsight after God knows how many years, look back and think about the people who took over in the Soviet Union, how little experience they themselves ever had of democracy or anything. They went from a Tsarist system to a Soviet system. The whole picture that we had in those days I think was very distorted and very unreal. It didn't make us any less passionate in our beliefs.

POM Did being a Stalinist mean a certain kind of inflexibility and rigidity?

HB Yes, and also it meant that you accepted the fact that the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, because of its primary position in the world as the only country that had set up a so-called communist society, that it occupied this premier position and that you had to follow its lead or its line in whatever they did.

POM I see an odd thing here, is that if you have the Catholic Church that believes in the infallibility of the Pope, you had all these communist parties that believed in the infallibility of the Soviet system.

HB I think that's more or less, that would be my opinion.

POM So you could switch the two?

HB No you couldn't. I've still got remnants of my antagonism towards religion which won't let me put the two on a par. But, yes, it's a kind of - I don't know what you call it any more, but you want to be led, you want to believe in something and you want to have people to whom you can look up to, whose lives you can regard as worth living that you'd like to be too. At least, I don't know, I don't know what ordinary people do who are not religious. I mean this country is an extremely religious country, it absolutely drives me mad.

They have religion on the radio in the mornings and everything. I come from England which has got over that.

POM It's funny, America is just going back into it.

HB Oh they never got out of the mire. My opinion of America.

POM We won't talk about America. I have the same beliefs as you have, OK. It just puts your blood pressure up. As long as Bush has been (there) that's the mandate of the hour.

HB Well it's wonderful to have an idiot who can't even talk properly as the most powerful leader of the most powerful nation in the world, isn't it? He's incredible this man.

POM When you were in London what was the party doing? What was Joe doing as a full time functionary of the party? It had an office?

HB Yes it did have an office at one time and Sonia Bunting was in charge of the party office. It was just off Charlotte Street, that's one thing that's stuck in my memory. It used to bring out the magazine, the African Communist. That was the base of it there and Sonia had a lot to do with the editing of it and so on.

POM What would Joe be doing?

HB You see he was up there and I didn't know what they were doing up there, running around certain places in Africa I suppose, organising, getting people together, trying to raise money for the party. I don't know. I don't remember all that.

POM When did you come back to South Africa.

HB I came back last November. I had visited prior to that, my husband and I came over in 1992 and again in 1994 we came before the elections, to take part in the elections. *(telephone interruption)*

... and if things are not happening then you have to think of what you can do to make things happen.

POM So when you came back, what were the biggest differences in the country? You'd been out of the country now since 1964 to 1992.

HB It's rather difficult for me to judge because we were Jo'burg people. I've never lived in Cape Town before. We used to visit the Cape on holidays but we didn't come to Cape Town. So in a sense I've got to get used to living in Cape Town first, the whole idea of being in a city which is not mine, which I don't know, but which I'm prepared to accept because I think it's one of the most beautiful cities in the world so I'm prepared to adopt it as my city. Last month I went up with my daughter to - we went to Pretoria and then we went to Jo'burg and had a look at our old house where we used to live and so on, and that all seems such a hell of a long way in the past. Look, I'm 89,

that's a very ancient age to be. I suppose the connections your neurons can make are infinitesimal but I think they get worn out when you get old.

POM You're just the same age as my mother.

HB Does she talk a lot, like me?

POM No. Her memory of very recent thing is very poor but her memory of things a long time ago is more perfect than it ever was.

HB Yes, that happens to people.

POM I began to record her, an oral history of when she was growing up. So do you like the South Africa you're living in now?

HB Yes. I think it's an amazing country and I think the fact that the transformation of the past ten years has taken place so peacefully without force of arms and so on has been wonderful. I mean there are all kinds of things that one can dislike and judge and so on. I think it's an amazing country and the model in many ways to the rest of the world about what can be done in the transference of power which is the important thing. I don't know to what extent underlying power of the huge companies in the mining field and other places and so on are in the hands of ordinary black people as well as white or whether the high echelons are still - I don't know about that but they're amazing changes.

POM How did Rusty feel about it?

HB Well the last time he was here was 1994 and I think we were all very happy at that time. Did I come with him later than that? I must have done. It's another thing I can't remember.

POM This wasn't the socialist paradise, or committed to being the socialist paradise that had been the central belief of his life? Did he still remain, continue to remain a member of the party?

HB Yes he did.

POM Did he still believe in - what did he believe in then? Or didn't you talk about it?

HB I don't really know.

POM Did you say at the end, "I'm right."

HB No. I made a choice to preserve my marriage.

POM Did you leave the party?

HB When I said I'm going to leave the party, Joe Slovo said, "You can't leave the party." So in a way I didn't leave, I simply slid out.

POM The same way as Thabo did?

HB Did he?

POM Well Thabo was a member. He was in the politburo.

HB Yes, yes.

POM He just ceased to be one.

HB That's right. Yes.

POM And Jacob Zuma.

HB Yes, I was never in touch with Zuma so I didn't know him. I knew Thabo when he was a student in Sussex.

POM How was he as a student? What do you remember of Thabo?

HB That's the only time I remember him because he was a student at Sussex and London was this kind of centre of the South African exiles, left wing exiles, so that whenever there was an important rally or meeting or something these people used to come. But I haven't got any very strong memories of him.

POM How about Govan?

HB Yes. Now there was a rigid communist if you ever wanted to meet one. He was - I don't know if you've read any books about the Rivonia trial, about the trial where Govan gave evidence. Percy Yutar the prosecutor accused him of having a smooth and friendly demeanour but being very strong, left wing and so on, which was true. I don't think Govan and Thabo got on very well, that's my own opinion.

POM How about Govan and Nelson?

HB I don't know. I think that they must have - as far as I know they got on well.

POM They were locked up together for twenty odd years, you'd better learn to get on together.

HB Yes, exactly, yes. Well they did, didn't they? I mean they made their prison their own university.

POM Now Mac says, and this is just a memory thing, he says that Govan didn't join the party until - it would have been that he wasn't on any banned - the first time he was banned was in 1962, When the state published a list of people of communist banned that he wasn't on it.

HB Named people.

POM Yes, in the named people.

HB I wouldn't know about that, whether that's so.

POM So when you say there was a kind of a rigid man, what do you mean by that? Was it that in any discussion he had one dogmatic way of looking at things and wouldn't yield on any point?

HB Well I got the impression that he was dogmatic. I can't think back of what meetings or what incidents made me think this, but that's the feeling I have mainly.

POM How did Ruth First work among all those men? One would assume it was a very gender insensitive male society.

HB She got away from them as fast as she could, as far as she could, taking her job up at a university, where was it?

POM In Maputo?

HB No before that, in England, up north somewhere. Ruth was too, I think she was too clever for the male dominated society.

POM In the family, between the two of them, who was the strategist? She?

HB Or Joe?

POM Yes.

HB Joe because he occupied the leading positions. Ruth wasn't so involved at the top.

POM But had Joe what you would call, you describe Ruth as being brilliant, how would you describe Joe?

HB Clever.

POM Clever. The clever people inherit the earth, that's the problem.

HB I'm very biased on this subject.

POM I can see that. Just a slight bias!

HB Yes.

POM I tell you what, we will leave it there for today and have Judy transcribe things and then we can go back and you can begin to fill in the gaps. But for
89 -

(End of side 1 of tape.)

POM ... just to talk on events, but on any question that requires a bit of thought you can answer perfectly. Your personality and your thoughts come out very clearly.

HB Well the thing is that when you live on your own you've got to have something to occupy your mind otherwise you'll just flop out and die I suppose, which I will do eventually. And therefore I have to keep an interest in what's going on around me and so on. I form my opinions but I don't want to participate any more.

POM You don't want to participate any more?

HB No, it's lovely to be on the outside and to criticise everybody else.

POM How many meetings do you think you've been at in your life?

HB Millions. In fact I've been writing about that. Millions, thousands of boring meetings, a lifetime spent at boring meetings. Just one of things I've been occupying myself by writing, not biography, but sort of political memoirs of what I remember of being in the movement and the things that we did and so on and I've written a whole chapter on boring meetings that we went to.

POM That's the chapter title, "Boring Meetings".

HB Yes, oh yes.

POM That's good, you're still trying to do some writing.

HB You've got to do something. I've got to do something. What do you think about when you go to bed at night? You've got to do something to put yourself to sleep. No you have to focus on something. All right I've got family but that's a support system, it's not a totally fulfilling system. It's great, in fact I think one of the best things I ever did was having my children. I am very pleased with the way they've turned out and what they're all doing and so on. So I get a lot of satisfaction from that. I get a lot of support from them and, as you can hear, my son keeps a close eye on me and what I'm doing.

POM That's what sons are for. Once again it's a man you see. You should say - I was going to say something that would be gender wrong so I won't.

JD Daughters also do this.

HB It's not a question of also. Yes but they do, they all do it.

POM If you have your son's address, Patrick's address, that would be terrific. I will ring him and tell him - does he call you regularly?

HB No, but we e-mail from time to time and there's a kind of network. He's in touch with his siblings, they pass on news backwards and forwards.

END OF INTERVIEW.

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