Sara Lidman: Anförande på möte för ANC och Nadine Gordimer

Talare
Sara Lidman
Författare

Datum
15 december 1991

Omständigheter
Manuskript till anförande till stöd för ANC och Nadine Gordimer.

Ur Sara Lidman-arkivet på Umeå universitetsbibliotek. Texten har redigerats av Svenska tals redaktör i enlighet med författarens eget korrektur.

Dear Nadine, dear friends,

The world is round - we'll meet again! says the Vietnamese proverb. And of course we accept this round-ness as a physical law: we breathe the same air, we have all the water in common. And at solemn occasions we confess THE FAMILY of MAN – like Beethoven in his ninth symphony.

But:

for same decades our western massmedia have divided this one globe inta three separate worlds: 1) Western Europe with it's annex The United States. 2) The socialist countries. 3) The Third World

Lately we are confronted with just two worlds: the northern hemisphere and the southern hemisphere – in daily political verbage presented as *Europe* and *The Third World* – the rest doesn't count!

And Europe must tighten itself up and get even richer – so as not to be contaminated by the poverty of the old third world. That southern hemisphere of the Globe is so distant and strange, we must have nothing to do with it -- except sending it a little crown for Xmas – or an ecu

But:

in spite of this updated world view – there are mornings when the other side of

the world is not distant at all – it touches our body like a blouse, it raises a hair on our ur skin like a question:

"how much did you pay for the blouse in the ware house? and how much do you think I am paid for a day's picking the cotton?"

We have to rip off the cotton blouse and put on a garment of same synthetic material – in order to calm down such intricate hairs.

And we make our tea and take the morning paper – Dagens Nyheter as the voice of the Nation and *Norra Västerbotten* with it's murmur of a province – and we read about the need to move *labour intensive production* to countries where the *cost of labor* is favorable – and we take a sip of tea – Her Majesty's blend – and suddenly there is a salty flavour on our tongue – salty and bitter like a drop of sweat – from the hand of the girl – picking the tea-leaves – a dried and curly little message dissolving itself in the water of our tea-pot.

And however firmly we proclaim that she belongs to the southern half of the world, that has nothing to do with our civilisation and culture up here – she is there – on our tongue – and we swallow her – like a cup of tea – we incorporate her ...

Or:

at night, in taking off our decent wedding ring, it's lustre may darken – like a glint of blood from a gold miner down south and we sense the beat of his pulse in the heat of the pit seven hundred feet below the level of the sea – the love he must forsake down there while fetching the gold for our rings, our tokens of fidelity for us here – in the northern hemisphere ...

There are days when the smallest items that surround us in a technological society, seem charged with greetings from people who work for us, at the opposite side of this one Globe. And a whisper is heard as from a dormant earthquake: Justice! We want Justice!

Don't put all the blame on papa Karl Marx for the idea of Justice – nor the glory of it! The hunger for Justice was there long before him: in the Bible as in all known religions the children seem to be born with it – we even have a charta

of Human Rights speaking Justice as a Categorical Imperative for all Mankind – so why don 't we make it – as capitalists – if the commies can't?

How come that as soon as the injustice committed against ourselves be alleviated – then we forget the injustice committed towards others. So when our editorials speak of "a country where the cost of labor is favorable" we prefer to think it means *good wages* instead of *starvation wages* ...

And this daily sermon about the blessings of Europe – if only little provincial Sweden could be accepted into the real Europe – the entire world would jubilate!

But:

in the middle of this indoctrination – there are Nadine Gordimer's letters from Johannesburg, showing us how Europe is planted in the middle of the so called third world, sucking it and exploiting it – drop by drop.

When Nadine writes about the gentle, well-meaning upper-class of Johannesburg – she is making portraits of us here in the north – not, from a distance but close by – holding a mirror in front of us – like the furious prince Hamlet scorning queen Gertrud: What has become of you! Can't you hear my father's blood roaring from the earth!

What Nadine has achieved is showing us the presence of Europe in the southern hemisphere

warning us that apartheid under different labels is about to establish itself in Europe – with racism and all.

Hunger for Justice – it can never be satisfied once and for good. We must strive for it, constantly – and at the same time be aware of the paradox: even if Justice were achieved it would not be enough.

There is the wilderness of heart. The angels are not all on one side – and all the beasts not on the other. There is an angel and a beast struggling for ever – inside each human being.

When Nadine writes about Justice she does not write about justice for ants – but Justice for beings – each of us a mixture of the most delicate feelings for others – and thundering passions. We thank you Nadine for your wisdom and courage and grace – the way you have shown us the one-ness of mankind – how indeed the world is round.

Come see us again soon! We love you!

Källa
Hämtat från Sara Lidman-arkivet på Umeå universitetsbibliotek (2024-03-29)

Taggar
ANC, Agitation, Antirasism, Apartheid

URI
https://www.svenskatal.se/tale/sara-lidman-anforande-pa-mote-for-anc-och-nadine-gordimer