

SENATE HOUSE LIBRARY

University of London

IDENTITY STATEMENT

Reference: ICS88
Title: Hyman M. Basner.
Dates: c1930-1991
Level: fonds
Extent and Medium: 5 boxes (36 folders and 8 reports)
Name of Creator: Basner, Hyman Meyer (1905-1977) lawyer, politician and co-founder of the African Democratic Party.

CONTEXT

Biographical/Administrative History: Hyman Meyer Basner was born in Russia in 1905, and moved to South Africa at an early age. He trained as a lawyer, and his case work brought him into close contact with Africans and their plight. He joined the Communist Party of South Africa, but resigned in 1938. He stood for Senate as a native representative against J H Rheinallt Jones, and served from 1942-1948. In 1943 he co-founded the African Democratic Party. He left South Africa after the Sharpeville massacre in 1960, and worked in Ghana from 1962-1966. He died in England in 1977.

CONTENT

Scope and Content: Papers of Hyman Basner comprise manuscripts of the biography "H.M. Basner - 20 Years in South African Politics" by his wife Miriam, the autobiography of A.S. Mopeli-Paulus co-authored with Miriam Basner, Basner's book "The Black Price of Gold in South Africa from 1870-1960" and random chapters from his unpublished autobiography and books on Ghana and "The Union of Smuts and Strydom"; research notes on his time in Ghana and his legal work involving Basutoland/Lesotho and Harrismith; transcripts of an interview of Basner by Brian Willan on South African politics between 1930-1950 and an interview with David Wilcox Bopape; correspondence including those relating to the publication of articles by Basner, political refugees in Swaziland, Connor Cruise O'Brien and Brian Willan and correspondence between Miriam Basner and various others; copies of published articles by Basner and seminar papers by Baruch Hirson and others; bound reports by various departments of the South African government; letters and pamphlets for his election campaign for the Senate and legal and court papers relating to cases Basner was working on (SOME ARE CLOSED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT) and his imprisonment.

ACCESS AND USE

Language of Scripts: English and Afrikaans.

System of Arrangement: 1. Manuscripts. 2. Research Notes. 3. Interviews. 4. Correspondence. 5. Articles, Seminar Papers & Publications. 6. Reports. 7. Election Papers. 8. Legal & Court Papers.

Conditions of Access: Open except for records restricted under the Data Protection Act or the Freedom of Information Act. Please contact the University Archivist for details. At least 24 hours notice is required for research visits.

Conditions of Reproduction: Copies may be made, subject to the condition of the original. Copying must be undertaken by the Special Collections Reading Room staff, who will need a minimum of 24 hours to process requests.

ICS88/1 Manuscripts.

**c1973-
c1990**

Manuscripts for Miriam Basner's biography, "H.M.Basner - 20 Years in South African Politics"; Basner's book, "The Black Price of Gold in South Africa 1870-1960" and the autobiography of A.S. Mopeli-Paulus (co-authored with Miriam Basner) and random chapters for Basner's unpublished autobiography and his books on Ghana and "The Union of Smuts and Strydom". Much of the material is annotated and contains corrections.

11 folders

ICS88/1/1 "H.M. Basner - 20 Years of South African Politics" (Part 1) by Miriam Basner. 1983

Annotated typescript manuscript, Chapters II-XI, bound, 160 pp, with contents and instructions relating to Chapter 1 noted on the cover.

1 folder

ICS88/1/2 "H.M Basner - 20 Years in South African Politics" (Part 2) by Miriam Basner. 1983

Annotated typescript manuscript, Chapters XII-XXI, bound, 167pp, with contents and instructions for various chapters noted on the cover. Chapter XVII, "Another Place", also includes eleven additional loose pages.

1 folder

ICS88/1/3 "H.M. Basner - 20 Years in South African Politics" (Part 1) by Miriam Basner. undated

Annotated typescript manuscript, Chapters I-XII, 189pp.

1 folder

ICS88/1/4 "H.M. Basner - 20 Years in South African Politics" (Part 2) by Miriam Basner. undated

Annotated typescript manuscript, Chapters XIII-XXII with a postscript, 191pp.

1 folder

ICS88/1/5 Basner Autobiography. undated

Various annotated typescript chapters with headings: "Beit Street Bunting" (pp.B1-B23); "Early Law C.P" (pp.Of.1-Of.42); "Chapter II" (pp.12-19); "Chapter IV" (pp.B1-B21); "Chapter III Hollywood" (pp.29-34) and parts of chapters, no headings, beginning: "or Yeoville. For the first time, the racialism...." (pp.20-27); "I was physically very active" (pp.27-41); "Central Committee of the Communist Party" (EII.2) and "What bothered me most was the subdued manner of the African clerks" (pp.5-20).

1 folder

ICS88/1/6 A.S. Mopeli-Paulus Autobiography. undated

Corrected typescript manuscript co-authored with Miriam Basner bound in two parts. Part 1, Chapters I-XI (pp.1-139) and Part 2, Chapters XII-XXI (pp.140-261). Also included is a letter to Peter Sanders from Stephen Gill, curator of the Morija Museum and Archives, Lesotho with comments to be passed to Miriam Basner regarding the manuscript.

1 folder

ICS88/1/7 "The Black Price of Gold in South Africa from 1870-1960" (Part 1) by H.M. Basner. undated

Annotated typescript manuscript, Chapters 1-15 (pp.1-112) with an Introduction (pp.i-v).

1 folder

- ICS88/1/8 "The Black Price of Gold in South Africa from 1870-1960" (Part 2) by H.M. Basner.** **undated**
Annotated typescript manuscript, Chapters 16-35 (pp.113-308).

1 folder
- ICS88/1/9 "The Union of Smuts and Strydom" (Part 2) by H.M. Basner.** **undated**
Typescript manuscript with corrections, Chapters XIX-XXX (pp.234-445) with a "Last Chapter" (pp.I-XVIII).

1 folder
- ICS88/1/10 Ghana (Part 2) by H.M. Basner.** **undated**
Incomplete photocopied typescript manuscript, with annotations, pp.2/1-2/214.

1 folder
- ICS88/1/11 Ghana Chapters by H.M. Basner.** **undated**
Various annotated typescript chapters: "Four Years at Kwame's Court" (pp.1-12); "Chapter 2", 1st version, two copies (pp.12-17); "Chapter 2" 2nd version (pp.12-23); "Ghana I" (pp.1-13); "Ghana 1-Ghana 3" (3pp); "Ghana Part 2" (pp.14-21); "Ghana II" (pp. 14-24); "Ghana Part 3", two copies (pp.22-27) and "Ghana III" (pp.25-49) with notes relating to a review of the book. Also included is a letter (24 September 1984) from Richard Rathbone to Miriam Basner thanking her for the loan of the chapters.

1 folder
- ICS88/2 Research Notes.** **undated**
Various typescript and ms research notes for Basner's autobiography, the case of the Basutoland chiefs executed in 1949, including information from the Public Record Office, and the Harrismith trial.

5 folders

ICS88/2/1 Basner Autobiography. undated

Various ms research notes with headings: "Josephus" (1pp); "Sharpeville & Vereeniging" (4pp); "Barristers & Solicitors" ((4pp); "Law" (1pp); "Miscellaneous including Roux, Padmore, CP, Trots & Chapter XI" (19pp); "Inserts for Chapter III" (5pp); "Marcia & Vadim, jobs in L.A." (9pp); "Grisha, Manusya, UCLA, Vadim and Marcia" (5pp); "Belgravia & Parents" (4pp); "B & his father" (2pp); "Marama etc" (6pp) and "Sex, Jews, Smuts and Nkrumah" (14pp).

1 folder

ICS88/2/2 Basner Autobiography. undated

Various ms and typescript research notes, with no headings, beginning: "Now in my seventieth year...." (3pp); "Although it was my first train journey...." (2pp); "I can't believe that one half of the black people...." (1pp); "The prototype of the unlovely and heavily bosomed Jewish mother...." (8pp); "In 1922 our house in Mariposa Avenue...." (4pp); "Paine and in which our lecturer told an enquiring Negro...." (6pp) and "There was no quarrel" (7pp).

1 folder

ICS88/2/3 Basutoland. undated

Typescript historical research notes relating to the case of two Basutoland chiefs executed in 1949, a family tree, supporting information from the Public Records Office entitled "Basutoland: confidential reports on native chiefs for the year 1938"; "Circumcision and Initiation Schools and Rites"; "Ritual Murders and Witchcraft: Basutoland"; "Medicine Murder: Basutoland"; "Chief Matlere: Basutoland"; "Witchcraft: Call by Rev M. Scott for Commission of Enquiry into Ritual Murders"; "Native Affairs. Bishop Bonhomme, Memorandum by"; "Lesotho Government Archives"; "Reminiscences of Rivers Fendall Thompson as recorded at the National University of Lesotho, May 1980" and notes on papers written by Hugh Ashton. Also included is an appeal against the sentence to the High Court of Basutoland.

1 folder

- ICS88/2/4 Harrismith.** **undated**
Annotated typescript notes relating to the Harrismith trial, the judgment and prison sentences, the Communist Party of South Africa and the town of Harrismith and the surrounding area.
1 folder
- ICS88/2/5 Lesotho.** **c1960**
Research notes; a memoranda from Basner to The Government Secretary, Basutoland (28 January 1960) and copies of Proclamations No.9 of 1950 and No.37 of 1950 made by the High Commissioner of Basutoland.
1 folder
- ICS88/3 Interviews.** **c1973-1983**
Two transcripts, with supporting notes, of an interview with Basner by Brian Willan and a transcript of an interview with David Willcox Bopape by H. Sapire and A. Cobley.
3 folders
- ICS88/3/1 Interview with H.M. Basner** **undated**
Typescript transcription, 105pp with corrections, of an interview with Basner by Brian Willan including interview notes (3pp).
1 folder
- ICS88/3/2 Interview with H.M. Basner.** **undated**
Photocopied typescript transcription, 105pp with annotations, instructions and corrections of an interview with Basner by Brian Willan and a list of tape contents (4pp).
1 folder

ICS88/3/3 Interview with David Wilcox Bopape.

**1982
September
21**

Transcription of an interview of David Wilcox Bopape by H. Sapire and A. Cobley, with an introduction and additional notes.

1 folder

ICS88/4 Correspondence.

1966-1995

Typescript and ms correspondence including those between Basner and the editors of "The Minority of One", "Monthly Review", "New Statesman", Andre Deutsch Publishers and Thames & Hudson Publishers and discussing Connor Cruise O'Brien and political refugees in Swaziland. Also included are correspondence to and from Miriam Basner and Brian Willan.

6 folders

ICS88/4/1 Various Correspondence.

1966-1976

Various ms and typescript correspondence including those refusing Basner British nationality, requesting Geoffrey Bing QC be allowed to work in Israel, regarding the possible publication of his book by either Andre Deutsch or Thames and Hudson Ltd, an update from the Accra Assembly and discussing Bernard Levin's judgement on Lord Goddard and Pieter van der Byl, Minister for Native Affairs under Smuts, with the New Statesman.

1 folder

ICS88/4/2 "The Minority of One".

1966-1967

Correspondence between Basner, M.S. Arnoni, Editor of "The Minority of One" and Leo Huberman and Paul Sweezy, Editors of "Monthly Review", regarding Basner's book and journal articles.

1 folder

- ICS88/4/3 Political Refugees in Swaziland. 1968-1969**
 Typescript correspondence and copies of indictments and affidavits regarding political refugees in Swaziland.
 1 folder
- ICS88/4/4 Connor Cruise O'Brien. c1967**
 Typescript and ms letters discussing disappointment with O'Brien for supporting the anti-Nkrumah establishment and leaving Ghana for the U.S.A. Also included are photocopied pages from Basner's book on Ghana and a list of pages from Volume 1 of a biography of O'Brien.
 1 folder
- ICS88/4/5 Brian Willan. 1974**
 Typescript correspondence regarding Willan's taped interview with Basner and a letter from Willan to Tandi Mvusi suggesting she contact Basner directly about the 1946 mineworkers strike.
 1 folder
- ICS88/4/6 Miriam Basner Correspondence. 1995**
 Typescript and ms correspondence including those between Miriam Basner and Father Denis O'Callaghan regarding research for a book; T.B. Moeketsi, Senior Private Secretary to King Moshoeshoe II, about information relating to the trial "Rex v Bereng Griffith Lerotholi and 36 others" (1948) and Professor Nhlanhla Maake, School of Oriental and African Studies, regarding the Gabashane case.
 1 folder
- ICS88/5 Articles, Seminar Papers and Publications. 1946-1991**
 Publications containing articles by Basner, seminar papers by Baruch Hirson and copies of the publications "South Africa's Treason Trial" and "The Coloured People of South Africa".
 4 folders

ICS88/5/1 Articles by H.M. Basner. 1946-1975

Two typescript copies of the article "Coq Au Levin", with amendments and a letter from the editor of "Tribune" (1975); "The Minority of One" (February 1967) containing the article "Apartheid is an English Word"; "West Africa" (No.2537 January 1966) containing the article "Ghana South African" and a copy of "The South African" (Vol 3 No.2 May 1946) edited by Basner.

1 folder

ICS88/5/2 Publications. undated

Copies of "South Africa's Treason Trial" and "The Coloured People of South Africa".

1 folder

ICS88/5/3 Seminar Papers by Baruch Hirson. 1976-1991

Copies of: "A Trade Union Organizer in Durban: M.B. Yengwa 1943-44", ICS seminar paper (20 January 1989); a draft copy of "A South African Journey: 1991" and "Rural Revolt in South Africa: 1937-1951, with annotations [5 May 1976] and "Friend to Olive Schreiner: The Story of Ruth Schechter" [15 May 1976] both part of the ICS seminar series, "The Societies of Southern Africa in the 19th and 20th Centuries".

1 folder

ICS88/5/4 Various Articles. c1970-c1990

Copies of: "G.D.R. - whence and whither?"/"G.D.R. we're staying here!" by Peter Fraenkel, with corrections; "The Removal", no author and "The Day the Town Stood Still: Women's Resistance in Potchefstroom, 1912-1930" by Julia Wells, University of Witwatersrand History Workshop, 1981.

1 folder

ICS88/6 Reports.	1943-1955
Copies and summaries of reports by various departments of the South African government.	
8 reports	
ICS88/6/1 Report of the Witwatersrand Mine Natives' Wage Commission.	1943
A report on "Remuneration and Conditions of Employment of Natives on Witwatersrand Gold Mines and Regulation and Conditions of Employment of Natives at Transvaal undertakings of Victoria Falls and Transvaal Power Company, Limited (62pp) with annotations.	
1 report	
ICS88/6/2 Department of Native Affairs.	1944
"Report of the Proceedings of the Natives Representative Council" (9pp), with a version of the report in Afrikaans.	
1 report	
ICS88/6/3 Department of Native Affairs.	1945
"Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on the Social, Health and Economic Conditions of Urban Natives" (30pp) with annotations.	
1 report	
ICS88/6/4 The Social and Economic Planning Council.	1946
"The Native Reserves and Their Place in the Economy of the Union of South Africa" (6pp).	
1 report	
ICS88/6/5 The Union of South Africa Government Gazette (Vol.CXLVIII No.3817).	1947 March
1 publication	

- ICS88/6/6 Basutoland Medicine Murder. 1951 April**
 "A Report on the Recent Outbreak of "Diretlo" Murders in Basutoland" (104pp) with annotations.
 1 report
- ICS88/6/7 "Report of the Industrial Legislation Commission of Enquiry" 1951**
 (343pp).
 1 report
- ICS88/6/8 "Summary of the Report of the Commission for the Socio-Economic Development of the Bantu Areas within the Union of South Africa". 1955**
 213pp of text and 64pp of maps.
 1 report
- ICS88/7 Election Papers. 1937-c1942**
 Copies of letters from Basner to Rheinallt Jones (10 September 1942) and Dr A. B. Xuma (31 August 1942); a letter from Dr P. Seme of the African National Congress (27 March 1937); a letter from Rheinallt Jones (30 September 1942) with a response from Basner (10 October 1942); minutes of a meeting of the Native Representative Council (3 December 1943); various notes and three election leaflets.
 1 folder

ICS88/8 Legal and Court Papers. 1944-1960

Legal papers and court reports (SOME ARE CLOSED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT) relating to the cases of The Banareng Tribe v. The Government of the Union of South Africa, Metz Lower Primary School and Bethel and Davel Districts and the Kadish Brothers; compensation claims by the Mamathola Tribe, Basner's membership of the Communist Party of South Africa and his imprisonment.

6 folders

ICS88/8/1 The Banareng Tribe v. The Government of the Union of South Africa. 1957

CLOSED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT.

1 folder

ICS88/8/2 Compensation Claims for the Mamathola Tribe. 1957

CLOSED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT.

1 folder

ICS88/8/3 The Banareng Tribe v. The Government of the Union of South Africa. 1958

CLOSED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT.

1 folder

ICS88/8/4 Metz Lower Primary School. 1958

CLOSED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT.

1 folder

ICS88/8/5 Membership of the Communist Party and Imprisonment. 1951-1960

Correspondence between Basner and the Department of Justice regarding Basner's membership of the Communist Party of South Africa (1951-1955) and papers relating to his imprisonment including a property receipt, a visiting order, a certificate of release and a letter authorising permission to travel (1960). Also included are two abusive letters, one signed "Himmler" and a cartoon headed "A Rolling Stone Gathers No Moss".

1 folder

ICS88/8/6 Bethel and Davel Districts and the Kadish Brothers Case. 1944-1945

Copies of correspondence, reports, summaries of evidence and supporting information relating to the case of the Kadish brothers and the supply of farm labourers in Bethel and Davel districts. (CLOSED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT).

1 folder