

D B D C

Dennis Brutus Defense Committee

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R E L E A S E

On February 6, 1981 Dennis Brutus, an exile from South Africa and a full professor in the English Department at Northwestern University, was ordered to leave the United States by March 5, 1981. The order came from the Department of Justice Immigration and Naturalization Section, 219 S. Dearborn Street, Chicago, IL after he had applied for a renewal or extension of his Visa which enabled him to teach African Literature at Northwestern University.

Dennis Brutus is a distinguished poet, academic, and activist who was exiled from South Africa for his principled and courageous opposition to racism and oppression and now has a home in Britain. As Dr. Gerald Graff, Chairman of the English Department at Northwestern University stated in his letter to the Immigration and Naturalization Service, dated May, 1980: "Professor Brutus is one of the most important and widely read poets from South Africa. His national and international reputation as an authority on African life and literature elicits frequent invitations to lecture in the United States and overseas ... he has earned the respect and admiration of his colleagues both as a professional in African studies and as a man committed to respect for human dignity. The English Department is strengthened by his presence and I strongly urge that he be granted the immigration status for which he applies."

Dennis Brutus has also been active in the fight for the liberation of the South Africa peoples both in South Africa, where he was imprisoned for his activities, and internationally including appearances before the United Nations and Congressional Committees in Washington D.C. His activities against racism in sport (South Africa bars some of its finest athletes from international competition on grounds of race) contributed to the exclusion of apartheid South Africa and racist Rhodesia from international sports events including the Olympic Games. He has been especially active in opposing and exposing internationally the overt and covert allies of the apartheid regime.

The Dennis Brutus Defense Committee protests the decision to deny him a Visa. We appeal to the Department of Justice to reverse the decision and to grant Professor Brutus a Visa. We solicit the widest possible support from academics, artists, athletes, trade unionists, workers, writers and all who genuinely believe in human rights including the right of freedom of movement. We ask you to support our fight to obtain this basic human right for Dennis Brutus.

For further information or to express your support and become an endorser of the Dennis Brutus Defense Committee, please write to the address above.

Yours sincerely,


Dan Carew

Co-Convenor

Dennis Brutus Defense Committee