BARBEN, TANYA, (FORMERLY SIMONS) 28 August 2019, Cape Town

Interviewer: Debbie Budlender. DB

Interviewee: Tanya Simon. TS

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DB Right, so, we've got Tanya Barben with us. It's Debbie Budlender and Paula Ensor are doing this interview. We're going to start, Tanya. Just firstly, thank you for agreeing to be interviewed.

TS Great pleasure.

DB Can you tell us something about your early life? So, where you were born, where you grew up, where you went to school and yes.

TS Sure. Very boring, born in Cape Town, 4 June 1948, a few days after the National Party came into power, and as a result of this, I was premature born, two months early. I was one of a twin, I didn't know this until I was 13. My twin died shortly after birth. I was born in the Booth Memorial Maternity Hospital, which is just up the road in Upper Orange Street.

And I grew up [unclear], number 13 Bridle Road. My older sister, my younger brother, and my parents, of course. My parents were politically active. My mother was banned very early on and wasn't able to work. She was working in the trade union. She got a job with Jack Tarshish I think. He was also banned at some stage, went into prison, I remember.

And so, I remember coming home from school and seeing my mother having one- to-one conversations with significant people. My father was an academic at the university. He was also very active, he was involved in the first of the Freedom Trials.

He was actually a very present parent, far more than my mother was. My mother was very active, very busy unionising. Sometimes we went on unionising trips with her. I remember going to Lambert's Bay as a child, going to Port Elizabeth and East London and Durban.

In fact, at the end of next week I'm going to be in Lambert's Bay which is the first time I will have been there since I was a child. So, I'm quite looking forward to this. I remember the very long sand, one was able to walk towards the waves at low tide because there was a long stretch of beach. I might of course be wrong, but this is what I remember.

My parents' political life always impacted us in one way or another. In 1960 there was an emergency, if you remember. Well, just two things. I remember being taken by my father to the edge of what is now Philip Kgosana Drive to see Philip Kgosana lead the thousands into Cape Town.

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Which is something really, it's now called Plantation Park. But sitting at the edge of De Waal Drive and I also remember the helicopters going over Cape Town when there were the disturbances in Langa, following Sharpeville. And it so happened that my grandmother, my father's mother, died on 21 March, on that same day.

So, there were a lot of memories about that time. I was supposed to be having one of my many operations on my eyes, because I was squint, and that was postponed, I think, or cancelled. And then of course, we went off on holiday, where we had a house in Onrus near Hermanus, that's one of the major memories of my childhood.

Well, there are many things I remember living right on the slopes of Table Mountain and going for walks with my father and in winter collecting mushrooms with him. But going for a walk almost every day with my father, the dog and he taught me about nature, and we talked about Dr Schyff who had produced these wonderful books on nature for children. And I learnt a lot about our natural environment.

And then going to Onrus on holidays where we had a lovely holiday house. We started camping first of all and then after a year, my mother, my maternal grandmother died, and she left my mother a little bit of money. She was able to buy a house in Onrus and then a few years later it was extended and done up and we had electricity and hot water and we went every single holiday with one exception which I'll tell you about.

So, in 1960, the emergency begins, and my parents come back to Cape Town and almost immediately my parents disappear. They go into hiding and my father's cousin Shirley Fiddler comes and looks after us. And this was quite difficult, it was a long period. I remember going to Gordon's Bay to see my mother when she was in hiding. My father of course had been arrested in his office at the university and was taken initially to Roeland Street and then later on to Simondium which I think is now Victor Verster Prison.

DB Okay.

TS I mean it was a small prison. And in fact, in the Simons collection at UCT there is wonderful correspondence between our father and us while he was in prison. Really wonderful.

DB Oh.

TS Yes, just prior to their disappearing our dog had given birth to puppies, so that was a great joy and activity, and I was rather angry when my father gave one of the puppies away to the prison wardens, but anyway.

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This continued until sometime in June I think, maybe late May when he was released. And I remember this, another thing I remember…

DB And your mother was still in hiding?

TS My mother was still in hiding. I remember this also very clearly because that particular weekend, I had been persuaded by a friend to spend the weekend with

her. And then I discovered that my father had been released from prison. And I was torn between my social obligations and my great desire to see my father.

And strangely enough, my friends' grandmother, who lived also in Oranjezicht, had a pot of chicken soup on the stove. And for this reason, I remember the smell of chicken soup and something I like eating it, but I hardly ever make it because of this very particular smell of Jewish chicken soup. There's a particular kind of fatty smell about it.

Right, okay. So, this is 1960 that July holidays, instead of going to our house in Vermont, we spent the holidays at the home of Kathleen Murray Parker who was a, sorry Kathleen Murray, who was a very early apple farmer in Elgin. And she had a wonderful farm in Elgin which we also visited and this cottage in Voëlklip, and we spent a very lovely holiday there. A stone's throw from the beach. It was a double story house, so it was my first experience of banisters.

I'm too old now, you see, I mean it's ridiculous, but these are the things I remember. And in winter it was a very wild winter, and we were going for long, long walks along Grotto Beach with my dog.

DB And your father was with you?

TS My father was with, yes. And my mother. My mother had come out of hiding.

DB Oh.

TS But they had gone to Hermanus rather than Onrus, basically to keep away from the usual prowling Security Police. And of course, at the end of, in 63 there is word that all the communists are going to be banned. I think the first one was Eddie Roux, and one has this intimation of a dramatically changing lifestyle for us.

And of course, at the end of 64 my father was banned, and we were on holiday in Onrus when the banning order was delivered. He was given permission to stay in Onrus until the end of the school holidays and then I came back, and I went into boarding school.

DB And you what standard at that stage?

TS I was going in Standard 9. I was 16 but I think I was quite an immature 16-year old. My pleasures were reading, spending time at home.

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I was going to be a vet you see, so spending time with my dogs, my dog or in various forms. And I went into boarding school where I was not very happy at all and I used to run away and go down to the National Library or the South African Library were my father happened to be doing some research in the Afrikaner section. And then he would take me to Mark's Coffee Shop for coffee and then I would go up, and then he would go up back home and he would drop me off. And I would creep into the school and this sort of became a regular. I missed home terribly.

In May, father was subpoenaed to appear in a court case. The Rowley Arenstein trial, you know about this. And on those grounds, he was given an exit permit and my mother was given an exit permit. And he left by train to go to Durban, I remember saying goodbye to him with Mary and Johan and David Welsh at the Cape Town Station.

Oh, the other thing that he used to do was to take me to Garlicks to have waffles. And I think that the afternoon that he left, we went to Garlicks and we had waffles.

And then my mother travelled up to Zambia through the Transkei with the son of a friend, Mervyn Bennen. I don't know if you know?

DB Oh yes.

TS Yes, okay.

Then she met my father in Durban and they went up through Rhodesia, which was then Southern Rhodesia and I think they were stopped at the border and they had a few troubles. Zambia has recently become independent and they were certainly trailed by, if not the South African Security Police, by the Rhodesian Security Police and then they arrived in Lusaka. Staying for a little while with a man called Barney Simon.

Barney, I don't know, I can't remember his name. Barney somebody. And while they were there they found a plot and decided that was where they were going to settle. But my father was initially going to Manchester where he was taking up a Lord Simon fellowship in Didsbury. And he was there in Manchester for a year and a half, so I visited them in Zambia twice, in Manchester twice.

I was clearly very unhappy in boarding school, I remember I got glandular fever, I was very ill. And I remember so clearly, don't cry please (crying).

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Standing in the assembly and the tears running down my cheeks because I was so worried about my parents for such a long time. Very worried. I was feeling so miserable and unhappy. I visited them at the end of the year, 1965.

And in 1966 and 1967 I came to UCT. And then every long holiday I would go up to Zambia to spend some time there. They moved to Zambia in 1967 and actually there's a little book called *A House in Zambia* which is about their home in Zambia which was bought by Oxfam and became and still is the Oxfam headquarters in Lusaka for Central Africa.

And I've written a chapter in this book about living in that house and my own experience with that house.

So, every holiday I would go up to Zambia.

DB The long holidays?

TS The holidays. And my mother would inevitably disappear to do whatever she had to do, and I was left alone to look after my dad and he was, after a few years, he became a professor of sociology at the university. So, I would entertain his

guests and his, what are they called? External examiners. And my father was a vegetarian, so I learnt to become quite a good cook catering for vegetarians and for non-vegetarians.

My father had a sweet tooth, and I would make cakes and cookies and biscuits for him. And yes, I think that is what stood me in good stead later. And then of course, I started working and these long holidays came to an end because I could only go up during my leave period.

But the pattern was the same. My mother would disappear, and I would be left. She wouldn't disappear all the time, but I would be left looking after my father which was actually quite wonderful.

In 1974, I met my later husband, Heinz Barben and then in 1976, of course on the 23rd. Right, 1976 was of course, 16th June was the Soweto uprising, and I was working in the library. There was a lot of consternation in the library. Certainly, there was a lot of jitteriness and paranoia on the part of the National Party government and there had been a number of bannings.

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And I remember that Sheila Weinberg was banned and others. And then on 23rd

DB November.

TS November. I must just tell you, the 22nd November I did something I had never ever done before, and I took an uncatalogued book that would have been a banned book from Special Collections which was where I was working. To take it home to read it and it was Hugh Lewin's *Bandiet*. There was this knock at my door at about 2:30 and I though oh gats, they're coming to get *Bandiet*. But it wasn't that at all, they came to deliver, serve me with a banning order.

And they left and the first thing I did was to phone Mary and tell her that she must disappear because they were going to come and get her. And she said, no. They'd been already. I think another group was with her and she shouted and said, what are you doing with my sister? And then a couple of hours later, there was a (knocking), and my passport was taken away.

And yes, I mean life changes. I was no longer able to work. I had the library in a tizz. They didn't know what to do with me. Didn't know what to do. Who was going to fill my place at work? There was concerns about finances and the university, very generously. There was a meeting of Council I think. Very, Neville Curtis I think was very large responsible for this. Had he left already?

DB Neville had left.

TS Okay. So, who else would have been? One of the NUSAS people went to speak to Sir Richard Luyt and suggested that Council.

DB Fink maybe?

TS It wasn't Fink. Council continued to pay Mary and I during the course of the banning order on condition that we aren't found guilty of any crime, which was

really very generous of them. So, we remained with our pensions and our medical aid, but I don't think there were any increments. But it was wonderful.

So, what do you do with yourself? I was living in my little cottage in Observatory, which you know very well. Number 121 Rochester Road. And my landlady wasn't happy. So, I actually moved out of that cottage and I lived in 123, the one next to her, next to it. And my then boyfriend who was in furniture design and manufacture fitted out my house for me. It was very comfortable.

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And I had to find something to do with myself. I know that what I did do initially was spend a lot of money that I didn't have on buying books and things. But I think that Theo Kotze came to visit me, and we decided that I would register for a law degree at UNISA which was actually a terrible mistake. I should never have done it. I'm not really sufficiently disciplined to do long distant learning and I liked elements of it.

But I didn't like many things. Criminal law was just horrible. Anyway, I struggled I suppose. I completed the first year and at the end of 77, it was quite clear that my landlady who also owned the cottage next door to me, but her niece and her husband had been living there any they handed over the cottage and their cat to me. The cat was actually shot. The cat was a beautiful Persian cat called Gollum. Somebody shot him with a, what are those things called? A pellet gun.

And I was told that I had to get out and I couldn't find anything. Anywhere to live. Who the hell would take a banned person? First of all, I must tell you that I had been initially confined to the magisterial district of Wynberg although I was actually living in Cape Town. So, I was in a strange situation where I was allowed to see Mary in Wynberg but I couldn't go to Sea Point or Cape Town to spend time with my husband and my boyfriend or visit my elderly aunt in Sea Point. And couldn't of course go to any of the beaches. The kind of thing that one did in summer.

And I had to get permission from I don't know which magistrate you saw. Was it the man in Wynberg? Rorich?

DB Yes Rorich.

TS Who I found rather kind and terribly embarrassed about what it was he had to do. Because we had to ask for permission to do just about everything. We had an aunt living in Pinelands, I had to get permission to see her. I had to get permission to spend time with my husband's son. I'm going to refer to him as my husband.

Guy, who was at boarding school and whom I looked after. Heinz's daughter, Bridget had left South Africa in 74. 76 sorry. So, that was actually another blow to us. She went over to Switzerland to spend time with her mother and didn't come back. And the custody of the children was changed, and I was made responsible for this little one. I had political friends who were unsuitable. And my family was not kosher in terms the ex-wife.

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Anyway. At the end of 1977, I moved into a house in Berkley Street, Oranjezicht. Is it 77? When did Rick Turner die? 78 or 77?

DB I don't know. Yes.

TS I think 78. Because I remember, I came to the house.

DB To the new house?

TS To the new house. It must have been in January 78 to hear that he had been murdered and I was terribly, terribly upset. Terribly, terribly upset and I remember having one of my meltdowns and saying that I wanted to go home. I wanted to go home, I didn't want to be here, and Heinz said to me, I'm afraid you can't go home, this is your home.

I didn't know where I was. I was just absolutely shattered. I mean I knew Rick. I used to go to the farm I'm sure you must have done that too Paula. His mother's farm. You know that in the book by Vivian Bickford-Smith and Bill Nasson, there's a lovely chapter about Rick's mother. Imaginary, I can't remember what it's called, and I think I've leant it to somebody. I must remember to get it back.

So, there you are. So, you know, what did I do? So, we fixed up our house in Berkley Street. I did a lot of gardening and bricklaying and planning. And I had a dog that I walked regularly. I used to go down to Heinz's factory totally illegally and do the wages and help him as much as I can. I studied law. I did a lot of walking.

I found myself very isolated. I know that many of my friends were approached to spy on me and this had actually happened while I was living in Rochester Road also.

DB Before you were banned or after?

TS I think before and after. Yes. You know, this is something that only comes out later on. And unfortunately, I had quite a number of episodes of depression. So, we have to accept the fact that you're a depressive. Repeated episodes of depression and in 1981, which is going to be the year of the banning order. Where it comes to an end.

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I think I had decided at that point to drop the law because it wasn't making me happy. And I went to Ruth Prowse and I did pottery and drawing and that was wonderful. Continued working on the house, during the course of that year, we created a little garden and we needed to get grass. Buffalo grass. And the only place where you could get buffalo grass was in Somerset West.

So, on a Saturday morning, Heinz was going to go off to Somerset West to collect the grass and I was going to stay at home. But we got a call from Guy that morning to say that he needed to go to some school. I can't remember the school. I could find out I suppose. To play in a hockey match and he had missed the bus and could we come and collect him.

So, we had difficulty finding the school and by the time we found the school and dropped Guy, it was getting too late to take me back home and go to Somerset West. So, we decided to go to Somerset West, and we went along. I had a little bakkie. A Fiat bakkie. And we went along the Baden Powell Drive and got to Somerset West to get the grass and then said, Heinz, come on let's have a cup of coffee. So, we went into Somerset West the town and we had something to eat and we went back home.

And three days later, they pitched up to say they had followed me to Somerset West. They thought I was going to see Peter Jones who was Steve Biko's dear friend and they were going to charge me with breaking my banning order, which came to pass.

And I then later on appeared before the magistrate in Cape Town and Ian Farlam represented me and of course I got off (laughs) thanks to Ian. Very grateful.

DB (Laughs).

TS But my name appeared in the newspaper, so this now resulted in my getting countless telephone calls. Heavy breathing, threats of whatever. And one day I got a call to say that my husband had been killed in a car accident and could they bring, a hearse came. Delivery of alcohol from Solly Kramer's or whatever.

Some pile of potting soil or soil for the garden. Taxis come to take me away. A Lutheran bishop to give me comfort. And this went on for the whole day.

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So, this went on throughout the day and I remember phoning the Security Police and I checked into this. And the following day, a Sergeant Giyani and a Colonel Ferreira or something like that came round to the house and interviewed me and I told them what had happened. And they said, they would put a stop to it.

Well, it did stop except that the people that lived next to me, on the corner of Berkley Street and Breda Street must have been party to this because they continued to make the telephone calls. Eventually, they stopped. Eventually. And then some time in October, I think. Yes.

Mary and I, we were summoned to be in our home. Of course, I could see Mary, and somebody came around to tell us that we could paint the town red because we were unbanned. Did the same thing happen to you?

DB Yes. We were unbanned early. They didn't come and announce it.

TS No, but we weren't fully unbanned because we were still restricted to seeing only one person at a time. But it meant that I could go back to work. And required a certain amount of adjustment on my part, so I didn't go back to work immediately, and Heinz took me on holiday to Umhlanga Rocks where he had been with his daughter who had visited over the years. And then I came back, and I went to work to find that of course I couldn't be together with people in a working environment.

And the first day that I arrived, I was summoned to the librarian's office and told that I was leaving Special Collections and I was going to be moving to Medical

Library. Which I thought was very cruel, I didn't want to do that because I had been… I didn't know anybody in Medical Library, Medical School. I had been isolated for five years. And I needed to get back into, I don't know if this affected you Debbie, but get back into the swing of things in society.

So, there was a whole hullaballoo, and somebody told Stuart Saunders who had visited me about this, and he interfered with the librarian. And chancellors and vice chancellors. Spoke to tell the university librarians what they should do with the staff. So, there was a whole lot of unpleasantness. So, I returned to work and I still don't have a passport.

What I haven't mentioned is the high anxiety of not being able to see my parents. So, I wasn't able to see them for six and a half years. And they were getting old. And there were these raids in Lusaka and in Botswana and Lesotho and (coughs) terrible, terrible.

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I don't suppose it was unexpected that I was depressed. That I think was the high anxiety. The thing that was most troubling apart from the isolation and the insecurity and the fact that, that's the other thing.

That somehow being banned is very cruel because you are your own warder, your own prison warder. And I'm sure that you all felt that way. And you walk around looking behind and of course, my anxiety was that I would be found guilty of breaking my banning order. Because then I would be totally financially up the spout because I wasn't able to work. I tried on many, many occasions to work for the library.

There was a possibility that I could run The Child Health Institute Library at Red Cross which would be a one person show and I remember writing and the university writing for permission. And that was turned down. And there were other instances when this kind of thing was turned down by who was it? Kruger, because everything went up to Kruger. And I think Rorich was very distressed about the whole thing. (pause)

I read a lot. I read a lot about a lot of things. I spent a lot of time in the South African Library, which was lovely. I tried to make as good use of my time, my so-called free time as I could. I went horse riding in Hout Bay. It was a strain. It was a strain and I'm afraid to say that the (pause) outcome was a diminishing of my social skills for a long, long time and being frightened of being in large crowds. And I found that early motherhood was identical to being banned.

DB And when were you pregnant? When did you [unclear]?

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TS Well, Jacques was born in 1985 and Mark in 1988 and unfortunately I suffered very, very badly from postnatal depression in both instances. And I have no doubt that the banning order had a lot to do with that. And the banning order left scars on my psyche and the postnatal depression left scars because these were children who were planned for and greatly desired. And I could not understand why. Why,

why. I was actually having to endure this. It was terrible. And subsequent, okay then I had, right.

So, I was very deeply depressed in 89. Mark was born 88 but in 1989 I think I had these long delayed postnatal depressions because my best friend died in 1989 and I didn't recover from that. And my issues, I was back at work, I found it very difficult returning to work to leave small children behind and anyway I had a very bad depression in 89.

And then in 1990 of course, De Klerk makes this announcement. And this changed, changed our lives enormously. My parents were able to come home, back to Cape Town. I remember, I remember I was driving home because I was on sick leave, so I didn't have to go to work, but I took the children to the Educare centre, yes Educare centre. I remember I was driving home when I turned the radio on and I heard De Klerk's speech. And I got home, and I phoned my father, and my mother was not at a meeting I think. And I said, dad when are you coming home? And he hadn't known.

It was really wonderful. Really wonderful. Not that I had much to be grateful to FW de Klerk for. And I've had two very bad episodes of depression since then. And I think in a way, they kind of related.

In 2001 I returned from, I had been to Cambridge where I delivered a conference paper. And I came back to Cape Town. My cousin's son died in 9/11. He was the only South African to be killed in 9/11 while I was in England. My plane was delayed in Amsterdam because of all the security issues about flying.

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And I came back to Cape Town totally worn out and utterly exhausted to go to work to find that first of all I had to now tidy up my paper so it could be presented, it could be published or presented on the society's website. To find that my assistant at work had been taken away from me. And that was a terrible shock. This was a man called Isaac Ntabankulu that I had been nurturing for some time, he's a librarianship student and we just worked very well together.

And I learnt such a lot from him about the society of the amaXhosa and about the culture of the amaXhosa. And I listened and wondered to what he was telling me, and I could never understand why in 1994 the whites hadn't been obliterated from this country. I was absolutely bowled over by, I know it's a term that has been denigrated of late, but ubuntu. And the generosity of the population, to the large population of South Africa to be so accommodating towards us.

Something that I think that white South Africans still do not recognise today and do not acknowledge and until such time as that is actually being done, we cannot actually live. We cannot have a common society which we actually need to have and which we all desire. And I see that two weeks ago, ten days ago, I was taken on a tour of parliament and I saw the Keiskamma tapestries. I don't know if you've ever seen them?

DB No. I haven't.

TS Oh my God, you must go and see them. But this is the South African equivalent of the Bayeux Tapestries. And we were in Hamburg in 2004, Hamburg, Eastern Cape. 114 metres of tapestry, a history of the amaXhosa going up to 1994, with of course the rest of South African's histories thrown into it. Absolutely of vital importance that everybody sees this. Absolutely vital importance.

Right so, the other thing of course, is that I didn't feel that I deserved to be banned. I didn't feel I'd been sufficiently politically active to warrant a banning. So, I felt uncomfortable in the presence of other people like yourself. Well, not in the presence because I wasn't able to be in your presence, but you know what I mean. Yes.

I discovered when reading very briefly, I don't know where I've put it. I think maybe it's at UCT, my file from the Security Police. That first of all, my parents were a factor. My friends were a factor. And the fact that I was living, I was not living, I was seeing a Swiss man and they saw this as a Geneva connection.

00:38:58

Do you know about the Geneva connection?

DB No.

TS This was a Geneva connection. Such absolute balderdash but nevertheless. So, there I am, considered a hero of some kind. And not feeling justified. Not feeling justified at all. Then, I don't want to tell you the story of my life, but okay so, I have a terrible depression in 2001 which goes on until probably 2002. And then, my mom is now living with us. Okay my mom is living with us and I also came back from England and she had missed me terribly.

She wanted me to spend almost every moment of my free time with her and I didn't have free time because I had two children, a husband to look after. So, this was quite difficult (coughs). I retired from work in 2000, what I haven't mentioned to you is that there were other issues.

In 1991 we went mussel picking in Scarborough. My husband picked up a tick, he got tick bite fever, ending up with end organ failure, was in a coma for about five and a half weeks. He came out of the coma an invalid. He lost his factory. We lost everything I owned. We lived up in the top of Deerpark Drive, the house we lived in, beautiful house. It's just been demolished actually, very sadly.

I had just been given a part time job at the library because I was finding it very difficult to look after two children who seemed to be perpetually sick and run a very busy, very important law library. Because I was a law librarian. So, we were left absolutely in the soup in a way but somehow we managed. Heinz became an estate agent. I don't even know how he passed the exams because his memory was really very bad at that stage. It improved greatly.

And my parents bought this house for us in the name of a trust which created some… You're going to edit this I hope?

No okay right, all right

This house for us. And it was wonderful that my mother was, after my dad's death, my mother was able to live here. We renovated the house and created space for her there. And space for the children down there and Heinz and I lived in the middle section, which is still where I live today. And Heinz did most of the work because our builder disappeared. So, he tiled and plastered and painted and did the woodwork and built the fences and glazed windows and did everything.

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And in 2013 I retired. At the end of 2013 I retired, and I blush to say that 2014 I didn't get my bonus at the end of November and it was quite a shock because one depends on one's bonus you know. Particularly if you're a librarian and not a very senior one. So, I went into another kind of slump which I came out of, fortunately. And when I retired, what I wanted to do was to be at home with my husband and my dogs. I mean I was away from home for such a long time and the last few years have been very happy.

I've been working as an editor and indexer. That's what I do, I edit theses and other things. And then of course, (crying) he has a heart attack. And then a stroke. And then we go to Mossel Bay and he makes recovery. A great recovery and comes to Cape Town where he does so well. They reckon he can have rehab at the Vincent Palloti Rehab Centre. There, the nursing I think, and the doctoring is not up to scratch.

And came back home for a little while with a bladder infection, then had to go back to hospital. He had pneumonia. (Crying). [Inaudible].

Because I must tell that he supported me throughout the period of the banning. He was the glue that kept me together. The sticky tape. He supported me in every way imaginable. He showed me such love and such support. He was a wonderful father. Far better parent than I was I believe. Just as well in a way, that he remained at home to look after the children, I went to work.

A wonderful man. He made me, he taught me to laugh at myself which is, because I tended to take myself a bit too seriously. And created many, many wonderful homes for us. A house in Berkley Street which was superb. The house in Deer Park. We lived in Clifford Avenue, Highlands Estate for a little while. And even when we left Deer Park Drive, and we moved to a tiny little cottage in Devil's Peak, he turned that into a wonderful home for us.

Okay.

DB I think you've answered all our questions.

00:44:57

TS I think I've spoken for too long.

DB No.

PE Thanks Tanya, it was really wonderful.

DB And so, I mean, obviously you grew up from the beginning in a political family?

TS Yes.

DB But was there something that made you yourself get involved in political activity?

TS I think that I was always conscious of injustice and I also developed a sense of tolerance towards people which I think is very lacking in many. So that, you deal, you treat people with respect and dignity regardless of who they are. If you can possibly manage it. I'm not always. I do object to the people at the traffic lights that shove things into my face, but you generally treat people with respect, and I think you think critically about things and you question things.

This would have come from the kind of upbringing I had and the discussions that we had around the dinner table. I think that I would like to think, I think there's. Let's begin again.

I can understand exactly what the attraction of communism was to the people living in the 1930s and 40s and 50s. I can understand it. Absolutely. And I think, maybe deep down inside me I might well be a communist or otherwise a socialist. I remember reading, I don't know if you've read Robert Tressell's *The Ragged-Trousered Philanthropist* which had a huge effect on me. A tremendous effect. I saw the musical some years ago at the Fugard and they seemed to dumb it down terribly.

But I think it's a kind of worldview that one has. I mean, here I live in the south with all these paintings and things like this. Rather bourgeois. But I would be equally happy living in a commune I think or on a farm and making some kind of contribution to the world. And in a way, I mean don't laugh at me, in a way I like to think that the work I do, editing students' theses. Most of whom are non-mother tongue English speakers, that I am making some kind of contribution. Because I'm making it possible for them to get.

I'm not responsible for the academic work but I make the barrier between the reader and the writer disappear. And I think that in that way I'm absolutely able to make a contribution. And I know that as a librarian, certainly when I was in the law, certainly I made a contribution by introducing students to materials that they would not necessarily have known about if I hadn't actually pointed them in that direction.

00:48:10

Does that make sense?

DB Yes.

TS And I think in a way, that sums me up in a way. You mentioned about cooking and baking. Yes, the idea of actually caring for people and yes. So, what should I have done differently?

Yes, maybe I should have pursued the law and become a human rights lawyer. I think I would have enjoyed, as long as I didn't have to interfere with dealing with criminal law. I think I would have enjoyed that. Or environmental law because these are issues that mean quite a lot to me. And as for a message to young people. I think that despite what is said. I mean, I don't think things have turned out quite the way we wanted.

There's a lot of wasted opportunities. Some years ago, Andimba Toivo ya Toiva was in Cape Town. And he interviewed, sorry, his filmmaker Richard, I can't remember his surname now, interviewed (coughs) Mary and I and Shalto and Amy Thornton and Dennis Davis. And one of the things that cropped up is whether we felt whether it was worth it.

And I was very surprised to hear Dennis say that Jacob Zuma was the most wonderful man and that yes absolutely. And Thabo Mbeki was horrible and my own sense about Jacob Zuma always was, this is a man who has had a multiplicity of wives. This is just after the, he has unprotected sex, whether it's rape or not, with somebody to whom he is a father figure. It is absolutely unconscionable. There is something wrong with the man's moral compass. And therefore, he is not the kind of person that I could admire in any way at all.

Right, so, missed opportunities. I would like to see things happen faster here. I would like to see far more changes and I would like to see the people who have corrupt be put behind bars.

00:51:00

People, they seem to be dying in car accidents at a hell of a rate. But people regardless of their backgrounds and regardless of their contributions. I would like to see the youth of South Africa having more positivity because I personally would rather live here in South Africa today than in Britain with Brexit and the rubbish that's going on there. With America under Donald Trump and the America that will succeed, that will follow Donald Trump because I think it's going to take a long, long time for America to recover.

And then what is happening in Britain? What is happening, sorry not in Britain, I've said Britain. But what is happening in Europe with the increasingly right-wing leadership? I find this very, very frightening. Australia is becoming more and more anti-immigrant. Anti, right wing. The whole world is becoming increasingly right wing and then we have the overarching problem of climate change.

I fear for the future generations, but I think in South Africa, at least one has things are happening all the time and there is an element of hope. And I'm going to expand on this a little bit because on Saturday night, Heinz and I love Freshly Ground. We would go to Freshly Ground concerts whenever we could and Xolani Mahola who's leaving Freshly Ground gave a concert at the Baxter in aid of Take a Girl Child to the Theatre. It's a charitable foundation.

And she was wonderful. And it was wonderful to see the people in the audience, completely integrated. I think many people had come there with free tickets. I paid R300 for mine and it wonderful because I made a contribution to this. But this was followed by something called Hani The Legacy. Young people performing a musical of Chris Hani's life. Started off very well initially and I just want to say something. They made great fuss of the fact that at Fort Hare, what did he study?

Do you know what he studied?

DB No.

TS Greek. Latin. English Literature. He read Shakespeare. He learned stage craft, his political stage craft through the plays of Shakespeare and the Greek and Roman writers. And forgive me for saying so, today we have decolonising the curriculum and I feel one of the saddest things about South Africa is the youth of today do not know our history and have no understanding of the history of the world. Never mind South Africa.

Because colonialism is a world-wide phenomenon throughout the ages. I remember reading a book many years ago, sorry I'm waffling on. Forgive me. Please, I would like to actually have a debate with you about this.

00:54:04

Many, many years ago, I read a book called, *Who Were the Barbarians*? And who were the barbarians? The barbarians were not the barbarians whom the Romans called barbarians. But the barbarians were the Romans themselves because of the way that they treated other societies. What is civilisation? We think civilisation is an ordered government and waterworks and roads, etc. Civilisation is not that.

Civilisation is how you treat your fellow man. I believe that very, very, firmly. So, nobody must talk to me about civilisation and putting in waterpipes. It's how we treat our fellow man. But we have to accept that colonisation is part of world history and there are benefits, many. And many, many negatives.

Eddie Roux, in a wonderful book, called *The Mayibuye Reader*, said that one of the benefits of a white man coming to South Africa is the book. Reading and writing. But reading is, I'll get the book actually because I think you should see it.

And this had been one of my mantras.

DB Stop. (TB gets up, with lapel mikes attached, to move towards a bookshelf)

TS Not right now, okay.

Of course, it's not only reading and writing. It's reading. I mean writing and reading are the Siamese twins of culture. It's also your own life experiences. And I think this is very important.

Now I would like to have a debate (laughs).

PE Tanya, just before we finish I want to return to the issue of why you think you were banned. You mentioned that you thought it was because of your parents.

TS Listen Paula, this was post 1976. June 76 and there was rampant paranoia as you well know. They were lashing out at everybody they could get and there I was involved in NUSAS in the Academic Freedom Committee and other things. As I student, I had been on the staff of Varsity for three years. And I had been involved in Varsity. But certainly, in my life as a librarian, from 71 to 76 I had not been politically active. (Coughs).

PE And you have mentioned that there was an anxiety on your part. That becoming politically would cut you off from your parents.

TS You mean that I would be prohibited from going into Zambia or wherever they were to see them which is exactly what happened. Exactly, exactly what happened.

DB Thanks.

00:57:00

TS And that was very, very hard. Very hard.

DB Okay.

00:57:12

Transcribed by Way with Words

Checked by Paula Ensor