

I want to thank you all for coming. My name is Alex Harris. First I want to let you know that this symposium is jointly organized by the Center for Documentary Photography at Duke University which I represent, the International Center of Photography here in New York, where the South Africa the Cordoned Heart exhibition opened yesterday, and Carnegie Corporation of New York who not only helped to organize but also supported this symposium, making possible among other things the participation of our South African panelists. I should also mention that the associated book and exhibition: South Africa The Cordoned Heart, were prepared for and sponsored by Carnegie Corporation through its Second Carnegie Inquiry into Poverty and Development in Southern Africa.

Now I want to let you know right away that I am not the person who should be moderating this morning session of the symposium, or even making these opening remarks. Along with Francis Wilson here today, the person most responsible for South Africa: The Cordoned Heart is a black South African named Omar Badsha. We invited Omar to come to New York to take part in the exhibition opening and this symposium, but he has been denied a passport by the South African authorities and cannot leave his country. Omar has been denied an opportunity to come to the United States to see and speak about the book and exhibition he spent four years of his life, under extraordinarily difficult circumstances, organizing and working on. Omar's wife, Nasima is here this morning and a little later on we will be hearing from her.

Last Fall, Margaret Sartor and I went down to South Africa and spent two months working closely with Omar and each of the group of

twenty South African photographers, black and white, to help bring the book and exhibition out in South Africa, The United States, England and Germany.

Now I have to say Margaret and I were surprised when we arrived in South Africa and first saw the photographs, perhaps in the way some of you were surprised when you saw the book or exhibition, or even glanced at the pictures outside the hall here. Like most of you, we carried with us in our minds an image of South Africa from the front pages and nightly news. And that image was of the now familiar battle in the streets, of tear gas and fleeing crowds.

Many of the photographers in the group have been involved for years in documenting that story of confrontation, but they made it clear to us from the start that from their point of view, the battle in the streets was evidence of changes that were coming to their country. They let us know that the real and important questions they were trying to address with this body of work were about the people who would be making those changes. They wanted to know and more importantly, to show other South Africans what lives and experiences were for for the vast majority of people in their country, black South Africans who by deliberate government policy were kept in poverty, out of sight, apart.

Before we get to our South African panelists this morning, I want to emphasize what an extraordinary event in the history of South Africa the Carnegie photographic survey is. In the United States we have over a hundred year tradition of government support of serious documentary work, and for over fifty years the government has supported photographers looking at the lives and problems of poor people in this country. In South Africa, that tradition of support

simply does not exist.

Until recently only a few individuals have been successful in sustaining documentary work in S.A., people like Ernest Cole who has disappeared, Peter Magubane who we are fortunate to have here today, and David Goldblatt who will also be speaking this morning.

Not only does the government not support this kind of documentary work, they do everything in their power to stop it - making it difficult and often dangerous for people of one racial classification or group from having contact with people of other races or groups.

While we were in South Africa, Margaret and I heard again and again from South Africans that Apartheid has succeeded. We learned that people of one race, even if they wanted to, had almost no opportunity to come to know the day to day experiences of people of another race. For instance, you could clearly see huge single sex compounds where thousands of black men had to live in order to work, spending 11 months a year away from their families their entire working lives, but have no sense without Ben McLennan's photographs of what life was like in those compounds. You could read in the papers about the so called "homelands" about black workers forced to commute 2, 3, sometimes four hours each way to and from work because they were not allowed to live close to their jobs, but not have any real sense of what that meant without David Goldblatt's pictures.

So it was clear to us as it is to anyone viewing the photographs of their struggle. It is their history which no one else would see of the Carnegie Survey, that these pictures were evidence, irrefutable visual proof of injustice, but, in South Africa they offer as well a chance that is difficult if not impossible to obtain in any other way, the people and organizations being recorded.

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countrymen and women, and the chance to begin to see the complexity of the problems they will have to face **together** whenever apartheid ends.

Now if I was asked to put together a photographic survey of poor people in the USA, what I would have thought immediately to do was to go to the twenty photographers whose work was of the highest proven quality in this area. I would have looked at portfolios and books and made my selection on the basis of that work. Well that wasn't Omar's idea at all. First of all those individuals did not exist in South Africa. There may have been a handful of people who had the "credentials" to take on this work. But Omar's idea was that he wanted to build a tradition, to encourage younger photographers by involving them in this project. Some of the photographers whose work is in this book and exhibit had just been using a camera a short time before the survey began.

Something else that seems to me quite unique about this project is that the photographs in many cases were made for the subjects of those pictures. When the project began in 1982, many of the photographers were already committed to documenting the work of black trade Unions and community based organizations throughout South Africa. These organizations wanted their meetings recorded even though the pictures in some way made them more vulnerable to the government. A record existed that could be used as evidence as in the recent treason trials of the UDF leaders. **But the pictures were also a record of their struggle. It is their history which no one else would see without these pictures.** So this is more than a document of one people to show to another people. The photographs encourage and give hope to the people and organizations being recorded.

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areas which has never been fully relaxed has only encouraged and given more time for the kind of crucial and in depth work these photographers have been doing on the Carnegie Survey.

It is also worth noting that the photographers in the Carnegie survey are working with Omar Badsha to keep the momentum alive for documentary work in South Africa. They have donated all royalties from South Africa: The Cordoned Heart to the formation of a Center for Documentary Photography at the University of Cape Town and we are trying in other ways to raise funds for that Center.

Though Omar has not been allowed to leave South Africa, we are fortunate as I mentioned to have Nasima Badhsa, and a number of South African photographers with us this morning to talk about their work and about what they see as the role of the photographer in relation to social change in South Africa.

But first I would like to turn to Francis Wilson.

Francis Wilson is a distinguished South African labor economist and wrote the text to South Africa The Cordoned Heart. For over twenty years he has been editor of South African Outlook an independent journal which since 1870 has sought to expose the truth about what is happening in Southern Africa. Francis is a leading Episcopal layman in South Africa, and head of the department of Economics at the University of Cape Town. He is the author of two books, Labour in South African Gold Mines and Migrant Labour in South Africa. But from the point of view of this morning's session, the most important thing to know about Francis is that he is the Director of the Second Carnegie Inquiry into Poverty and Development in Southern Africa of which this photographic survey was a part. Francis will be speaking more extensively this afternoon, but I'd like to turn to him now to

Dr. Francis Wilson is the head of the School of Economics and of the Southern Africa Labor and Development Research Unit at The University of Cape Town. He is director of the Second Carnegie Inquiry into Poverty and Development in South Africa. He was born in Northern Rhodesia which is now Zambia. He grew up in the Eastern Cape of South Africa. After completing his Ph.D. on "Labor in the South African Gold Mines" at Cambridge, he returned to the University of Cape Town as a lecturer in Economics. In 1974, he started the South African Labor and Development Research Unit which we know as SALADRU of which he is still the director. In 1984, he was appointed the Head of the School of Economics having received a personal Chair in Labor Economics in 1979. I think there are very few biographies of people or I should say of curriculum vitae of people that talk about their parents and since Francis's does, I cannot resist but mention it briefly. Francis Wilson's mother, Monica Hunter Wilson, was a historian of South Africa. His grandfather, Dan Hunter, was editor of the South African Outlook for thirty years and played a key role in the Lovedale community which gave rise to many of the more important efforts at black education in South Africa. Francis Wilson is head of the South Africa Outlook, a publication which has for a long time given voice in South Africa to the concern of the World Council of Churches. He is a leading Episcopal layman who has actively contributed to making the Episcopal Church in South Africa an effective force for democracy and peace. He is the author of "Labor in the South African Gold Mines" and "Migrant Labor in South Africa" and of course, his new book, is "South Africa: The Cordoned Heart" prepared for the Second Carnegie Inquiry into Poverty and Development

in South Africa.