

AG17





# AZASO

*Rev. AG. 17*

## RELEASE

# MANDELA

Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela has been the source of inspiration to all the oppressed people of this land. He has shared with his countrymen the yoke of oppression and tirelessly fought for a truly non-racial, non-exploitative and democratic South Africa. He symbolises courageous men and women who have been incarcerated in prison by the racist South African regime because of their love for freedom and equality.

This year Mandela celebrated his 65th birthday, his 19th year in imprisonment. The majority of the people in South Africa object to his continued incarceration because his imprisonment and that of his fellow prisoners have deprived South Africa of a vital leadership which is of crucial importance at this time.

Mandela is a man who has committed himself to the idea of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and equality. He and other political prisoners represent a substantial force for change in South Africa.

Mandela together with Sisulu and Oliver Tambo, helped form the African National Congress Youth League (ANC YL), thus the foundation for the creation of a mass political organisation was built. The ANC Youth League was one result of their tireless efforts and more important it succeeded in injecting new vitality into the ANC. In 1949, Nelson Mandela was elected onto the National Executive of the ANC, and in 1950 Mandela became National President of ANC Youth League. Through him the ANC rejected the aging tactic of petitions and sending deputations to the government - instead Mandela instituted the move to organising united mass resistance. This was manifested in the Programme of Action of the ANC which was adopted in 1949.

Since that time he, together with Sisulu and Tambo steered the ANC away from the policy of compromise - a policy which he totally rejected and which he dismissed with the contempt that it truly deserved. His objection to such policy led to his taking initiative and being volunt er-in-chief in one of the most significant



his charismatic personality and courage, coupled with his intellect and eloquence, was bound to result in him becoming the acknowledged leader of militant black opinion in South Africa.

In order to decentralise and strengthen the organisation, Mandela implemented the 4-plan which was meant to build mass membership for the organisation. This then led to the Congress Alliance which was led by the ANC and included the South African Indian Congress, South Africa Coloured People's Congress, the Congress of Democrats and the South African Congress of Trade Unions.

This Alliance led to the drafting of the FREEDOM CHARTER. The charter was preceded by a massive campaign of asking the people what they want and what their impressions of freedom are. Our people from the farms to the factories, from the schools to the colleges, from the church to the mosque were called to talk about freedom - talk they did and the Charter was born.

Mandela's influence and popularity rose to heights intolerable to those bent on maintaining a racist and exploitative society. This led to Mandela being charged and acquitted for High Treason, then charged with leaving the country illegally, and receiving military training. His activity culminated in him, together with Sisulu, Mbeki, Kathrada, Mhlaba, Goldberg and others charged in the great Treason Trial wherein they were convicted of engaging in an armed revolution "against the Republic of South Africa". Mandela was the first commander-in-chief of UMBONTO WE SIZWE - the military wing of the ANC.

Mandela was imprisoned leader of our people and still remains so up to this day.

#### MANDELA MUST GO FREE

The Campaign to free Nelson Mandela and all other political prisoners has spread to all parts of South Africa and the world. The call was made out of an understanding of what is needed by South Africa to resolve conflict and eliminate repression and exploitation.

Mandela is the obvious leader of the people. He is a symbol of the will of the people. His ideals are in unity with those of the people - the Freedom Charter. As such they can neither ever be suppressed nor destroyed. The call for the release of Mandela, Sisulu, Mbeki and all other political prisoners stems from a deep commitment to justice and democracy. It stems from a belief that the future of our country can only be shaped by all its people. Therefore the release of the true leaders of the people is a necessary prerequisite.

Today Mandela still creates a spirit of resistance which has led the oppressed people in their struggles. That same spirit evokes in us deep commitment, conviction and will to carry on, and the knowledge that victory is certain.

The call is :

**FREE MANDELA AND ALL OTHER POLITICAL PRISONERS !**

**LONG LIVE THE FREEDOM CHARTER !**



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