South Africa Apartheid

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contents

Apartheid Legislation in South Africa (http://africanhistory.about.com/library/bl/blsalaws.htm)

Starting in 1948, the Nationalist Government in South Africa enacted laws to define and enforce segregation.

What makes South Africa's apartheid era different to segregation and racial hatred that have occurred in other countries is the systematic way in which the National Party, which came into power in 1948, formalised it through the law. The main laws are described below.

Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act, Act No 55 of 1949
Prohibited marriages between white people and people of other races. Between 1946 and the enactment of this law, only 75 mixed marriages had been recorded, compared with some 28,000 white marriages.

Immorality Amendment Act, Act No 21 of 1950; amended in 1957 (Act 23)
Prohibited adultery, attempted adultery or related immoral acts (extra-marital sex) between white and black people.

Population Registration Act, Act No 30 of 1950
Led to the creation of a national register in which every person's race was recorded. A Race Classification Board took the final decision on what a person's race was in disputed cases.

Group Areas Act, Act No 41 of 1950
Forced physical separation between races by creating different residential areas for different races. Led to forced removals of people living in "wrong" areas, for example Coloureds living in District Six in Cape Town.

Suppression of Communism Act, Act No 44 of 1950
Outlawed communism and the Community Party in South Africa. Communism was defined so broadly that it covered any call for radical change. Communists could be banned from participating in a political organisation and restricted to a particular area.

Bantu Building Workers Act, Act No 27 of 1951
Allowed black people to be trained as artisans in the building trade, something previously reserved for whites only, but they had to work within an area designated for blacks. Made it a criminal offence for a black person to perform any skilled work in urban areas except in those sections designated for black occupation.

Separate Representation of Voters Act, Act No 46 of 1951
Together with the 1956 amendment, this act led to the removal of Coloureds from the common voters' roll.

Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act, Act No 52 of 1951
Gave the Minister of Native Affairs the power to remove blacks from public or privately owned land and to establishment resettlement camps to house these displaced people.

Bantu Authorities Act, Act No 68 of 1951
Provided for the establishment of black homelands and regional authorities and, with the aim of creating greater self-government in the homelands, abolished the Native Representative Council.

Natives Laws Amendment Act of 1952
Narrowed the definition of the category of blacks who had the right of permanent residence in towns. Section 10 limited this to those who'd been born in a town and had lived there continuously for not less than 15 years, or who had been employed there continuously for at least 15 years, or who had worked continuously for the same employer for at least 10 years.

Natives (Abolition of Passes and Co-ordination of Documents) Act, Act No 67 of 1952
Commonly known as the Pass Laws, this ironically named act forced black people to carry identification with them at *all* times. A pass included a photograph, details of place of origin, employment record, tax payments, and encounters with the police. It was a criminal offence to be unable to produce a pass when required to do so by the police. No black person could leave a rural area for an urban one without a permit from the local authorities. On arrival in

an urban area a permit to seek work had to be obtained within 72 hours.

Native Labour (Settlement of Disputes) Act of 1953
Prohibited strike action by blacks.

Bantu Education Act, Act No 47 of 1953
Established a Black Education Department in the Department of Native Affairs which would compile a curriculum that suited the "nature and requirements of the black people". The author of the legislation, Dr Hendrik Verwoerd (then Minister of Native Affairs, later Prime Minister), stated that its aim was to prevent Africans receiving an education that would lead them to aspire to positions they wouldn't be allowed to hold in society. Instead Africans were to receive an education designed to provide them with skills to serve their own people in the homelands or to work in labouring jobs under whites.

Reservation of Separate Amenities Act, Act No 49 of 1953
Forced segregation in all public amenities, public buildings, and public transport with the aim of eliminating contact between whites and other races. "Europeans Only" and "Non-Europeans Only" signs were put up. The act stated that facilities provided for different races need not be equal.

Natives Resettlement Act, Act No 19 of 1954

Group Areas Development Act, Act No 69 of 1955

Natives (Prohibition of Interdicts) Act, Act No 64 of 1956
Denied black people the option of appealing to the courts against forced removals.

Bantu Investment Corporation Act, Act No 34 of 1959
Provided for the creation of financial, commercial, and industrial schemes in areas designated for black people.

Extension of University Education Act, Act 45 of 1959
Put an end to black students attending white universities (mainly the universities of Cape Town and Witwatersrand). Created

separate tertiary institutions for whites, Coloured, blacks, and Asians.

Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act, Act No 46 of 1959
Classified black people into eight ethnic groups. Each group had a Commissioner-General who was tasked to develop a homeland for each, which would be allowed to govern itself independently without white intervention.

Coloured Persons Communal Reserves Act, Act No 3 of 1961

Preservation of Coloured Areas Act, Act No 31 of 1961

Urban Bantu Councils Act, Act No 79 of 1961
Created black councils in urban areas that were suppoed to be tied to the authorities running the related ethnic homeland.

Terrorism Act of 1967
Allowed for indefinite detention without trial and established BOSS, the Bureau of State Security, which was responsible for the internal security of South Africa.

Bantu Homelands Citizens Act of 1970
Compelled all black people to become a citizen of the homeland that responded to their ethnic group, regardless of whether they'd ever lived there or not, and removed their South African citizenship.

Various segregation laws were passes before the Nationalist Party took complete power in 1948. Probably the most significant were **The Natives Land Act, No 27 of 1913** and **The Natives (Urban Areas) Act of 1923**. The former made it illegal for blacks to purchase or lease land from whites except in reserves; this restricted black occupancy to less than eight per cent of South Africa's land. The latter laid the foundations for residential segregation in urban areas.

THE FREEDOM CHARTER

ADOPTED AT THE CONGRESS OF THE PEOPLE AT KLIPTOWN, JOHANNESBURG, ON JUNE 25 AND 26, 1955.

WE, the People of South Africa, declare for all our country and the world to know:

that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white, and that no government can justly claim authority unless it is based on the will of all the people;

that our people have been robbed of their birthright to land, liberty and peace by a form of government founded on injustice and inequality;

that our country will never be prosperous or free until all our people live in brotherhood, enjoying equal rights and opportunities;

that only a democratic state, based on the will of all the people, can secure to all their birthright without distinction of colour, race, sex or belief;

And therefore we, the People of South Africa, black and white together — equals, countrymen and brothers — adopt this Freedom Charter. And we pledge ourselves to strive together sparing neither strength nor courage, until the democratic changes here set out have been won.

THE PEOPLE SHALL GOVERN!

Every man and woman shall have the right to vote for and to stand as a candidate for all bodies which make laws;

All people shall be entitled to take part in the administration of the country;

The rights of the people shall be the same, regardless of race, colour or sex;

All bodies of minority rule, advisory boards, councils and authorities shall be replaced by democratic organs of self-government.

ALL NATIONAL GROUPS SHALL HAVE EQUAL RIGHTS!

There shall be equal status in the bodies of state, in the courts and in the schools for all national groups and races.

All people shall have equal right to use their own languages, and to develop their own folk culture and customs;

All national groups shall be protected by law against insults to their race and national pride;

The preaching and practice of national, race or colour discrimination and contempt shall be a punishable crime;

All apartheid laws and practices shall be set aside.

THE PEOPLE SHALL SHARE IN THE COUNTRY'S WEALTH!

The national wealth of our country, the heritage of all South Africans, shall be restored to the people;

The mineral wealth beneath the soil, the Banks and monopoly industry shall be transferred to the ownership of the people as a whole;

All other industry and trade shall be controlled to assist the well-being of the people;

All people shall have equal rights to trade where they choose, to manufacture and to enter all trades, crafts and professions.

THE LAND SHALL BE SHARED AMONG THOSE WHO WORK IT!

Restriction of land ownership on a racial basis shall be ended, and all the land redivided amongst those who work it, to banish famine and land hunger;

The state shall help the peasants with implements, seed, tractors and dams to save the soil and assist the tillers;

Freedom of movement shall be guaranteed to all who work on the land;

All shall have the right to occupy land wherever they choose;

People shall not be robbed of their cattle, and forced labour and farm prisons shall be abolished.

ALL SHALL BE EQUAL BEFORE THE LAW!

No one shall be imprisoned, deported or restricted without a fair trial;

No one shall be condemned by the order of any Government official;

The courts shall be representative of all the people;

Imprisonment shall be only for serious crimes against the people, and shall aim at re-education, not vengeance;

The police force and army shall be open to all on an equal basis and shall be the helpers and protectors of the people;

All laws which discriminate on grounds of race, colour or belief shall be repealed.

ALL SHALL ENJOY EQUAL HUMAN RIGHTS!

The law shall guarantee to all their right to speak, to organise, to meet together, to publish, to preach, to worship and to educate their children;

The privacy of the house from police raids shall be protected by law;

All shall be free to travel without restriction from countryside to town, from province to province, and from South Africa abroad;

Pass laws, permits and all other laws restricting these freedoms shall be abolished.

THERE SHALL BE WORK AND SECURITY!

All who work shall be free to form trade unions, to elect their officers and to make wage agreements with their employers;

The state shall recognise the right and duty of all to work, and to draw full unemployment benefits;

Men and women of all races shall receive equal pay for equal work;

There shall be a forty-hour working week, a national minimum wage, paid annual leave, and sick leave for all workers, and maternity leave on full pay for all working mothers;

Miners, domestic workers, farm workers and civil servants shall have the same rights as all others who work;

Child labour, compound labour, the tot system and contract labour shall be abolished.

THE DOORS OF LEARNING AND OF CULTURE SHALL BE OPENED!

The government shall discover, develop and encourage national talent for the enhancement of our cultural life;

All the cultural treasures of mankind, shall be open to all, by free exchange of books, ideas and contact with other lands;

The aim of education shall be to teach the youth to love their people and their culture, to honour human brotherhood, liberty and peace;

Education shall be free, compulsory, universal and equal for all children;

Higher education and technical training shall be opened to all by means of state allowances and scholarships awarded on the basis of merit;

Adult illiteracy shall be ended by a mass state education plan;

Teachers shall have all the rights of other citizens;

The colour bar in cultural life, in sport and in education shall be abolished.

THERE SHALL BE HOUSES, SECURITY AND COMFORT!

All people shall have the right to live where they choose, to be decently housed, and to bring up their families in comfort and security;

Unused housing space shall be made available to the people;

Rent and prices shall be lowered, food plentiful and no one shall go hungry;

A preventive health scheme shall be run by the state;

Free medical care and hospitalisation shall be provided for all, with special care for mothers and young children;

Slums shall be demolished, and new suburbs built where all have transport, roads, lighting, playing fields, creches and social centres;

The aged, the orphans, the disabled and the sick shall be cared for by the state;

Rest, leisure and recreation shall be the right of all;

Fenced locations and ghettoes shall be abolished and laws which break up families shall be repealed.

THERE SHALL BE PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP!

South Africa shall be a fully independent state, which respects the rights and sovereignty of all nations;

South Africa shall strive to maintain world peace and the settlement of all international disputes by negotiation — not war;

Peace and friendship amongst all our people shall be secured by upholding the equal rights, opportunities and status of all;

The people of the protectorates — Basutoland, Bechuanaland and Swaziland — shall be free to decide for themselves their own future;

The rights of all the peoples of Africa to independence and self-government shall be recognised and shall be the basis of close co-operation.

Let all who love their people and their country now say, as we say here: "THESE FREEDOMS WE WILL FIGHT FOR, SIDE BY SIDE, THROUGHOUT OUR LIVES, UNTIL WE HAVE WON OUR LIBERTY."

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BUSINESS INSIDER

What Life Was Like In South Africa During Apartheid

MICHELLE FAUL, ASSOCIATED PRESS
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JOHANNESBURG (AP) — My mother was furious. The operators of the gas station in rural, racist South Africa had taken her money to fill the car, but would not give her the key to the toilets. They were for whites only.

It was the early 1960s, and apartheid was the law of the land.

So my indomitable mum did the only thing she could do: She ordered me and my two sisters to urinate right there, very publicly, in front of the fuel pumps.

We did not disobey, but I started crying — and my sisters bawled, too. We lowered our shorts, but I was so traumatized that I simply could not go.

My widowed mother, Ethel Pillay, had driven us from our home in Zimbabwe, which was then called Rhodesia, to visit family in her native South Africa.

AP

Description: This undated photo courtesy of Pillay Family, shows Ethel Pillay, with daughter left to right, Carole, Danette and Michelle. The family experienced racists incidences in the early '60's prompting them to leave the country for Southampton in England.

There was racism in Rhodesia, too, but it was nothing like the institutionalized code in South Africa that made blacks subhuman — the system that Nelson Mandela later fought to bring down.

We had been on the road for more than 15 hours that day. We were taking the car because the train ride was difficult for a woman with three children and lots of baggage.

The train also was an uncomfortable ride for blacks: Halfway through the trip, in the middle of the night, they would have to get out of the Rhodesian Railways compartments and transfer to decrepit blacks-only South African carriages.

The car trip presented its own challenges. Hotels catered only to whites, so the drive needed to be nonstop. We also had to carry piles of food and drinks because my mother refused to go to the back door of shops; only whites were allowed inside the stores.

In those days, of course, we didn't say "blacks" and "whites." Black people were called "Africans," we were "colored" to designate our mixed race, and whites were called "Europeans."

Sometimes those lines got blurred. South Africa had a crazy system of deciding your race, including whether the moons of your fingernails were a bit more mauve than white, indicating a hint of black blood. There also was the test of whether a pencil would stay in your hair, indicating it must be of kinky black stock. If the pencil slid through, you could be considered white.

Under such rules of apartheid, Chinese were classified colored despite their straight hair; Japanese were white.

Blacks who wanted to be reclassified as colored also could undergo the pencil test: if it fell out when you shook your head, you could be become colored.

Tens of thousands of people changed their race in this manner. Sometimes it was not voluntary and led to families being forcibly separated — even children from their parents — if one member was deemed not to belong to the same race. It was not unusual, in the colored community, to find siblings ranging in shades from deepest black to fair with blond hair.

I remember the sorrow brought on our family because one of my mother's sisters "played white." When she was in her 90s, my grandmother recounted how her own daughter walked past her in the street, pretending not to know her. But with the pain still stark in her eyes, she told me, "That's what she had to do to make a better life for herself and her children."

Being white meant you got decent health care, your kids could go to school, and you could live where you wanted.

Blacks were corralled into townships, if they could get jobs in the city. If not, their urban shacks often were bulldozed and they were forcibly moved to unproductive "homelands." This was at the heart of the policy of apartheid, or "separateness."

My experience was more the absurd pettiness of apartheid, rather than the brutal,

state-sponsored violence used to maintain it.

If you were white, you had access to jobs denied to blacks. The only black professionals were teachers, like my mother; nurses and doctors who could only treat blacks; and lawyers, the profession chosen by Mandela, who once believed he could end apartheid by reasoning and legal argument.

We moved to England from Rhodesia when I was child because my mother fell in love with a white man, Michael Faul, who had come to Rhodesia when he was 2. His mother strenuously objected to the marriage, and for years, she was estranged from her only son until my mother forced him to reconcile.

I remember our ship docking in Southampton. On the train ride to London, seeing whites doing menial work, I exclaimed to my mother: "But those are Europeans — picking up dustbins!" It was so alien.

On subsequent visits to South Africa as a teenager, I had a British passport. That put me in the peculiar position of being an "honorary white" — meaning I could stay in white hotels and, upon showing my passport, go to restaurants, movie theaters and other places reserved for whites. The exception was South Africa's racially segregated beaches.

To my surprise, I realized that Johannesburg was not made up of dusty, treeless suburbs with poor homes crowded onto small plots overlooked by dumps. White people lived in green neighborhoods with paved roads and sidewalks, in lush homes with gardens, swimming pools and tennis courts.

Black people who worked in those suburbs had to have permission to live in the "boy's quarters" at the bottom of the garden — such approval was stamped into much-hated "passbooks." Or they had to be out of the white suburbs before nightfall.

My mother, now writing her memoirs, recalls racism as something that "children were not taught. ... It seemed to be imbibed unconsciously, and automatically became a part of you."

In Cradock, a South African town in the eastern Cape where she was living when apartheid was legalized in 1948, my English-speaking mother struggled with her studies after new laws sought to entrench white superiority through the Afrikaans language. Once, she was "locked into my classroom to do my topic in history, in a foreign language I could neither read nor write."

Opposition to Afrikaans as "the language of the oppressor" led to the 1976 uprising in Soweto, when police opened fire on 15,000 students marching in a peaceful protest. Images of the state violence published around the world proved a momentous turning point, changing how many perceived apartheid.

When that evil system finally was crushed, we all were in awe of Mandela's insistence on reconciliation and not retribution. It is a tribute to him that today, as he ordained, I and others forgive but do not forget.

EDITOR'S NOTE — Michelle Faul is Chief Africa Correspondent for The Associated Press.

VOCABULARY

RURAL: landligt
INDOMITABLE:ukuelige
BAWLED: skrålede
DECREPIT: faldefærdige
MAUVE: lyslilla
STOCK: herkomst
CORRALLED: gennet som kvæg
PROFESSIONALS: fagfolk
STENUOUSLY: på det kraftigste
PECULIAR: særegne
IMBIDED: tilegnet
ENTRENCH: forankre
RECONCILIATION: forsoning
RETRIBUTION: gengældelse
ORDAINED: ordineret

SOUTH AFRICA: The Sharpeville Massacre

TIME Magazine, Monday, Apr. 04, 1960
(http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,869441,00.html)

For a century and a half, blacks in the Union of South Africa have had to carry passbooks. But it is only in recent years, under the Boer regime of stubborn, stiff-necked Prime Minister Hendrik Verwoerd, that the passbook has become almost a physical shackle.

The pass lists the African's name, birthplace, and tribal affiliation, contains his picture and serial number, has space for a receipt to prove that he has paid his taxes and to list his arrests, and unless it is signed each month by his employer, the African can be herded with the other unemployed into a native reservation.

If an African travels from the countryside to the city, or just across the street for cigarettes, South Africa's ubiquitous, hard-fisted police check his pass. If he stands outside his front door without his pass, the police will not let him walk five feet to get it. He is hauled off to jail, without notice to his employer or family, and fined or imprisoned. Murders go unsolved while the courts are jammed with pass offenders.

For years the Africans hated and endured the system. Then a new and more militant organization called the Pan-African Congress decided to exploit the passbook grievance. It urged Africans all over the Union to descend last week upon local police stations—without their passbooks, without arms, without violence—and demand to be arrested. In a few spots, the turnout was impressive. At Orlando township in the outskirts of Johannesburg, 20,000 Africans milled around the police station, led by Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe, 36, a Methodist-reared university instructor, who heads the Pan-African Congress. Fifteen miles to the south, in Evaton, 70,000 Africans turned out. The nervous police made few arrests of the demonstrators; at Langa, near Cape Town, they opened fire to disperse the Africans, killing three and wounding 25.

At first, everything was relatively quiet, too, at the Sharpeville police station, 28 miles southwest of Johannesburg—but Sharpeville was soon to become a headline name the world over. Twenty police, nervously eying a growing mob of 20,000 Africans demanding to be arrested, barricaded themselves behind a 4-ft. wire-mesh fence surrounding the police station. The crowd's mood was ugly, and 130 police reinforcements, supported by four Saracen armored cars, were rushed in. Sabre jets and Harvard Trainers zoomed within a hundred feet of the ground, buzzing the crowd in an attempt to scatter it. The Africans responded by hurling stones, which rattled harmlessly off the armored cars and into the police compound, stnk-ing three policemen.

Chain Reaction. At i: 20 p.m. the blowup came. When police tried to seize an African at the gate to the compound, there was a scuffle and the crowd advanced toward the fence. Police Commander G. D. Pienaar rapped out an order to his men to load. Within minutes, almost in a chain reaction, the police began firing with revolvers, rifles, Sten guns. A woman shopper patronizing a fruit stand at the edge of the crowd was shot dead. A ten-year-old boy toppled. Crazily, the unarmed crowd stampeded to safety as more shots rang out, leaving behind hundreds lying dead or wounded—many of them shot in the back. It was all over in two awful minutes.

As the police emerged to clean up the carnage, one officer grew sick at the sight and vomited. But the police commander said coolly: "My car was struck by a stone. If they do these things, they must learn their lesson the hard way." The dead —estimates range from 72 to 90—were carted off to

makeshift morgues; more than 200 wounded overflowed the native hospital. And so much plasma was needed that African blood gave out, and the wounded got transfusions from reserve white stocks.

All South Africa was stunned by the sudden bloodshed that had always been implicit in Verwoerd's unrelenting policies. The English-language Johannesburg Star assailed the government's "pathetic faith in the power of machine guns to settle basic human problems," and the Anglican Bishop of Johannesburg appealed "to all those in South Africa who have any human feelings" to stop the police tactics. More than 500 white students at the University of Natal, carrying banners reading HITLER 1939, VERWOERD 1960, assembled on campus to lower the British and South African flags to half-mast.

But in the rest of Africa and throughout the world, the reaction was even angrier. Liberia's President William Tubman called the Sharpeville massacre "the vilest, most reckless and unconscionable action in history." In London, a crowd shouting "Murder!" had to be dispersed from South Africa House under an ordinance that prohibits any public gathering within a mile of Parliament when the House of Commons is in session. In Vatican City, L'Osservatore Romano demanded to know why South Africa's police "did not employ such modern means as water hoses and tear gas, which are in use in all civilized countries,"-instead of mowing down men, women and children indiscriminately. Nowhere in the world did a single government side with South Africa.

Everywhere Deplored. The U.S. State Department, freely intruding in another nation's internal affairs contrary to usual practice, "deplored" the violence and "regretted" the tragic loss of life. U.N. Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjold said that the U.N. was entitled to discuss the race riots, even if it could not intervene over them, and added: "In humanitarian terms, you need not have any doubt about my feelings." On petition of 29 Afro-Asian U.N. members, U.S. Delegate Henry Cabot Lodge, as the current president of the Security Council, set a meeting for this week.

Even South Africa's rabidly nationalistic Afrikaans press was having second thoughts. The day before the riots, the Johannesburg Vaderland called for a "simpler and less hurtful pass system." The influential Cape Town Die Burger urged moderation on Prime Minister Verwoerd. But Verwoerd obstinately said that "nothing would be done" to abolish the pass laws, and belatedly discovered that the demonstrators at Sharpeville had "shot first," even though no one found arms on the Africans.

Mourning Day. Afraid of civil war and preparing for a showdown, the government canceled all leaves for the 20,000 members of the South African police, placed the members of auxiliary white defense forces on a stand-by alert. Indoor or outdoor meetings of more than twelve persons were declared illegal (exception: a political rally of 40,000 addressed by Prime Minister Verwoerd, who complained that most of the unanimous outside criticism came from "the ducktails of the political world .... Good and nice people are mostly quiet"). African political organizations were outlawed. Robert Sobukwe and eleven of his Pan-African aides surrendered and were, jailed. Albert Luthuli, leader of the more moderate African National Congress, was already under house arrest. Both organizations proclaimed a "day of mourning" for the dead (the police released the bodies a few at a time so that there could be no mass funeral). A work boycott by Africans was ordered, and strong-arm squads called "the Spoilers" walked the streets to keep Africans off the job. Cape Town docks, loading 20 ships, were crippled by a walkout of stevedores. On the Johannesburg exchange, gold stocks fell for a paper loss of $250 million in four days. Throngs of white South Africans, fearing disaster, lined "up for emigration data at the, information offices of Canada and Australia.

At week's end came the first giving of ground. South Africa's commissioner of police curtly announced that to relieve the "tremendous tension," police would no longer ask Africans to show—or arrest them for failure to carry—the hated passbooks. It represented the first major retreat by the government since the Nationalists won power at the polls twelve years ago. But just when everyone was about to credit Verwoerd's administration with coming to its senses, Defense Minister Francois Erasmus said that the police decision was "strictly temporary" until the "situation quieted." South Africa's course was still set for disaster.

Nadine Gordimer

(b. 1923)

South Africa

In an interview published in Women Writers Talk *(1989), edited by Olga Kenyon, Nadine Gordimer had this to say about the political evolution of South Africa:*

> *[T]here are some extraordinary black and white people who are prepared to take a Pascalian wager on the fact that there is a way, that there must be a way. It goes beyond polarisation, it cannot happen while the situation is what it is. It can only be after the power structure has changed. But the fact is that if whites want to go on living in South Africa, they have to change. It's not a matter of just letting blacks in—white life is already dead, over. The big question is, given the kind of conditioning we've had for 300 years, is it possible to strike that down and make a common culture with the blacks?*

Since 1953, when she published her first novel, The Lying Days, *Nadine Gordimer has been aligned with the liberal white consciousness of South Africa. She was born in the Transvaal in 1923. Her father was a shopkeeper, her mother a housewife. A childhood illness kept Gordimer out of school until she was 14, by which time she was already an avid reader. By 15 she had published her first short story. It was not until she was somewhat older that she became aware of the South African political situation, and it was not until she was 30 that her first novel was published. Beginning with* A World of Strangers *(1958), Gordimer's novels focus directly on the South African racial situation. The most famous of these works include* A Guest of Honor *(1970),* The Conservationist *(1974),* Burger's Daughter *(1979),* July's People *(1981),* A Sport of Nature *(1987),* My Son's Story *(1990),* None to Accompany Me *(1994), and* The House Gun *(1998). Gordimer has also published 10 volumes of short stories, as well as several volumes of nonfiction. She was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature in 1991.*

Asked by Olga Kenyon what it means to be a white South African, Gordimer responded as follows:

> *You have to show that you support change. In my case that you support a complete revolution, if possible a peaceful one. I use revolution in a broad sense, a complete change of the whole political organisation, from grass roots. It's not enough for a white to say "Right, I'll be prepared to live under black majority rule," and sit back, waiting for it to come. You also have to work positively, in whatever way you can, as a human being.*

"Country Lovers," from Soldier's Embrace *(1975), a collection of short stories, was originally published paired with another story and jointly titled "Town and Country Lovers."*

COUNTRY LOVERS

The farm children play together when they are small; but once the white children go away to school they soon don't play together any more, even in the holidays. Although most of the black children get some sort of schooling, they drop every year farther behind the grades passed by the white children; the childish vocabulary, the child's exploration of the adventurous possibilities of dam, koppies, mealie lands and veld—there comes a time when the white children have surpassed these with the vocabulary of boarding-school and the possibilities of inter-school sports matches and the kind of adventures seen at the cinema. This usefully coincides with the age of twelve or thirteen; so that by the time early adolescence is reached, the black children are making, along with the bodily changes common to all, an easy transition to adult forms of address, beginning to call their old playmates *missus* and *baasie*—little master.

The trouble was Paulus Eysendyck did not seem to realize that Thebedi was now simply one of the crowd of farm children down at the kraal, recognizable in his sisters' old clothes. The first Christmas holidays after he had gone to boarding-school he brought home for Thebedi a painted box he had made in his wood-work class. He had to give it to her secretly because he had nothing for the other children at the kraal. And she gave him, before he went back to school, a bracelet she had made of thin brass wire and the grey-and-white beans of the castor-oil crop his father cultivated. (When they used to play together, she was the one who had taught Paulus how to make clay oxen for their toy spans.) There was a craze, even in the *platteland* towns like the one where he was at school, for boys to wear elephant-hair and other bracelets beside their watch-straps; his was admired, friends asked him to get similar ones for them. He said the natives made them on his father's farm and he would try.

When he was fifteen, six feet tall, and tramping round at school dances with the girls from the 'sister' school in the same town; when he had learnt how to tease and flirt and fondle quite intimately these girls who were the daughters of prosperous farmers like his father; when he had even met one who, at a wedding he had attended with his parents on a nearby farm, had let him do with her in a locked storeroom what people did when they made love—when he was as far from his childhood as all this, he still brought home from a shop in town a red plastic belt and gilt hoop ear-rings for the black girl, Thebedi. She told her father the missus had given these to her as a reward for some work she had done—it was true she sometimes was called to help out in the farmhouse. She told the girls in the kraal that she had a sweetheart nobody knew about, far away, away on another farm, and they giggled, and teased, and admired her. There was a boy in the kraal called Njabulo who said he wished he could have bought her a belt and ear-rings.

When the farmer's son was home for the holidays she wandered far from the kraal and her companions. He went for walks alone. They had not arranged this; it was an urge each followed independently. He knew it was she, from a long way off. She knew that his dog would not bark at her. Down at the dried-up river-bed where five or six years ago the children had caught a leguaan one great day—a creature that combined ideally the size and ferocious aspect of the crocodile with the

harmlessness of the lizard—they squatted side by side on the earth bank. He told her traveller's tales: about school, about the punishments at school, particularly, exaggerating both their nature and his indifference to them. He told her about the town of Middleburg, which she had never seen. She had nothing to tell but she prompted with many questions, like any good listener. While he talked he twisted and tugged at the roots of white stinkwood and Cape willow trees that looped out of the eroded earth around them. It had always been a good spot for children's games, down there hidden by the mesh of old, ant-eaten trees held in place by vigorous ones, wild asparagus bushing up between the trunks, and here and there prickly-pear cactus sunken-skinned and bristly, like an old man's face, keeping alive sapless until the next rainy season. She punctured the dry hide of a prickly-pear again and again with a sharp stick while she listened. She laughed a lot at what he told her, sometimes dropping her face on her knees, sharing amusement with the cool shady earth beneath her bare feet. She put on her pair of shoes—white sandals, thickly Blanco-ed against the farm dust—when he was on the farm, but these were taken off and laid aside, at the river-bed.

One summer afternoon when there was water flowing there and it was very hot she waded in as they used to do when they were children, her dress bunched modestly and tucked into the legs of her pants. The schoolgirls he went swimming with at dams or pools on neighbouring farms wore bikinis but the sight of their dazzling bellies and thighs in the sunlight had never made him feel what he felt now, when the girl came up the bank and sat beside him, the drops of water beading off her dark legs the only points of light in the earth-smelling, deep shade. They were not afraid of one another, they had known one another always; he did with her what he had done that time in the storeroom at the wedding, and this time it was so lovely, so lovely, he was surprised . . . and she was surprised by it, too—he could see in her dark face that was part of the shade, with her big dark eyes, shiny as soft water, watching him attentively: as she had when they used to huddle over their teams of mud oxen, as she had when he told her about detention weekends at school.

They went to the river-bed often through those summer holidays. They met just before the light went, as it does quite quickly, and each returned home with the dark—she to her mother's hut, he to the farmhouse—in time for the evening meal. He did not tell her about school or town any more. She did not ask questions any longer. He told her, each time, when they would meet again. Once or twice it was very early in the morning; the lowing of the cows being driven to graze came to them where they lay, dividing them with unspoken recognition of the sound read in their two pairs of eyes, opening so close to each other.

He was a popular boy at school. He was in the second, then the first soccer team. The head girl of the 'sister' school was said to have a crush on him; he didn't particularly like her, but there was a pretty blonde who put up her long hair into a kind of doughnut with a black ribbon round it, whom he took to see films when the schoolboys and girls had a free Saturday afternoon. He had been driving tractors and other farm vehicles since he was ten years old, and as soon as he was eighteen he got a driver's licence and in the holidays, this last year of his school life, he took neighbours' daughters to dances and to the drive-in cinema that had just opened twenty kilometres from the farm. His sisters were married, by then; his parents often left him in charge of the farm over the weekend while they visited the young wives and grandchildren.

When Thebedi saw the farmer and his wife drive away on a Saturday afternoon, the boot of their Mercedes filled with fresh-killed poultry and vegetables from the garden that it was part of her father's work to tend, she knew that she must come not to the river-bed but up to the house. The house was an old one, thick-walled, dark against the heat. The kitchen was its lively thoroughfare, with servants, food supplies, begging cats and dogs, pots boiling over, washing being damped for ironing, and the big deep-freeze the missus had ordered from town, bearing a crocheted mat and a vase of plastic irises. But the dining-room with the bulging-legged heavy table was shut up in its rich, old smell of soup and tomato sauce. The sitting-room curtains were drawn and the T.V. set silent. The door of the parents' bedroom was locked and the empty rooms where the girls had slept had sheets of plastic spread over the beds. It was in one of these that she and the farmer's son stayed together whole nights—almost: she had to get away before the house servants, who knew her, came in at dawn. There was a risk someone would discover her or traces of her presence if he took her to his own bedroom, although she had looked into it many times when she was helping out in the house and knew well, there, the row of silver cups he had won at school.

When she was eighteen and the farmer's son nineteen and working with his father on the farm before entering a veterinary college, the young man Njabulo asked her father for her. Njabulo's parents met with hers and the money he was to pay in place of the cows it is customary to give a prospective bride's parents was settled upon. He had no cows to offer; he was a labourer on the Eysendyck farm, like her father. A bright youngster; old Eysendyck had taught him brick-laying and was using him for odd jobs in construction, around the place. She did not tell the farmer's son that her parents had arranged for her to marry. She did not tell him, either, before he left for his first term at the veterinary college, that she thought she was going to have a baby. Two months after her marriage to Njabulo, she gave birth to a daughter. There was no disgrace in that; among her people it is customary for a young man to make sure, before marriage, that the chosen girl is not barren, and Njabulo had made love to her then. But the infant was very light and did not quickly grow darker as most African babies do. Already at birth there was on its head a quantity of straight, fine floss, like that which carries the seeds of certain weeds in the veld. The unfocused eyes it opened were grey flecked with yellow. Njabulo was the matt, opaque coffee-grounds colour that has always been called black; the colour of Thebedi's legs on which beaded water looked oyster-shell blue, the same colour as Thebedi's face, where the black eyes, with their interested gaze and clear whites, were so dominant.

Njabulo made no complaint. Out of his farm labourer's earnings he bought from the Indian store a cellophane-windowed pack containing a pink plastic bath, six napkins, a card of safety pins, a knitted jacket, cap and bootees, a dress, and a tin of Johnson's Baby Powder, for Thebedi's baby.

When it was two weeks old Paulus Eysendyck arrived home from the veterinary college for the holidays. He drank a glass of fresh, still-warm milk in the childhood familiarity of his mother's kitchen and heard her discussing with the old house-servant where they could get a reliable substitute to help out now that the girl Thebedi had had a baby. For the first time since he was a small boy he came right into the kraal. It was eleven o'clock in the morning. The men were at work in the lands. He looked about him, urgently; the women turned away, each not wanting to be the

one approached to point out where Thebedi lived. Thebedi appeared, coming slowly from the hut Njabulo had built in white man's style, with a tin chimney, and a proper window with glass panes set in straight as walls made of unfired bricks would allow. She greeted him with hands brought together and a token movement representing the respectful bob with which she was accustomed to acknowledge she was in the presence of his father or mother. He lowered his head under the doorway of her home and went in. He said, "I want to see. Show me."

She had taken the bundle off her back before she came out into the light to face him. She moved between the iron bedstead made up with Najbulo's checked blankets and the small wooden table where the pink plastic bath stood among food and kitchen pots, and picked up the bundle from the snugly-blanketed grocer's box where it lay. The infant was asleep; she revealed the closed, pale, plump tiny face, with a bubble of spit at the corner of the mouth, the spidery pink hands stirring. She took off the woollen cap and the straight fine hair flew up after it in static electricity, showing gilded strands here and there. He said nothing. She was watching him as she had done when they were little, and the gang of children had trodden down a crop in their games or transgressed in some other way for which he, as the farmer's son, the white one among them, must intercede with the farmer. She disturbed the sleeping face by scratching or tickling gently at a cheek with one finger, and slowly the eyes opened, saw nothing, were still asleep, and then, awake, no longer narrowed, looked out at them, grey with yellowish flecks, his own hazel eyes.

He struggled for a moment with a grimace of tears, anger and self-pity. She could not put out her hand to him. He said, "You haven't been near the house with it?"

She shook her head.

"Never?"

Again she shook her head.

"Don't take it out. Stay inside. Can't you take it away somewhere. You must give it to someone—"

She moved to the door with him.

He said, "I'll see what I will do. I don't know." And then he said: "I feel like killing myself."

Her eyes began to glow, to thicken with tears. For a moment there was the feeling between them that used to come when they were alone down at the river-bed.

He walked out.

Two days later, when his mother and father had left the farm for the day, he appeared again. The women were away on the lands, weeding, as they were employed to do as casual labour in summer; only the very old remained, propped up on the ground outside the huts in the flies and the sun. Thebedi did not ask him in. The child had not been well; it had diarrhoea. He asked where its food was. She said, 'The milk comes from me.' He went into Njabulo's house, where the child lay; she did not follow but stayed outside the door and watched without seeing an old crone who had lost her mind, talking to herself, talking to the fowls who ignored her.

She thought she heard small grunts from the hut, the kind of infant grunt that indicates a full stomach, a deep sleep. After a time, long or short she did not know, he came out and walked away with plodding stride (his father's gait) out of sight, towards his father's house.

The baby was not fed during the night and although she kept telling Njabulo it was sleeping, he saw for himself in the morning that it was dead. He comforted her with words and caresses. She did not cry but simply sat, staring at the door. Her hands were cold as dead chickens' feet to his touch.

Njabulo buried the little baby where farm workers were buried, in the place in the veld the farmer had given them. Some of the mounds had been left to weather away unmarked, others were covered with stones and a few had fallen wooden crosses. He was going to make a cross but before it was finished the police came and dug up the grave and took away the dead baby: someone—one of the other labourers? their women?—had reported that the baby was almost white, that, strong and healthy, it had died suddenly after a visit by the farmer's son. Pathological tests on the infant corpse showed intestinal damage not always consistent with death by natural causes.

Thebedi went for the first time to the country town where Paulus had been to school, to give evidence at the preparatory examination into the charge of murder brought against him. She cried hysterically in the witness box, saying yes, yes (the gilt hoop ear-rings swung in her ears), she saw the accused pouring liquid into the baby's mouth. She said he had threatened to shoot her if she told anyone.

More than a year went by before, in that same town, the case was brought to trial. She came to Court with a new-born baby on her back. She wore gilt hoop ear-rings; she was calm; she said she had not seen what the white man did in the house.

Paulus Eysendyck said he had visited the hut but had not poisoned the child.

The Defence did not contest that there had been a love relationship between the accused and the girl, or that intercourse had taken place, but submitted there was no proof that the child was the accused's.

The judge told the accused there was strong suspicion against him but not enough proof that he had committed the crime. The Court could not accept the girl's evidence because it was clear she had committed perjury either at this trial or at the preparatory examination. There was the suggestion in the mind of the Court that she might be an accomplice in the crime; but, again, insufficient proof.

The judge commended the honourable behaviour of the husband (sitting in court in a brown-and-yellow-quartered golf cap bought for Sundays) who had not rejected his wife and had "even provided clothes for the unfortunate infant out of his slender means."

The verdict on the accused was "not guilty."

The young white man refused to accept the congratulations of press and public and left the Court with his mother's raincoat shielding his face from photographers. His father said to the press, "I will try and carry on as best I can to hold up my head in the district."

Interviewed by the Sunday papers, who spelled her name in a variety of ways, the black girl, speaking in her own language, was quoted beneath her photograph: "It was a thing of our childhood, we don't see each other any more."

[1980]

GCINA MHLOPE

The Toilet

Sometimes I wanted to give up and be a good girl who listened to her elders. Maybe I should have done something like teaching or nursing as my mother wished. People thought these professions were respectable, but I knew I wanted to do something different, though I was not sure what. I thought a lot about acting. . . . My mother said that it had been a waste of good money educating me because I did not know what to do with the knowledge I had acquired. I'd come to Johannesburg for the December holidays after writing my matric exams, and then stayed on, hoping to find something to do.

My elder sister worked in Orange Grove as a domestic worker, and I stayed with her in her back room. I didn't know anybody in Jo'burg except my sister's friends whom we went to church with. The Methodist church up Fourteenth Avenue was about the only outing we had together. I was very bored and lonely.

On weekdays I was locked in my sister's room so that the Madam wouldn't see me. She was at home most of the time: painting her nails, having tea with her friends, or lying in the sun by the swimming pool. The swimming pool was very close to the room, which is why I had to keep very quiet. My sister felt bad about locking me in there, but she had no alternative. I couldn't even play the radio, so she brought me books, old magazines, and newspapers from the white people. I just read every single thing I came across: *Fair Lady, Woman's Weekly*, anything. But then my sister thought I was reading too much.

"What kind of wife will you make if you can't even make baby clothes, or knit yourself a jersey? I suppose you will marry an educated man like yourself, who won't mind going to bed with a book and an empty stomach."

We would play cards at night when she knocked off, and listen to the radio, singing along softly with the songs we liked.

Then I got this temporary job in a clothing factory in town. I looked forward to meeting new people, and liked the idea of being out of that room for a change. The factory made clothes for ladies' boutiques.

The whole place was full of machines of all kinds. Some people were sewing, others were ironing with big heavy irons that pressed with a lot of steam. I had to cut all the loose threads that hang after a dress or a jacket is finished. As soon as a number of dresses in a certain style were finished, they would be sent to me and I had to count them, write the number down, and then start with the cutting of the threads. I was fascinated to discover that one person made only sleeves, another the collars, and so on until the last lady put all the pieces together, sewed on buttons, or whatever was necessary to finish.

Most people at the factory spoke Sotho, but they were nice to me—they tried to speak to me in Zulu or Xhosa, and they gave me all kinds of advice on things I didn't know. There was this girl, Gwendolene—she thought I was very stupid—she called me a "bari" because I always sat inside the changing room with something to read when it was time to eat my lunch, instead of going outside to meet guys. She told me it was cheaper to get myself a "lunch boy"—somebody to buy me lunch. She told me it was wise not to sleep with him, because then I could dump him anytime I wanted to. I was very nervous about such things. I thought it was better to be a "bari" than to be stabbed by a city boy for his money.

The factory knocked off at four-thirty, and then I went to a park near where my sister worked. I waited there till half past six, when I could sneak into the house again without the white people seeing me. I had to leave the house before half past five in the mornings as well. That meant I had to find something to do with the time I had before I could catch the seven-thirty bus to work—about two hours. I would go to a public toilet in the park. For some reason it was never locked, so I would go in and sit on the toilet seat to read some magazine or other until the right time to catch the bus.

The first time I went into this toilet, I was on my way to the bus stop. Usually I went straight to the bus stop outside the OK Bazaars where it was well lit, and I could see. I would wait there, reading, or just looking at the growing number of cars and buses on their way to town. On this day it was raining quite hard, so I thought I would shelter in the toilet until the rain had passed. I knocked first to see if there was anyone inside. As there was no reply, I pushed the door open and went in. It smelled a little—a dryish kind of smell, as if the toilet was not used all that often, but it was quite clean compared to many "Non-European" toilets I knew. The floor was painted red and the walls were cream white. It did not look like it had been painted for a few years. I stood looking around, with the rain coming very hard on the zinc roof. The noise was comforting—to know I had escaped the wet—only a few of the heavy drops had got me. The plastic bag in which I carried my book and purse and neatly folded pink handkerchief was a little damp, but that was because I had used it to cover my head when I ran to the toilet. I pulled my dress down a little so that it would not get creased when I sat down. The closed lid of the toilet was going to be my seat for many mornings after that.

I was really lucky to have found that toilet because the winter was very cold. Not that it was any warmer in there, but once I'd closed the door it used to be a little less windy. Also the toilet was very small—the walls were wonderfully close to me—it felt like it was made to fit me alone. I enjoyed that kind of privacy. I did a lot of thinking while I sat on that toilet seat. I did a lot of daydreaming too—many times imagining myself in some big hall doing a

really popular play with other young actors. At school, we took set books like *Buzani KuBawo* or *A Man for All Seasons* and made school plays which we toured to the other schools on weekends. I loved it very much. When I was even younger I had done little sketches taken from the Bible and on big days like Good Friday, we acted and sang happily.

I would sit there dreaming. . . .

I was getting bored with the books I was reading—the love stories all sounded the same, and besides that I just lost interest. I started asking myself why I had not written anything since I left school. At least at school I had written some poems, or stories in the school magazine, school competitions and other magazines like *Bona* and *Inkqubela*. Our English teacher was always so encouraging; I remembered the day I showed him my first poem—I was so excited I couldn't concentrate in class for the whole day. I didn't know anything about publishing then, and I didn't ask myself if my stories were good enough. I just enjoyed writing things down when I had the time. So one Friday, after I'd started being that toilet's best customer, I bought myself a notebook in which I was hoping to write something. I didn't use it for quite a while, until one evening.

My sister had taken her usual Thursday afternoon off, and she had delayed somewhere. I came back from work, then waited in the park for the right time to go back into the yard. The white people always had their supper at six-thirty and that was the time I used to steal my way in without disturbing them or being seen. My comings and goings had to be secret because they still didn't know I stayed there.

Then I realised that she hadn't come back, and I was scared to go out again, in case something went wrong this time. I decided to sit down in front of my sister's room, where I thought I wouldn't be noticed. I was reading a copy of *Drum Magazine* and hoping that she would come back soon—before the dogs sniffed me out. For the first time I realised how stupid it was of me not to have cut myself a spare key long ago. I kept on hearing noises that sounded like the gate opening. A few times I was sure I had heard her footsteps on the concrete steps leading to the servant's quarters, but it turned out to be something or someone else.

I was trying hard to concentrate on my reading again, when I heard the two dogs playing, chasing each other nearer and nearer to where I was sitting. And then, there they were in front of me, looking as surprised as I was. For a brief moment we stared at each other, then they started to bark at me. I was sure they would tear me to pieces if I moved just one finger, so I sat very still, trying not to look at them, while my heart pounded and my mouth went dry as paper.

They barked even louder when the dogs from next door joined in, glared at me through the openings in the hedge. Then the Madam's high-pitched voice rang out above the dogs' barking.

"Ireeeeeeeene!" That's my sister's English name, which we never use. I couldn't move or answer the call—the dogs were standing right in front of me, their teeth so threateningly long. When there was no reply, she came to see what was going on.

"Oh, it's you? Hello." She was smiling at me, chewing that gum which never left her mouth, instead of calling the dogs away from me. They had stopped barking, but they hadn't moved—they were still growling at me, waiting for her to tell them what to do.

"Please Madam, the dogs will bite me," I pleaded, not moving my eyes from them.

"No, they won't bite you." Then she spoke to them nicely, "Get away now—go on," and they went off. She was like a doll, her hair almost orange in colour, all curls round her made-up face. Her eyelashes fluttered like a doll's. Her thin lips were bright red like her long nails, and she wore very high-heeled shoes. She was still smiling; I wondered if it didn't hurt after a while. When her friends came for a swim, I could always hear her forever laughing at something or other.

She scared me—I couldn't understand how she could smile like that but not want me to stay in her house.

"When did you come in? We didn't see you."

"I've been here for some time now—my sister isn't here. I'm waiting to talk to her."

"Oh—she's not here?" She was laughing, for no reason that I could see. "I can give her a message—you go on home—I'll tell her that you want to see her."

Once I was outside the gate, I didn't know what to do or where to go. I walked slowly, kicking my heels. The street lights were so very bright! Like big eyes staring at me. I wondered what the people who saw me thought I was doing, walking around at that time of the night. But then I didn't really care, because there wasn't much I could do about the situation right then. I was just thinking how things had to go wrong on that day particularly, because my sister and I were not on such good terms. Early that morning, when the alarm had gone for me to wake up, I did not jump to turn it off, so my sister got really angry with me. She had gone on about me always leaving it to ring for too long, as if it was set for her, and not for me. And when I went out to wash, I had left the door open a second too long, and that was enough to earn me another scolding.

Every morning I had to wake up straight away, roll my bedding and put it all under the bed where my sister was sleeping. I was not supposed to put on the light although it was still dark. I'd light a candle, and tiptoe my way out with a soap dish and a toothbrush. My clothes were on a hanger on a nail at the back of the door. I'd take the hanger and close the door as quietly as I could. Everything had to be ready set the night before. A washing basin full of cold

water was also ready outside the door, put there because the sound of running water and the loud screech the taps made in the morning could wake the white people and they would wonder what my sister was doing up so early. I'd do my everything and be off the premises by five-thirty with my shoes in my bag—I only put them on once I was safely out of the gate. And that gate made such a noise too. Many times I wished I could jump over it and save myself all that sickening careful-careful business!

Thinking about all these things took my mind away from the biting cold of the night and my wet nose, until I saw my sister walking towards me.

"Mholo, what are you doing outside in the street?" she greeted me. I quickly briefed her on what had happened.

"Oh Yehovah! You can be so dumb sometimes! What were you doing inside in the first place? You know you should have waited for me so we could walk in together. Then I could say you were visiting or something. Now, you tell me, what am I supposed to say to them if they see you come in again? Hayi!"

She walked angrily towards the gate, with me hesitantly following her. When she opened the gate, she turned to me with an impatient whisper.

"And now why don't you come in, stupid?"

I mumbled my apologies, and followed her in. By some miracle no one seemed to have noticed us, and we quickly munched a snack of cold chicken and boiled potatoes and drank our tea, hardly on speaking terms. I just wanted to howl like a dog. I wished somebody would come and be my friend, and tell me that I was not useless, and that my sister did not hate me, and tell me that one day I would have a nice place to live . . . anything. It would have been really great to have someone my own age to talk to.

But also I knew that my sister was worried for me, she was scared of her employers. If they were to find out that I lived with her, they would fire her, and then we would both be walking up and down the streets. My eleven rand wages wasn't going to help us at all. I don't know how long I lay like that, unable to fall asleep, just wishing and wishing with tears running into my ears.

The next morning I woke up long before the alarm went off, but I just lay there feeling tired and depressed. If there was a way out, I would not have gone to work, but there was this other strong feeling or longing inside me. It was some kind of pain that pushed me to do everything at double speed and run to my toilet. I call it my toilet because that is exactly how I felt about it. It was very rare that I ever saw anybody else go in there in the mornings. It was like they all knew I was using it, and they had to lay off or something. When I went there, I didn't really expect to find it occupied.

I felt my spirits really lifting as I put on my shoes outside the gate. I made sure that my notebook was in my bag. In my haste I even forgot my lunchbox, but it didn't matter. I was walking faster and my feet were feeling lighter all the time. Then I noticed that the door had been painted, and that a new window pane had replaced the old broken one. I smiled to myself as I reached the door. Before long I was sitting on that toilet seat, writing a poem.

Many more mornings saw me sitting there writing. Sometimes it did not need to be a poem; I wrote anything that came into my head—in the same way I would have done if I'd had a friend to talk to. I remember some days when I felt like I was hiding something from my sister. She did not know about my toilet in the park, and she was not in the least interested in my notebook.

Then one morning I wanted to write a story about what had happened at work the day before; the supervisor screaming at me for not calling her when I'd seen the people who stole two dresses at lunch time. I had found it really funny. I had to write about it and I just hoped there were enough pages left in my notebook. It all came back to me, and I was smiling when I reached for the door, but it wouldn't open—it was locked!

I think for the first time I accepted that the toilet was not mine after all. . . . Slowly I walked over to a bench nearby, watched the early spring sun come up, and wrote my story anyway.

Tracy Chapman predicted the fall of the Apartheid system?

http://youtu.be/wGmHpn-prd0

Tracy Chapman
Talkin' Bout A Revolution
(1988)

Don't you know
They're talkin' bout a revolution
It sounds like a whisper
Don't you know
They're talkin' about a revolution
It sounds like a whisper

While they're standing in the welfare lines
Crying at the doorsteps of those armies of salvation
Wasting time in the unemployment lines
Sitting around waiting for a promotion

Don't you know
They're talkin' bout a revolution
It sounds like a whisper
Poor people gonna rise up
And get their share
Poor people gonna rise up
And take what's theirs

Don't you know
You better run, run, run, run, run,
run, run, run, run, run, run, run
Oh I said you better
Run, run, run, run, run, run, run,
run, run, run, run, run

Finally the tables are starting to turn
Talkin' bout a revolution
Finally the tables are starting to turn
Talkin' bout a revolution
Talkin' bout a revolution

While they`re standing in the welfare lines
Crying at the doorsteps of those armies of salvation
Wasting time in the unemployment lines
Sitting around waiting for a promotion

Don't you know
They're talkin' bout a revolution
It sounds like a whisper

Finally the tables are starting to turn
Talkin' bout a revolution
Finally the tables are starting to turn
Talkin' bout a revolution
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Tracy Chapman was born on March 30th, 1964 in Cleveland, Ohio, and is one of the famous song writers in the USA. For her songs, she was awarded two Grammies.

The song is about the Apartheid in South Africa, which ruled the country from 1948 to 1994. Apartheid means the system in South Africa, which enforced a strong separation between the 'white people' and the 'black people'. There were voting rights only for the white people. The black people had to live in different housing areas, had different schools and were not allowed to come to public parks. Many hospitals and other public buildings had two different entries. One entry for the white people and one for the black people. One of the leading fighters against the Apartheid system was Nelson Mandela, who became the first black president of South Africa in 1994. Tracy Chapman sang this song in 1988 at the "Nelson Mandela 70th Birthday Tribute Concert" in London. At that time Nelson Mandela was still in exile.

At the time Tracy Chapman sang this, the black people were still oppressed. But there were also uprisings in the black townships, the start of the revolution. In 1989 a new president was elected. One year later, because the resistance of the black people had grown so much, Nelson Mandela was allowed to return to South Africa and finally became president in 1994.

Nelson Mandela: Inaugural Address, May 10, 1994

Your Majesties, Your Highnesses, Distinguished Guests, Comrades and Friends:

Today, all of us do, by our presence here, and by our celebrations in other parts of our country and the world, confer glory and hope to newborn liberty.

Out of the experience of an extraordinary human disaster that lasted too long, must be born a society of which all humanity will be proud.

Our daily deeds as ordinary South Africans must produce an actual South African reality that will reinforce humanity's belief in justice, strengthen its confidence in the nobility of the human soul and sustain all our hopes for a glorious life for all.

All this we owe both to ourselves and to the peoples of the world who are so well represented here today.

To my compatriots, I have no hesitation in saying that each one of us is as intimately attached to the soil of this beautiful country as are the famous jacaranda trees of Pretoria and the mimosa trees of the bushveld.

Each time one of us touches the soil of this land, we feel a sense of personal renewal. The national mood changes as the seasons change.

We are moved by a sense of joy and exhilaration when the grass turns green and the flowers bloom.

That spiritual and physical oneness we all share with this common homeland explains the depth of the pain we all carried

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dis'tinguished: fremtrædende, fornem, **con'fer:** overdrage, **dis'aster:** ulykke, **deed:** handling, **reinforce:** forstærke, **sus'tain:** støtte, **com'patriot:** landsmand, **hesi'tation:** tøven, **a'ttach:** knytte, **bushveld:** slette, **re'newal:** fornyelse, **exhila'ration:** munterhed

Fugard, "Valley Song" (Modtryk, 1997)

in our hearts as we saw our country tear itself apart in a terrible conflict, and as we saw it spurned, outlawed and isolated by the peoples of the world, precisely because it has become the universal base of the pernicious ideology and practice of racism and racial oppression.

We, the people of South Africa, feel fulfilled that humanity has taken us back into its bosom, that we, who were outlaws not so long ago, have today been given the rare privilege to be host to the nations of the world on our own soil.

We thank all our distinguished international guests for having come to take possession with the people of our country of what is, after all, a common victory for justice, for peace, for human dignity.

We trust that you will continue to stand by us as we tackle the challenges of building peace, prosperity, non-sexism, non-racialism and democracy.

We deeply appreciate the role that the masses of our people and their political mass democratic, religious, women, youth, business, traditional and other leaders have played to bring about this conclusion. Not least among them is my Second Deputy President, the Honorable F.W. de Klerk.

We would also like to pay tribute to our security forces, in all their ranks, for the distinguished role they have played in securing our first democratic elections and the transition to democracy, from blood-thirsty forces which still refuse to see the light.

The time for the healing of the wounds has come.

The moment to bridge the chasms that divide us has come.

The time to build is upon us.

We have, at last, achieved our political emancipation. We

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spurn: vrage, afvise med foragt, **per'nicious:** ondartet, ødelæggende, **o'ppression:** undertrykkelse, **bosom:** bryst, **rare:** sjælden, **host:** vært, **take po'ssession of:** sætte sig i besiddelse af, **dignity:** værdighed, **pros'perity:** fremgang, **a'ppreciate:** værdsætte, **pay tribute to:** hylde, **tran'sition:** overgang, **chasm:** kløft, **a'chieve:** opnå, **emanci'pation:** frigørelse

pledge ourselves to liberate all our people from the continuing bondage of poverty, deprivation, suffering, gender and other discrimination.

We succeeded to take our last steps to freedom in conditions of relative peace. We commit ourselves to the construction of a complete, just and lasting peace.

We have triumphed in the effort to implant hope in the breasts of the millions of our people. We enter into a covenant that we shall build the society in which all South Africans, both black and white, will be able to walk tall, without any fear in their hearts, assured of their inalienable right to human dignity—a rainbow nation at peace with itself and the world.

As a token of its commitment to the renewal of our country, the new Interim Government of National Unity will, as a matter of urgency, address the issue of amnesty for various categories of our people who are currently serving terms of imprisonment.

We dedicate this day to all the heroes and heroines in this country and the rest of the world who sacrificed in many ways and surrendered their lives so that we could be free.

Their dreams have become reality. Freedom is their reward.

We are both humbled and elevated by the honour and privilege that you, the people of South Africa, have bestowed on us, as the first President of a united, democratic, non-racial and non-sexist South Africa, to lead our country out of the valley of darkness.

We understand it still that there is no easy road to freedom.

We know it well that none of us acting alone can achieve success.

We must therefore act together as a united people, for national reconciliation, for nation building, for the birth of a new world.

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pledge: love højtideligt, **bondage:** trældom, **depri'vation:** afsagn, **gender:** køn, **co'mmit:** forpligte (sig), **covenant:** overenskomst, kontrakt, **in'alienable:** umistelig, **interim:** midlertidig, **matter of urgency:** hastesag, **currently:** for tiden, **sacrifice:** ofre, **su'rrender:** overgive, ofre, **humble:** gøre ydmyg, **elevate:** ophøje, **be'stow:** skænke, **reconcili'ation:** forsoning,

Let there be justice for all.
Let there be peace for all.
Let there be work, bread, water and salt for all.
Let each know that for each the body, the mind and the soul have been freed to fulfill themselves.
Never, never and never again shall it be that this beautiful land will again experience the oppression of one by another and suffer the indignity of being the skunk of the world.
Let freedom reign.
The sun shall never set on so glorious a human achievement!
God bless Africa!
Thank you.

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in'dignity: uværdighed, **skunk:** stinkdyr, sjover