

ICCR Pays Tribute to Nelson Mandela

July 18, 1918 – December 5, 2013

“I have walked that long road to freedom. I have tried not to falter; I have made missteps along the way. But I have discovered the secret that after climbing a great hill, one only finds that there are many more hills to climb. I have taken a moment here to rest, to steal a view of the glorious vista that surrounds me, to look back on the distance I have come. But I can only rest for a moment, for with freedom come responsibilities, and I dare not linger, for my long walk is not ended.” – Nelson Mandela

Donna Katzin, Executive Director, Shared Interest

Nelson Mandela towered as a yardstick – measuring the heights of which humanity is capable. A campaigner, prisoner, president, prophet – he never pretended to be more than he was – profoundly human. At ICCR, we were privileged to play a leading role in organizing the first U.S. event to welcome him after his release from 27 years in prison – the unforgettable service at Riverside Church, where he strode down the aisle to African drums and a tsunami of song, dance, chants, tears. With others, he inspired the anti-apartheid and socially responsible investment movements, helped us turn from divestment to reinvestment, left South Africa’s indelible imprint on international strategies and struggles for justice.

When Shared Interest welcomed him in 2002, he told us our “unflagging partnership” was “as nec-



Donna Katzin, 1987



Nelson Mandela, Riverside Church NYC, 1990

essary as it was in 1994” to “give substance and shape to the vision and energies of [South Africa’s] people.” Mandela’s words that night still ring true: “We look forward to continuing that work which is based on a shared interest.” Today we continue his long, unfinished walk to freedom by creating viable communities, farms, enterprises, homes, jobs – and laying economic foundations for an equitable South Africa, and a more just and peaceful world.

Tim Smith, Director of ESG Engagement, Walden Asset Management

Our work at ICCR is built on the foundation of the faith community coming together as a moral voice and as investors to challenge support by banks and companies for that immoral system of racism called apartheid.

Nelson Mandela was already in prison at that time but his words and spirit moved through prison walls to energize the opposition to apartheid inside South Africa and to stimulate broad-based campaigns in the U.S. which challenged South Africa’s system of white supremacy culturally, through sport, in religious centers and of course economically. ICCR’s role was to coordinate the voice of the faith community to challenge

banks’ lending to the Government, companies providing strategic support for the administration of apartheid and its military and to raise the issue of the very ethics of a company investing in South Africa.

Through engagement with hundreds of banks and companies, religious investors filed shareholder resolutions, publicized and challenged the role of companies, withdrew accounts from banks



Tim Smith, Jessie Jackson, Citibank Protest

they called “partners in apartheid” and some even sold shares in protest. The overall goal was to weaken economic support for the government and move it to the negotiating table. It took decades of work but at last the government relented, released Nelson Mandela and negotiated a peaceful agreement moving toward majority rule.

The result was Mandela as President and a new future for South Africa, but one that is still in the process of being built with many chapters to go before his vision of economic equality will be reached.

Paul M. Neuhauser, Attorney

I had been very active in a group called the Episcopal Society for Cultural Racial Unity, which was anti-segregation in the United States. The first thing the committee had to do was decide what it was going to do about recommendations to the governing board with respect to investments. How were we



going to build in social responsibility in investments? And what we decided we were going to do was write a shareholder resolution on apartheid. I drafted the resolution and got it on the proxy statement at General Motors asking the company to get out of South Africa. Our view was that, because of the conditions there, they should not operate under such immoral conditions. This was the first social resolution that ever appeared on a proxy statement. In any event, one of the things that came out of that was the Sullivan Principles.

The Sullivan Principles were workplace principles for companies operating in South Africa. No segregation of restrooms or drinking fountains and things of that sort; equal pay for equal work. And it became a *modus vivendi* within the General Motors board: they decided they would reform what they were doing within South Africa, rather than get out. What they did was get other major corporations operating in South Africa to form a coalition that adopted the Sullivan Principles for their operations. General Motors, Ford and I think Goodyear—the major big American

companies that were operating in South Africa, virtually all of them signed on to the Sullivan Principles to reform their own workplaces.

David Schilling, Senior Program Director Human Rights and Resources, ICCR

In the 1980s I worked at the Riverside Church Disarmament Program and got involved with ICCR's campaign to end apartheid by getting major corporations to withdraw from South Africa. Donna Katzin, ICCR's South Africa program staff person, did an amazing job in pulling together a major coalition in the New York area of religious, labor and political leaders. This was one of the strategic pieces put in place that drew its inspiration from the then still-jailed Nelson Mandela.

In the mid-1980s, I went to a rally in front of Citibank attended by ICCR members, unions, and faith-based groups which ended by eight of us blocking the front door to the headquarters by forming a human chain. My boss, Rev. William Sloane Coffin was there, along with Rabbi Balfour Brickner, Rev. Bill Wipfler of the National Council of Churches, Cleveland Robinson, labor leader, and Jenifer Davis of the American Committee on Africa. After we refused to “unblock the door”, we were arrested and taken to the nearest precinct for booking. This action was one of thousands that took



David Schilling (second from left) at interfaith anti-apartheid demonstration in front of Citibank, 1984

place throughout the U.S. and other countries. In the New York area, it was ICCR that took the lead and helped many people like me to connect to the struggle to end apartheid and to the remarkable, inspirational and transformative human being, Nelson Mandela.

Vidette Bullock Mixon – formerly with the General Board of Pensions of the United Methodist Church

Reflections from an ICCR fact-finding delegation to South Africa, August, 1991:



Change in the interest of black South Africans will only occur as attitudes, behavioral patterns and practices have been revised. Currently, it would appear that change in South Africa is a practical imperative brought on by international sanctions, and that change in many arenas is not yet a moral imperative. The city is first-world and affluent, and the township is third-world and poverty abounds. Peace is the general rule in the city, but violence is the order of the day in the township. The most rewarding part of the trip was the people I met, conversed with, listened to and with whom I shared a meal. Their comments were poignant, challenging and spoken with a presence that belied their disappointments, suffering and unfulfilled dreams. A single mother who does domestic work to support her five children told me “that sanctions can last until true change comes, because we are used to suffering. We were suffering long before 1986.”