

AG8

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NELSON MANDELA



The People's Leader

Throughout South Africa's history of struggle against apartheid exploitation and oppression, Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela has been the source of inspiration to all the oppressed people of this land. Nelson Mandela (65) has been declared a leader of the people, a leader who has shared with his countrymen the yoke of oppression; a leader who has stood with the people in their fight for a non-racial democratic South Africa. A leader who has been incarcerated in prison for the last 19 years by the S.A. regime. Throughout the country and the world, the cry for the release of Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners continues. The Free Mandela Campaign was launched in 1980 and has gained momentum.

Nelson Mandela was born in the Transkei in 1918. After studying at Healdtown, Mandela went to Fort Hare in 1938, but was suspended in 1940 after a student protest. He completed his B.A. degree in 1942 through UNISA and in 1943 began to study for a law degree at Wits with Walter Sisulu.

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.

By June 1952 Mandela became volunteer in-chief of the Defiance Campaign launched against unjust repressive laws.

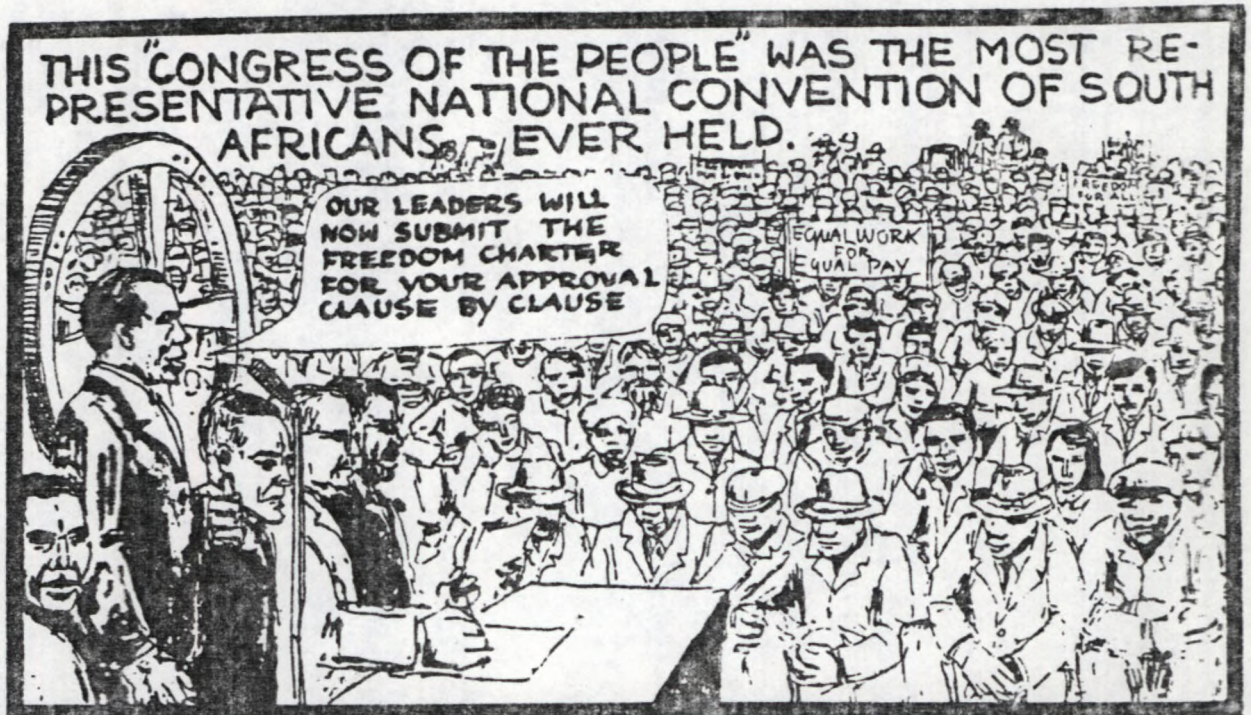
The Defiance Campaign, one of our country's most historic events, led to a massive show of support for the call made by the ANC and its allies.

In it, historical alliances were made between the ANC and the South African Indian Congress. The campaign, involving tens of thousands of people, succeeded in creating an increasing awareness both at home and abroad on the plight of the oppressed people of South Africa. In December, Mandela was one of 20 charged under suppression of Communism Act and given a 9 months suspended sentence and banned from attending gatherings.

In order to decentralize and strengthen the organisation, Mandela implemented the M - Plan (named after him), a scheme to build a mass membership that was organised into cells at grassroot levels. Mandela, in the meantime joined Oliver Tambo in forming a joint legal practise, but obstacles were placed on their path by the Transvaal Law Society.

because it contains the concrete demands of oppressed people. It has linked all these demands together, and shown how they form part of the national democratic struggle. The Freedom Charter also expresses the unity of all progressive forces. It is a broadly democratic document, including the demands of all groups. Nevertheless, the demands of the workers, the most oppressed and exploited group, are clearly the leading demands. 28 years later, none of these demands have been met. But struggles in the communities, schools, universities and factories still find their basis in the Charter.

In 1956, Mandela and 155 Congress Alliance leaders were charged with treason. The Treason Trial ended in 1961 and the people's leaders were acquitted due to lack of state



Thus we^{see} Nelson Mandela involved in mass work with the ANC. After the historic defiance campaign, the Congress Alliance (ANC, South African Indian Congress, S.A. Coloured Peoples Congress, white Congress of Democrats, South African Congress of Trade Unions) embarked on the historic task of asking people what they want.

Thus on June 26 1955, 3000 delegates from all over South Africa gathered in Kliptown to draft the most democratic document in our history of resistance - the FREEDOM CHARTER. Since then, the Freedom Charter (the minimum demands of the people) has lived in the hearts of the people. It lives

evidence. Concurrent with the trials, all legitimate and peaceful means of resistance were met with violence by the state. After the anti-pass campaign of 1960 and the Sharpeville massacre, the state declared a State of Emergency and the ANC was banned. (8 April 1960). More and more people were arrested. Many left the country to continue the struggle from outside the borders of South Africa. Some leaders, like Oliver Tambo began to co-ordinate the action of the ANC and the external mission was established. This was the time when many men and women left home, it was also the time when South Africa's people's leaders felt there was no

alternative, but the armed struggle. It was a hard decision to make, but it made clear that all other avenues for peaceful change was closed, thus the ANC was forced to take up arms.

During 1961 Mandela helped create Umkhonto weSizwe (Spear of the Nation), the military wing of the ANC. He then slipped out of the country to rally support and obtain assistance for the coming armed struggle. After undergoing a brief military training in Algeria, Mandela addressed the Conference of the Pan African Freedom Movement in Addis Ababa in January 1962. He explained why the move to armed struggle had been made and stated that channels for peaceful change no longer existed. Mandela returned home in August 1962 and was arrested in Durban and sentenced for 5 years for calling a strike and leaving the country illegally.

Raymond Mhlaba, Andrew Mlangeni, Govin Mbeki, Dennis Goldberg and many other leaders. In the "Rivonia Trials" Mandela was the 1st accused and found guilty of high treason and being a member of the MK, Nelson Mandela and his comrades were thus sentenced to life imprisonment on Robben Island.

During the trial. Mandela outlined the reasons for his involvement in the struggle for liberation. He admitted that he was guilty of sabotage and preparations for guerilla warfare. He argued that he could not obey the laws that entrenched white minority domination since he and the black people of South Africa had had no say in its formulation. His ideal was a non-racial democratic South Africa and it was an ideal that he was prepared to die for.

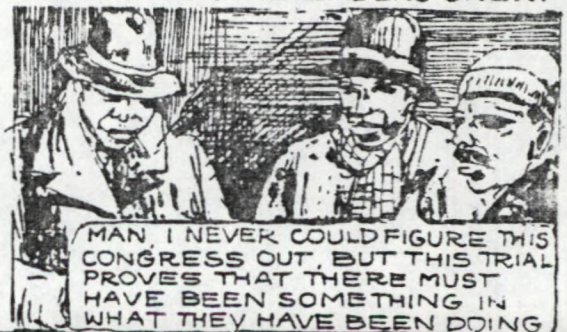
THE TREASON TRIAL WENT ON FOR FIVE YEARS



THE TRIAL BOOSTED THE PRESTIGE OF THE ANC AND ITS LEADERS AND STRENGTHENED SOLIDARITY WITH ITS ALLIES, AS WELL AS WITH THE BLACK MASSES

THE ACCUSED BECAME HEROES.

SUPPORT FOR THE LEADERS GREW.



In 1963, the underground leadership was arrested in Rivonia. Mandela was brought from prison to stand trial as a member of the Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) high command. He stood together with Walter Sisulu, Ahmed Kathrada, Elias Motsoaledi,



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!

Transference of Political prisoners to Pollsmoor

There has been wide spread speculation on why the Government removed Mandela, Sisulu and other political prisoners from Robben Island to Pollsmoor on the Cape mainland. The regime has kept its intentions secret. But no matter where, Mandela Sisulu and the others are still in prison.

Firstly, there is talk that the regime will do away with Robben Island and turn it into a tourist resort or more likely into a military base.



Demonstrations of support during the Treason Trial.

Secondly, it is clear that throughout their period of imprisonment, the State has failed to break the unity of the group. It is also clear that all efforts, including the harsh conditions and torture, did not break down their spirit of determination.

Therefore this move by the State could be the beginning of the breaking up of that solid group who acted courageously and demonstrated the true calibre of leadership.

But whether in Robben Island or Pollsmoor, they are still the prisoners and therefore the campaign for their release must continue.

MANDELA - RECOGNISED WORLD WIDE

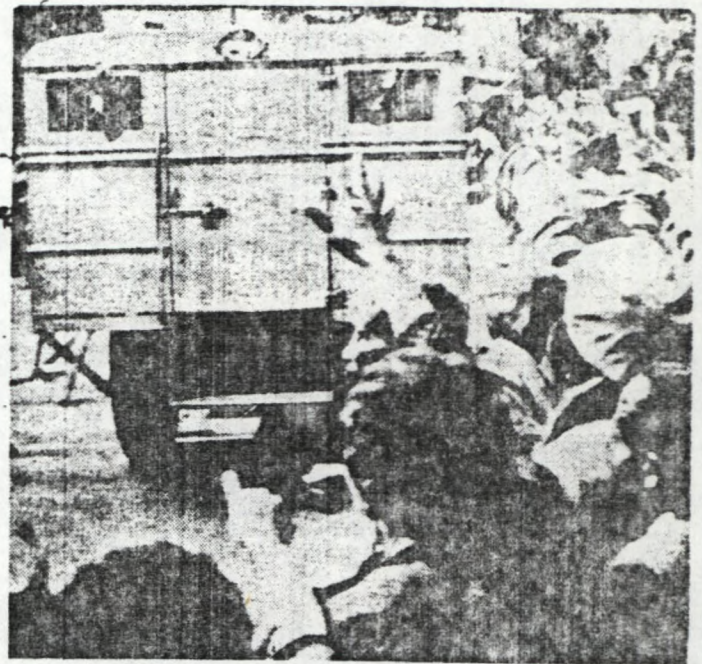
AS A PEOPLES LEADER

Nelson Mandela, South Africa's most recognised political prisoner and leader of the ANC has an impressive list of honours conferred on him. The following attests to the fact that he is recognised both nationally and internationally as the true leader of the South African people.

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16. Honorary citizen of the Greek Village of Ancient Olympia - March 1983.
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18. Other honours include a street in Camden, North London, where the anti-apartheid movement has its headquarters, to be named after its headquarters, to be named after him.

The South African government has refused permission for some of the awards to be conferred on the ANC leader now in Pollsmoor Prison. The government has also refused to allow Mrs Winnie Mandela, his wife to travel outside the country to receive the awards on his behalf.



THE FREEDOM CHARTER

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- *All national groups shall have equal rights
- *The people shall share in the country's wealth
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'Bid to break Mandela'

The Star Bureau

LONDON — Complaints by ANC leader Nelson Mandela about his conditions at Pollsmoor Prison have been laid before the United Nations Human Rights Commission with an appeal that the Security Council be alerted.

An explanation of the "subtle cruelty" to which Mandela was allegedly being subjected was given here this week to a specialist group from the UN commission by writer Mary Benson, a friend of the Mandela family.

Miss Benson gave evidence to the group, which is making its annual visit from Geneva to gather information about human rights violations in South Africa.

The chairman of the group, Ghana's ambassador Mr A Cato, promised the group would "explore ways of making his (Mandela's) conditions more tolerable."

Miss Benson's report was based on a letter she received from Mrs Winnie Mandela explaining her husband's hardships.

"In all the 21 years of Nelson Mandela's imprisonment, I have never before detected such a note of desperation in a description of a visit to him," said Miss Benson, who was born in South Africa but expelled from there in 1966 after serving a term of house imprisonment.

Mr and Mrs Mandela had decided to risk breaking prison regulations and the law by publicising his conditions because these were "deteriorating terribly" and the authorities refused

to receive their complaints, said Miss Benson.

After the move from Robben Island to Pollsmoor in April 1982, Mandela had been separated from the friends he had lived with for the past 20 years.

He was sharing a cell with five other prisoners which made studying difficult.

He was particularly worried about the damp in the cell.

Mandela and his cellmates were isolated from other prisoners and were not even taken outside for exercise, she said.

Mandela's prison conditions were criticised in a letter to The Times this week signed by the Duke of Devonshire, Mr Denis Healey and Mr David Steel.

The three also claim to have had news of Mandela in "a letter reaching London" from his wife Winnie.

It was hoped, the correspondents wrote, that the move to Pollsmoor would bring an improvement in their conditions. "Mrs Mandela's letter brings the sinister news that the opposite is the case."

They claim that Mandela had told his wife "in a restricted conversation" that he and the other five had been moved to increase the severity of their imprisonment.

The Duke, the deputy leader of the Labour Party and the leader of the Liberals concluded their letter: "Mrs Mandela's letter is a plain cry for help."

"If we in the West take no notice, the younger generation of African leaders are not likely to forget."

Betray the Freedom Charter and you betray the people — Mandela

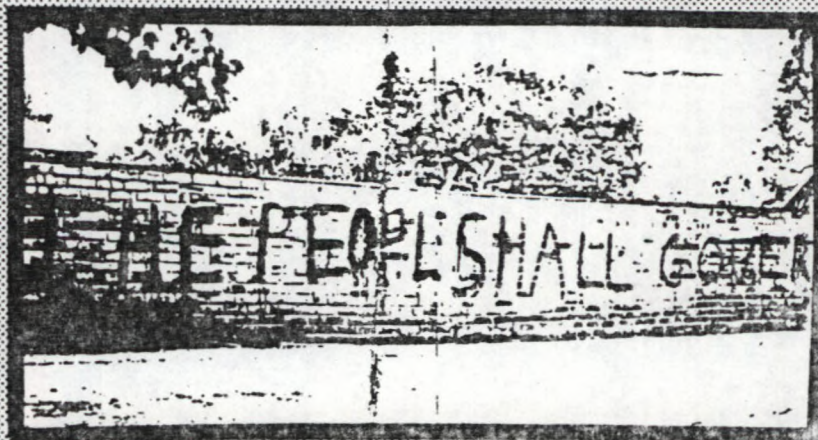
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These individuals had no relevance to the popular movements and only attacked apartheid because they wish to govern under a similar system themselves. "The ANC is the future government of the country".

Another speaker, Dr Essop Jassat, president of the TIC, also said, "some people" had met recently under the guise of unity, and under this guise, began to attack democratic bodies such as the UDF and TIC. He reject this attack with the contempt it deserves. We, of the progressive democratic movement are proud of our history of struggle. "The greatest acts of unity came from the Congress Alliance, led by the ANC".

To those who hope to divert the struggle and confuse the people, to them, we say, history will bear harsh judgement on you all.

THE PEOPLE SHALL GOVERN — what's wrong with that?



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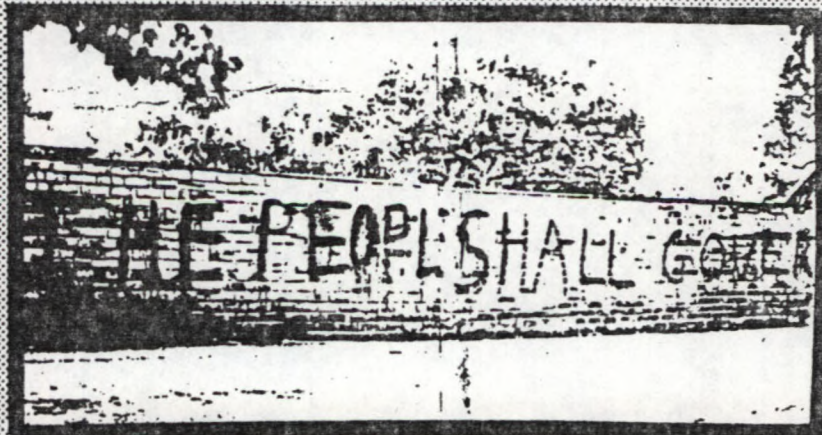
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Silvanus
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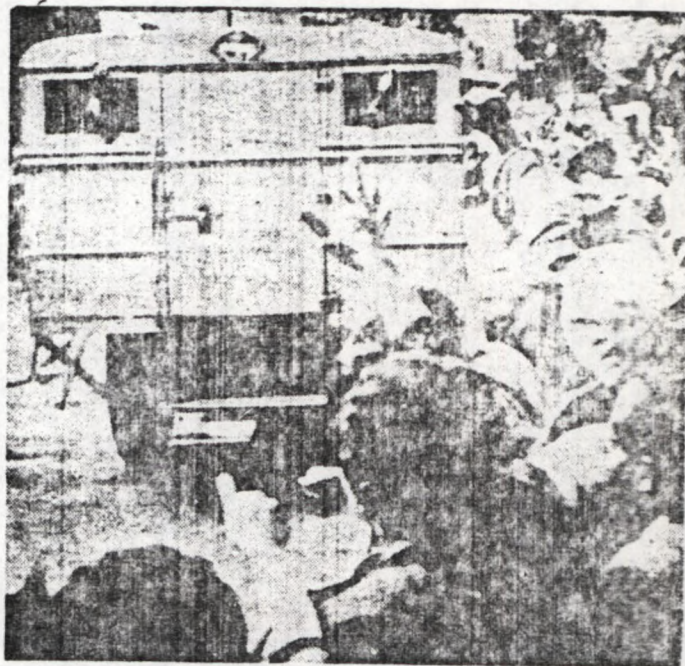
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*A. MABASO
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