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this really means the inviolability of our shared heritage; majority discipline; anti-chauvinism; the recognition of the example of workers' experience; the shift away from elitism; the road to socialism; a creative and transformative and healing view of the role of culture; third-worldism; Pan-Africanism; the practice of dialogue and tolerance and fellow-responsibility and democracy. For my part, I'd like to see more humanism, Marxism, self-reliance ... but I'm just greedy.

As a writer I shall continue attempting to plot and chase the shifts in power and conceptions; to help keep alive the dream of a free, democratic, decent and just South Africa; to help foster the notion of the ethics of resistance; of the need to build democracy, to elicit dialogue, to test ideas, to promote resilience, to nurture revolutionary patience; to ask for respect for the texture of consciousness; to shore up international solidarity; to shore up fire...

Our contribution is our rich diversity, our recognition of the need to go beyond ourselves, to enlarge, embrace; draw forward, maybe even to blend extremes whilst keeping the common good in mind.

I think I'm some way along this road. *Gee die hond nog net so n bitjie wind.* Nobody here wants to be prescriptive, but if you, my fellow Afrikaners, were to ask me for advice, I'd say – rather aphoristically and in a haphazard and incomplete fashion: He who travels alone travels fastest, but together we shall go further. You have as much cause, perhaps more, to be involved in the

process of transformation as those against whom apartheid is aimed. You need nobody's permission to join the struggle. Guilt feelings and self-flagellation are self-indulgent sentiments, but an understanding of responsibilities gets you moving. It is in walking that you learn how to walk. Watch out for exultation of the hair shirt. Clear out the cellars. Watch out for the corruption of suffering, of self-pity. Don't go and sell yourselves as brave warriors.

To be against apartheid is normal, not heroic. Recognise the hidden racism of the white outside world who will carry you on the hands and sing praises to your courage, whilst conveniently forgetting your black comrades. Don't profit from anti-racism. Don't turn South Africa into an experimental terrain for your writer's fancies and fantasies. Keep moving, way beyond liberation.

Nothing is gained or established forever, no solution or form can be permanent, so remain vigilant. Probably nothing is lost forever either. It is a bastard to be a human being, but a dog doesn't even get a sip of wine. Know then that you, we, are privileged far beyond what we deserve, because we share in the writing and the struggling and in Africa. Remember that ours is the most noble cause that mankind could imagine, well worth living for. Go well.

As for me, an off-white Afrikaans-speaking South African African living temporarily abroad, I shall lift my nose to the wind: there's a smell of victory in the air. But just in case I get above my station, as a scribbler, I'd like to quote to you, finally, a rough approximation of a Brecht poem:

VRAE VAN 'N LESENDE ARBEIDER

Wie het Thebes van die sewe torings gebou?
 In die boeke staan die name van konings.
 Het die konings die rotsblokke nader gesleep?
 En Babilon wat verskeie kere vernietig is -
 wie het dit so dikwels weeropgetrek?
 In watter huise
 van die goudstralende Lima het die bouwerkers gewoon?
 Waarheen het die messelaars saans gegaan
 Wanneer 'n stuk muur van Sjina voltooi is?
 Grootse Rome is vol triomfboë. Wie het dit opgerig?
 Oor wie het die Cesars geseë vier?
 Was daar
 in die veels besonge Bisantium dan slegs paleise
 vir die inwoners? Selfs in saamgeprate Atlantis
 het die besopenes snags om hulle slave gebrul.

Die jonge Alexander het Indië verower.
 Hy alleen?
 Cesar het die Galliers verslaan.
 Was daar ten minste 'n kok saam met hom?
 Flip van Spanje het gehuil toe sy vloot onder die branders verdwyn. Het niemand anders dan nie?
 Frederik die Tweede was die oorwinnaar van die
 Sewejarige Oorlog. Wie behalwe hy het ook gewen?

Elke bladsy 'n sege
 Wie het die oorwinningsmaal gekook?

Elke tien jaar 'n heldefiguur.
 Wie het die gelag betaal?

So baie berigte.
 So baie vrae.

Breyten Breytenbach