

# SOUTH AFRICA'S LIBERATION:

WHEN OUR DREAMS COME TRUE, LET US TAKE TIME TO CELEBRATE.

WHEN OUR DREAMS COME TRUE, LET US REMEMBER THAT WHAT WE DO MATTERS.

BY DAVID HART

This morning I watch Arch Bishop Desmond Tutu cast a ballot and dance for joy. I feel my spirit sing. I dance with him and through him with those unnamed millions whose dream is coming true today. To activists everywhere this Noble Peace Prize winner's celebration should be contagious. As we see the South African people transform their destiny, as we share their joyful liberation, let us celebrate the fact that committed hard working activists make a real difference in people's lives and the future of this planet.

Today is a day for celebration! A day full of hope for a better tomorrow. A day built on years of struggle. We know that a difficult road lies ahead. We know that there are a hate filled few who continue to hold on to the past as if it is their only salvation. But we also know that a new day is dawning. South Africa will be free. Liberation is real. Even in this brutal world, redemption is possible. Bishop Tutu celebrated, "It is a mountain top experience! You keep having to pinch yourself, saying 'hey it has arrived!' This day that so many have worked for - many have suffered for - many have died for - and our friends overseas have prayed for and supported us. And here it is! It is happening! Everybody is now vindicated. It is a dream come true!"

When our dreams come true, let us take time to celebrate. When our dreams come true, let us remember that what we do matters.

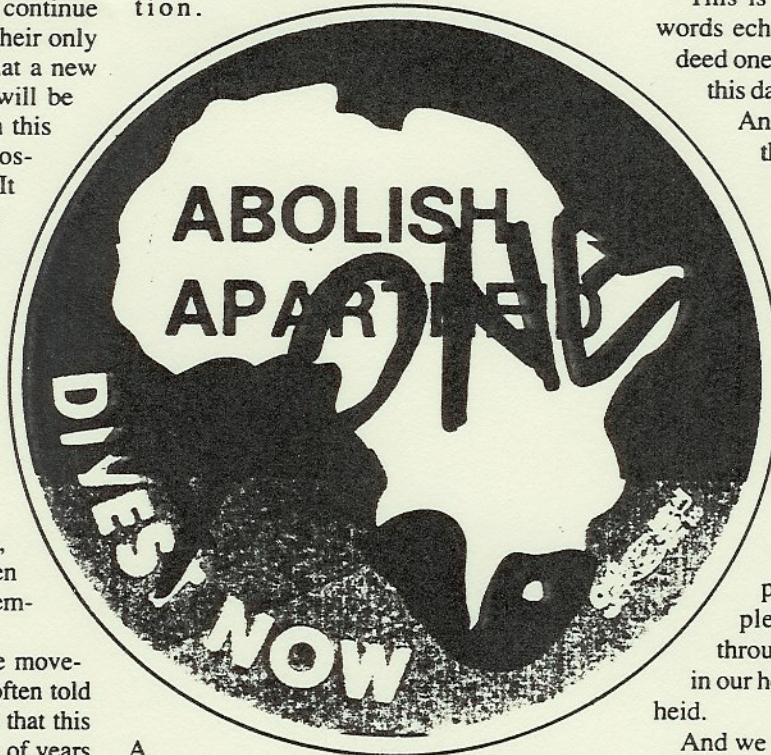
Many of us were active in the movement to end apartheid. We were often told that we were naive. We were told that this problem had existed for hundreds of years and wasn't going to change. Again and again efforts to make a difference were degraded as "symbolic" or "unrealistic." Today, let us be reminded that there is nothing more real,

nothing more worthy of our lives, than committed social change activism.

Let us remember that we create the future by how we live our lives today. Either by our action or our inaction we change the world. By their courageous, committed, largely nonviolent actions, South Africans built this day of liberation. What they did mattered.

When our dreams come true, let us take time to celebrate.

Of course, bringing tangible change directly to the many people in desperate need will be difficult. And we know that change doesn't come overnight, but change does come. South Africa is a wealthy nation.



A nation full of natural and human resources. If the new government is able to share this wealth equitably among their people, South Africa will be a stable and prosperous nation.

When asked about the pressing needs of South Africa's people, Bishop Tutu speaks the peace movement's language. He said, "We will have made massive sav-

ings in our defense budget. We don't have to be fighting in Angola. We don't have to be destabilizing our neighboring states, and therefore those resources that were wastefully used can be redirected to providing housing... People want to see that their children can go to good schools. People want to have affordable easily accessible health care. People want to be able to live securely, safely. Therefore the new government will have to do something about the violence... and I'm sure they are aware of these problems, but more than anything else, is the discovery that we are one people!"

This is universal language. These words echo in our hearts. We are indeed one people. One people who on this day, are celebrating liberation.

And recommitting ourselves to the hard work yet to be done.

To serve the many needs of our people and our planet, it is clear that we must end militarism. When we look around the world today, we can not forget the brutality of Rwanda and Bosnia. We celebrate South Africa's liberation fully aware of the work still to be done.

When we look inward to the United States, we see poverty in the shadow of plenty. We see the violence throughout our society and even in our hearts. We see our own apartheid.

And we are reminded that what we do matters. Now is the time for activists to value what we do. It is up to us to create the changes that we dream of. We are a people with a beautiful collective vision of the world we want to create. Now is the time to celebrate the power of activism, and to ask "what can we do to become worthy of our dreams?" ■

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