

THS003 Robert Weinberg

Track 1 [28:10] [Session one: 17 June 2015] Robert Weinberg [RW]. Born 1931. BSc Economics at LSE 1955, PhD Economics at LSE 1960 [00:19]. Tutor for PhD was Ben Roberts, Professor of Trade Union Studies [00:43]. RW describes being brought up in New York and attending a progressive grade school and public high school [01:14]. After high school RW attended Yale University [02:18] despite it being hard to gain entrance because of his Jewish background [02:24]. RW describes the quotas at Yale for Catholic students, Jewish students and the very small number of black students [02:50]. RW describes doing a BA in History at Yale [03:38] and being active in an organisation called the Yale Political Union [03:44] which was linked with unions at Oxford and Cambridge Universities [04:11]. RW describes debating against Michael Heseltine [04:21]. RW secured a Fulbright Scholarship which allowed him to attend LSE in England [04:40]. RW explains that he thinks the tuition at LSE at that time (1953?) was £17 GBP a term [05:30]. RW stayed in Passfield Hall (student accommodation) which was very cosmopolitan [05:40] and the only halls of residence for men at the time. RW talks about his first impressions of LSE [06:08] including receiving a food rationing card [06:17] and meeting the secretarial staff [06:42]. RW describes his interest in studying the Trade Union Movement [07:08] both in the USA and the UK. RW describes, that after his first year at LSE, being encouraged by his tutor, Ben Roberts to apply for an extension of his grant to study at LSE for a PhD [08:06]. RW briefly describes the different types of courses he took at LSE [08:50]. RW describes meeting Ralph Miliband [09:08] and how LSE has produced many international leaders [09:48]. RW talks about how cosmopolitan LSE is [10:10]. RW describes what it was like being a PhD student and how there was little difference between PhD students and other postgraduate students [10:27]. RW describes winning the LSE chess championship [11:21]. RW talks positively about Ben Roberts as a supervisor [11:43] and about attending the Labour Party Conference [12:05] and the Conservative Party Conference [12:21] and a TUC Conference [12:26]. RW talks about remaining friends for life with Ben Roberts and their association beyond LSE [12:36]. RW talks about studying at law school while also being in the US Army [12:54]. RW explains the context and details of his thesis (democracy, trade unions and the labour movement etc.) [13:31]. RW talks about other faculty he met at LSE, Robson from the Government Department [14:39]. RW talks about being President of the LSE Students' Union and his wife being General Secretary [17:20]. RW describes his duties as president, he would preside over the weekly meetings of the union [17:51] which met every Thursday afternoon and was very democratic. RW explains the structure of the union [18:00] and the events that were planned by the union [18:27] including an interesting array of guest speakers [18:36] from across the political spectrum [18:55]. RW describes the Student Union debates [19:00] including one speaker called Bob Johnson (who is now a High Court Judge) [19:10] and other notable speakers who he mentions by name and describes their backgrounds [19:20]. RW describes how close friendships were made at LSE despite political differences [21:20]. RW describes the diversity of students in his Halls of Residence [21:40] and the warden of the halls [22:20]. RW describes the LSE campus in 1950s [22:52] and the advantage of being in London [23:54]. RW explains that his wife Wendy, who he met at LSE has been on the Governing Body of LSE for

many years [24:24]. RW mentions that he attended his PhD graduation ceremony [25:24]. RW explains his hopes for the future of the LSE [25:50] and his feelings about his association with the School over the years [27:00] including meeting his wife in December 1953 [27:20].