

27 YEARS IN PRISON

He Asks Other Nations Not to Lift Sanctions Against Pretoria

By CHRISTOPHER S. WREN

Special to The New York Times

CAPE TOWN, Feb. 11 — After 27 and a half years in prison, Nelson Mandela finally won his freedom today and promptly urged his supporters at home and abroad to increase their pressure against the white minority Government that had just released him.

"We have waited too long for our freedom," Mr. Mandela told a cheering crowd from a balcony of Cape Town's Old City Hall. "We can wait no longer."

"Now is the time to intensify the struggle on all fronts," he said. "To relax our efforts now would be a mistake which generations to come will not be able to forgive." [Transcript of address, Page A10.]

Telephone Talk With Bush

In Washington, President Bush rejoiced over the release of Mr. Mandela, spoke to him by telephone and invited the anti-apartheid leader to visit the White House. [Page A12.]

Mr. Mandela's 20-minute speech, which he prepared before leaving prison today, constituted his first remarks in public since before he was sentenced in June 1964 to life imprisonment for conspiracy to overthrow the Government and engage in sabotage.

He asked the international community not to lift its sanctions against South Africa, despite the recent changes introduced by President F. W. de Klerk, which culminated in Mr. Mandela's release.

Erect and Vigorous Bearing

"To lift sanctions now would be to run the risk of aborting the process toward ending apartheid," he said.

Mr. Mandela's voice sounded firm and his words as eloquently militant as when he defended violence as the ultimate recourse at his political trial in 1964. Though he looked all of his 71 years and was grayer than artists' renditions over the years had depicted, he walked out of Victor Verster prison erect and vigorous.

More important, Mr. Mandela gave no evidence that his militant opposition to apartheid had been tempered by more than 10,000 days he spent in confinement. But he also said nothing that would have surprised the Government had he said it during his years of incarceration. Indeed, there appeared to be nothing in Mr. Mandela's initial remarks after his release to give the Government much consolation or encouragement.

Although he has been viewed as a potential leader for all South Africans, he stressed time and again that his loyalty lay with the African National Con-

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Mandela, Freed, Urges Rise In Pressure on White Rule

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gress, for which he was working underground when he was arrested and jailed in August 1962.

Mr. Mandela told a crowd that he remained a "loyal and disciplined member" of the African National Congress and still endorsed its policies, including its use of armed struggle against the white minority Government.

He said he saluted the congress's military wing, Spear of the Nation and its ally, the South African Communist Party, "for its steady contribution to the struggle for democracy."

But he also thanked the Black Sash, an organization of white women working to end apartheid, and the predominantly white National Union of South African Students for being "the conscience of white South Africans." And he held out an olive branch to all whites, asking them to join in shaping a new South Africa.

"The freedom movement is a political home for you, too," he said.

In his first speech after his release, Mr. Mandela may have taken an orthodox line with a mass audience sympathetic to the African National Congress and might in private discussions exhibit greater flexibility on the question of discussions that the Government

wants to have with blacks, who are 28 million of the population, compared with the 5 million whites of the ruling minority.

He said he was only making some preliminary comments following his release, and would have more to say "after I have had the opportunity to consult with my comrades." By this he meant the leaders of the African National Congress now in exile in Zambia as well as colleagues still based in South Africa.

But he appeared to discourage any leading role for himself, such as the Government has in mind, saying, "A leader of the movement is a person who has been democratically elected at a national conference."

De Klerk Seeks Talks

President de Klerk has invited black leaders to join talks leading to the formulation of a new constitution that would let black South Africans take part at last in their nation's politics.

Mr. Mandela acknowledged to the crowd that he had conducted a dialogue with the Government during his last years in prison. But he added: "My talks with the Government have been aimed at normalizing the political situation in the country. We have not yet begun discussing the basic demands of our struggle."

"I wish to stress that I myself have at no time entered into negotiations about the future of our country, except to insist on a meeting between the A.N.C. and the Government," he said.

He described Mr. de Klerk, whom he has met twice since December, as "a man of integrity."

"Mr. de Klerk has gone further than any other Nationalist President in taking real steps to normalize the situation," Mr. Mandela said.

Still a 'Harsh Reality'

"But as an organization we base our policy and strategy and tactics on the harsh reality we are faced with," he said. "And this reality is that we are still suffering under the policies of the Nationalist Government."

The National Party, which Mr. de Klerk now leads, instituted apartheid after taking power in 1948.

Mr. Mandela said the Government had to take further steps before negotiations could begin.

As a prerequisite for negotiations, he reiterated two demands that he had conveyed from prison by recent visitors. They are the lifting of the state of emergency, which was imposed in June 1986, and the release of all political prisoners, including those accused of crimes committed in the struggle against apartheid.

"Only such a normalized situation which allows for free political activity can allow us to consult our people in order to obtain a mandate," Mr. Mandela

'Power! 'It Is Ours!'

At the start of his speech in Cape Town yesterday, Nelson Mandela led the crowd in a chant that has become a regular feature of anti-apartheid gatherings in South Africa. He led the chant in his native language, Xhosa, each time receiving a response in Xhosa from the crowd. Here is how the exchange went:

Mandela: Amandla!
(Power!) pronounced ah-MAHN-dlha.

Crowd: Ngawethu! (It is ours!) pronounced ntsa-WEH-too.

Mandela: Amandla!
Crowd: Ngawethu!

Mandela: i-Afrika! (Africa!) pronounced ee-AH-free-ka.

Crowd: Mayibuye! (Let it come back!) pronounced mah-ye-BOO-yeh.

Mandela: Mayibuye!
Crowd: i-Afrika!

aid. He said the people had to be consulted about who would represent them in talks with the Government.

Democratic Election Urged

"Negotiations cannot take place above the heads or behind the backs of our people," he said. "It is our belief that the future of our country can only be determined by a body which is democratically elected on a nonracial basis."

Mr. Mandela appeared to allude to a formula under which a constituent assembly, in effect supplanting the existing Parliament, would draft a new constitution. Such a plan would mean the creation of an interim government in South Africa and has previously been rejected by Mr. de Klerk for the foreseeable future.

Mr. Mandela walked out of Victor Verster Prison near Paarl at 4:15 P.M. local time (9:15 A.M. Eastern time), which was 75 minutes later than the release time announced Saturday afternoon by Mr. de Klerk. Acquaintances of the Mandela family said his departure from the prison was delayed by family discussions.

He was greeted by about 5,000 supporters lining the asphalt road outside the prison farm where he has been held since December 1988. Some waved the black, green and yellow flags of the Af-



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A few hours after his release from Victor Verster Prison, outside Paarl, Nelson Mandela spoke on the steps of Cape Town City Hall.

rican National Congress, from which Mr. de Klerk removed a banning restriction on Feb. 2.

Mr. Mandela was then driven 40 miles from Paarl to Cape Town, passing several hundred people who had parked by the roadside or waited on

overpasses in hope of seeing him. They held homemade signs, some of which read simply, "Welcome home."

A huge crowd, which organizers said reached 250,000 people, assembled in the square in front of the old City Hall in Cape Town to greet Mr. Mandela. Reporters covering the rally put the crowd's size at only 50,000 people at its peak. They became impatient and sometimes unruly, waiting up to six hours in the hot sun and had dwindled to about 20,000 by sunset, when Mr. Mandela finally appeared.

Blacks a Minority in Area

In the 1950's it was Government policy to prevent blacks from settling in the Western Cape, so they are not in the clear majority in Cape Town, where Mr. Mandela was released. People of mixed race, known as coloreds, are the largest population group in Cape Town, where whites also outnumber blacks.

Blacks, who account for nearly 75 percent of the population in the country as a whole, are in the overwhelming majority in the Johannesburg region, where Mr. Mandela can expect his most tumultuous welcome.

The rally organizers said Mr. Mandela was held up by traffic jams created by his well-wishers and subsequently by overcrowding at the rally. By one account, Mr. Mandela's convoy

took a wrong turn and ended up stuck in the crowd.

The otherwise festive occasion was also marred by violence after some youths who had been drinking on the fringes of the rally started breaking windows and looting shops in downtown Cape Town.

The police tried to disperse them by firing shotguns and tear gas, and some of the youths retaliated by throwing bottles and stones. At one point, drunken protesters invaded a Chinese restaurant, snatched up the liquor and wine and threw bottles at the police from the rooftop. One man in the crowd was also injured in a knife fight.

Two Reported Killed

The South African Press Association reported tonight that 2 people had been killed and 13 wounded in the confrontations. A physician treating casualties on the scene estimated that 100 people had been wounded, mostly by buckshot. Most suffered only light injuries, including three journalists covering the rally.

Cheryl Carolus, a spokeswoman for the United Democratic Front, which helped organize the rally, attributed the violence to outsiders who, she said, were "beyond our usual crowds, or who supported the rival Pan-Africanist Movement."

At times, some supporters at the rally had to scramble for cover as the police chased or fired at looters and stone-throwers. The Rev. Allan Boesak, a prominent figure in the anti-apartheid movement, pleaded for more than 45 minutes with the crowd to maintain discipline and move back.

Dullah Omar, a lawyer representing the Mandela family, said Mr. Mandela had been unaware of the violence.

This evening, Mr. Mandela failed to appear at a news conference arranged by the reception committee that is handling his schedule. A representative said Mr. Mandela would meet the press later this week in Johannesburg.

Due in Johannesburg Today

Mr. Mandela and his wife, Winnie, are expected to fly to Johannesburg on Monday and proceed to their home in the black township of Soweto.

One of the organizers, Saki Mocoza, said security considerations precluded him from revealing where the Mandelas were spending their first night.

Mr. Mandela also paid tribute to his wife, who has lived apart from him for more than 27 years, and their children. "I am convinced that your pain and suffering was far greater than my own," he told them.

Mrs. Mandela was severely criticized by other supporters of Mr. Mandela a year ago for condoning violent behavior by her bodyguards that apparently led to the alleged murder of a 14-year old boy. A trial involving at least one of the guards is expected to start this month.

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On Mandela's Walk: Hope and Violence

By JOHN F. BURNS
Special to The New York Times

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PAARL, South Africa, Feb. 11 — When Nelson Mandela made his walk to freedom today, he did it with the same simplicity and command of occasion that made him a leader among millions of South African blacks when his imprisonment began more than 10,000 days ago.

At 4:14 P.M. on a sun-warmed day — 21 years, six months and one week after his arrest on Aug. 5, 1962 — Mr. Mandela stepped from the car that drove him to the last guard post at the Victor Verster prison.

From there, smiling gently, he passed under a raised barrier and flicked his right hand quickly out from his body in greeting. He then raised his right arm several times in the bolder, black nationalist salute, his left hand holding the hand of his wife, Winnie,

and walked to the point where the prison entrance road abuts the highway running through the undulating wine country of the Western Cape.

'No Easy Walk to Freedom'

It was a walk of perhaps 70 yards, through a corridor of policemen, and as he made it, Mr. Mandela said not a word, at least none that could be heard by any in the crowd of 5,000 blacks and whites chanting his name. But to those who have come to know Mr. Mandela in the only way that was possible under the total ban that the South African Government threw around the black leader in prison — through his speeches and writings of a generation ago — there was no mistaking the symbolism involved in beginning his life outside jail on foot.

About the time in 1961 when President John F. Kennedy was spending his first summer in the White House, Mr.

Mandela, then about the same age as Mr. Kennedy, used a phrase that became the title of a book of Mr. Mandela's speeches and writings. The book has been passed hand to hand in dog-eared copies among South Africans, who were forbidden until today under censorship laws and statutes governing political prisoners, to own any book by or about the black leader. There was, Mr. Mandela said, "no easy walk to freedom" for South African blacks after three centuries of white domination and repression.

Dignified and Resolute

The Nelson Mandela who made his own walk to freedom today, after more than 22 years in the fortress prison on Robben Island, in the gale-swept mouth of Cape Town harbor, and five more years in a series of other prisons, ending at Victor Verster, had hair that had turned to grey and looked at least 30 pounds lighter than he was when, at the weight of the heavyweight boxer he had been in his youth, he made his last public appearance. That was in June 1964, when Mr. Mandela stood in the dock at the Rivonia Trial in Johannesburg and acknowledged that he was

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guilty as charged of sabotage and attempting to overthrow the Government.

But in other respects, the 71-year-old black leader who emerged from prison today to the ecstatic salute of millions of his fellow countrymen and of much of the world seemed unchanged from the man whose closing address in his own defense in 1964 has become one of the central documents in the South African struggle.

As always before, he was erect and dignified, immaculately dressed in a dark grey suit tailored for him in Cape Town during his closing weeks in prison. And above all, he was resolute — resolute in his opposition to any accommodation with apartheid, and just as resolute in his insistence that blacks in South Africa have always preferred a peaceful settlement with whites to one rooted in violence.

No black man in South Africa has had as wide an audience as Mr. Mandela had tonight when he stepped to the microphone on the steps of Cape Town's Victorian City Hall, watched live by tens of millions of television viewers in countries including the United States, Australia and Japan, and, in a delayed but uncensored broadcast, on South Africa's Government-owned television service. It was an occasion Mr. Mandela used to the full, beginning, in a strong, unquavering voice, with the first word he had uttered in public — "Amandla!" meaning power in the Xhosa language, the rallying cry of the black resistance — since the speech at his trial.

Need for Armed Struggle

To anybody who wondered whether Mr. Mandela had compromised during his three years of secret talks with the Government, the black leader gave a blunt answer. As in 1964, he offered no compromise on the principle of majority rule, calling for the creation of "a democratic, nonracial and unitary South Africa."

Perhaps most jarring to many whites, he said that "the factors which necessitated" the African National Congress's resort to guerrilla attacks in 1961, under his own leadership, "still exist today," so that the congress had "no option but to continue."

He also demanded what he called "a fundamental restructuring" of the economy, a phrase many whites will take to signal an intention to nationalize mines, banks and major industries.

But along with those strictures, Mr. Mandela showed the same strong preference for a peaceful solution, the same appreciation for whites who are prepared to join blacks in dismantling apartheid, and the same confidence

that his cause will triumph that he showed at his trial.

Using the phrase he coined last year when he met with the former President, P. W. Botha, and later with the current President, F. W. de Klerk, Mr. Mandela said that he hoped that "a climate conducive a negotiated settlement" would allow the African National Congress to abandon its armed struggle. He referred to Mr. de Klerk, who watched the televised replay of the speech at the presidential mansion half a mile from City Hall, as "a man of integrity," and he added: "Our march to freedom is irreversible."

But as Mr. Mandela looked out at the crowd of 50,000 people in front of the City Hall, a few blocks from Mr. de Klerk's office, and in the two and a half hours he spent conferring inside the building with black leaders who accompanied him on the 40-mile motorcade from the prison, he was confronted with dismaying evidence of the

uphill struggle that lies ahead of blacks in the contest to wrest power.

For three hours, police officers along Darling Street, in front of City Hall, and across the maze of streets and pathways around the Grand Parade that lies across from the municipal building, fought running battles with black youths, including at least three who were shot dead by the police with shot-guns.

What prompted most of the police action, if not all of it, were gangs of black youths smashing windows of cars and shops and looting clothing, toys, and alcohol, an action that was followed in many cases by the tossing of full or half-full bottles of wine, spirits and beer off rooftops toward ranks of policemen.

Tear Gas and Ambulances

But the result was that Mr. Mandela, and the worldwide television audience, were exposed to the sounds that have made South Africa's image in the

Mandela's scheduled release, when Cheryl Carolus, a 33-year-old high-school teacher who is spokeswoman for the Mandela family, said that Mr. Mandela had completed the signing of official documents related to his release earlier in the day but needed an extra hour at a bungalow inside the prison grounds with his wife, two daughters and old friends from his Robben Island days before emerging into what Ms. Carolus called "a situation that is going to be quite perplexing at the personal level."

Whites and Blacks Line Route

With many South Africans, whites as well as blacks, inclined in recent weeks to see Mr. Mandela as a colossus who can somehow resolve the nation's political problems, it was a reminder that what lies ahead would be daunting for any man, let alone one who has spent more than a quarter of a century largely cut off from the world.

Something of that may have been on Mr. Mandela's mind when he referred in Cape Town to his "long and lonely years in prison," when he said that "no individual leader" can dismantle apartheid, and when he insisted that there could be "no exception" to the rule that political leaders must be legitimized by elections among their followers.

Still, much of what the black leader did see in his first hours of freedom may have encouraged him. Everywhere — outside the prison, along the route into Cape Town, at the rally — there were large numbers of whites among the blacks, far more proportionally than he would have seen during his days as a lawyer in Johannesburg in the 1950's.

The road into Cape Town, through countryside alive with pink and red bougainvillea, and bordered by the glorious vista of the Franschoek mountains, would have been a particularly striking experience, with thousands of whites, many of them in family groups, waving, cheering, and holding aloft hand-lettered signs of support like "Welcome Home, Mandela!" from the roofs of their cars, from overpasses and from picnic tables.

Hardships in Prison

Some moments on the trip seem sure to have been emotionally charged. As six white motorcycle policemen led the Mandela motorcade into Cape Town's suburbs, the travelers had their first glimpse of the Atlantic Ocean. There, bathed in the sunshine of the late afternoon was Robben Island, the former leper colony five miles off shore where Mr. Mandela was taken first after a trial in 1962, and then held for 21 years, after his life sentence in 1964.

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world for 40 years — the crack of tear-gas canisters being fired, the blast of shotguns, and the whine of ambulance sirens; some of it during the black leader's 25-minute speech.

How Mr. Mandela reacted to any of that was unknown, since the black leader's aides canceled a news conference that was to have ended his day. But one remark he made, an appeal at the end of his speech for all attending the rally to disperse without doing anything that "will lead others to say that we can't control our own people," suggested his chagrin.

Earlier, aides suggested that being suddenly confronted with realities outside prison might be taxing for the anti-apartheid leader, although he has been moved between prisons, and from the prisons to hospitals, and in and out of Cape Town for his meetings with Mr. de Klerk and Mr. Botha, most of his trips over the years have been at night.

The aides' suggestion came at the prison during a 75-minute delay in Mr.

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An Unwavering Opponent

Nelson Mandela

By ROBERT D. McFADDEN

The hair has gone gray and the boxer's shoulders are shells under the awkward jacket now. The booming voice that had roared for justice in the 1960's became a gentle echo in his lonely cell long ago. But amid the many perils of South Africa's future, one thing seemed clear yesterday: the years of imprisonment had not broken Nelson R. Mandela.

Emerging from Victor Verster Prison near Cape Town, the 71-year-old black nationalist leader — who had not been seen or heard publicly for almost 26 years — raised his fist in a triumphant salute and spoke to a sea of cheering followers of their dignity and his dreams of "peace, democracy and freedom for all" in a new nation without apartheid.

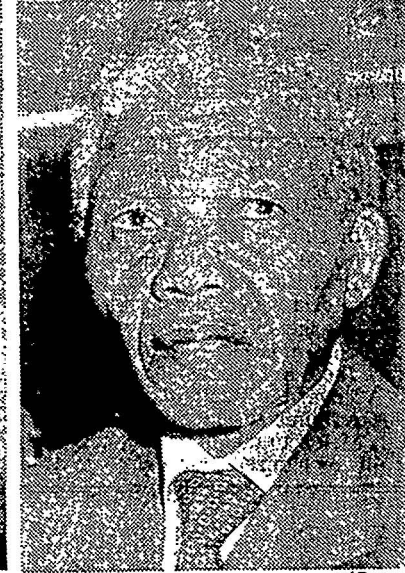
The face was like parchment and the voice was strained, but the passion was still there: power seemed to radiate from the lean old figure. And anyone could see that the years of prison had ravaged only the body, not the spirit — had, if anything, solidified his resolve and raised his stature as the embodiment of black liberation.

Indeed, as with Gandhi, Andrei D. Sakharov and other prisoners of conscience, confinement had served only to burnish his legend and preserve the flame of rebellion, until the silenced renegade came at last to tower over his oppressors.

Possibly the Last Hope for Peace

They offered in recent years to release him for a promise of nonviolence, but he refused, saying his freedom and that of his people were inseparable. And finally, President F. W. de Klerk had to make concessions to him to bring his release, for the man once regarded by white South Africans as a threat to everything they prized had become the best, perhaps the last, hope of peaceful reconciliation.

Outside City Hall in Cape Town, a fraction of the millions who believe he should be president and have viewed his release with expectations bordering on the messianic, Mr. Mandela told the crowd that the struggle for which he went to prison will continue, but he expressed hope for "a climate conducive to a negotiated settlement."



Pictorial Parade
Nelson Mandela in Robben Island prison in 1965, left, and after his release yesterday from Victor Verster prison in Paarl, South Africa. Reuters

A lawyer and leader of the outlawed African National Congress who had gone underground and launched guerrilla warfare against Pretoria, he was arrested in 1962 and convicted of sabotage and treason in a 1964 trial for trying to overthrow white rule, a charge he conceded before sentencing in his last and most famous affirmation of principle.

"A time comes in the life of any nation," he declared on April 20, 1964, "where there remains only two choices — submit or fight. That time has now come to South Africa. We shall not submit and we have no choice but to hit back by all the means in our power in defense of our people, our future, our freedom."

Sentenced to Life in Prison

"During my lifetime, I have dedicated myself to this struggle of the African people. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and achieve, but if need be, an ideal for which I am prepared to die."

Sentenced to life in prison, Mr. Mandela became South Africa's, and eventually the world's, most notable political prisoner, officially a nonperson whose views could not be publicly discussed and whose photograph could not be published.

For 18 years, he was kept at the prison fortress at Robben Island, where he endured substandard food, deprivation of reading material and hard labor that included breaking rocks in a lime quarry.

In 1982, he was transferred to Pollsmoor Prison near Cape Town. There he shared a cell with other prisoners, was allowed to cultivate a small vegetable garden and to study for an advanced law degree, which he received last year. Eventually at Pollsmoor, he began receiving uncensored newspapers and letters.

His communications with his wife, Winnie, and children were limited to,

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two 30-minute visits and one 500-word letter a month. On May 12, 1984, he and his wife, who was herself jailed or banished through much of his confinement, were allowed to embrace for the first time in 20 years.

For many years, it was Winnie Mandela who kept his message alive, but she was repudiated last year by leading anti-apartheid leaders who accused her of complicity in the abduction and fatal assault of a youth and of allowing her bodyguards to wage a reign of terror in the black township of Soweto.

An international campaign to free him began in the 1980's and culminated in a call for his release by the United Nations Security Council. Around the world, streets and squares were named for him. Peace prizes and honorary degrees were awarded to him. A pop song, "Free Nelson Mandela," became a hit, and "Sarafina," a musical about and his nation's racial struggle, appeared on Broadway.

In 1985, President P. W. Botha offered to free him if he renounced violence, but he refused to do so until the

Many see Mandela as the last hope for peaceful change.

Government granted blacks full political rights and took the initiative to dismantle apartheid, South Africa's pervasive system of segregation and white preference.

While his health for years was good, Mr. Mandela underwent prostate surgery in 1985. And after he contracted tuberculosis and nearly died in 1988, he was moved to a comfortable bungalow at the Victor Verster prison farm at Paarl, near Cape Town. There he was allowed unrestricted family visits, strolls on the grounds and access to television.

In the past year, Mr. Mandela met with top Government officials and issued statements saying he wanted to work for peace. In July, he met President Botha, but said later that nothing had changed. In August, Mr. de Klerk replaced Mr. Botha and later released five of Mr. Mandela's comrades and three other anti-apartheid leaders.

Amid reports that the prisoner would soon be freed, Mr. de Klerk met Mr. Mandela in December. On Feb. 2, the President legalized the African National Congress and 60 other banned organizations, clearing the way for Mr. Mandela's release. Though apartheid and security laws remained in place, he said he was accepting freedom to work for peace.

Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela was born on July 19, 1918, at Umtata in Transkei territory of the Eastern Cape, where his father was the chief of the Xhosa-speaking Tembu tribe.

He had a relatively privileged upbringing, attended Methodist schools and was admitted to the black University of Fort Hare in 1938. But he was expelled in 1940 for leading a student strike with a fellow student, Oliver Tambo, who was to become a life-

riage, Mr. Mandela renounced his hereditary leadership of the tribe and went to Johannesburg, where he worked as a police officer at a gold mine, as a law clerk and in a real estate agency run by Walter Sisulu, who was later imprisoned with him.

Mr. Mandela, who is 6 feet 2 and once weighed 245 pounds, boxed as a heavyweight for a time. He also studied law by correspondence at the predominantly white University of Witwatersrand, and obtained his law degree from the University of South Africa in 1942.

Two years later, with Mr. Tambo and Mr. Sisulu, he formed the Youth League of the African National Congress, which had been founded in 1912 to fight for black political rights. The Youth League eventually came to dominate the congress.

In the 1940's, Mr. Mandela married a nurse, Evelyn Nomathamsanga, with whom he had three children. She helped finance his studies, but disapproved strongly of his growing involvement in the black rights movement and the marriage ended in divorce in 1957.

After the National Party came to power in South Africa in 1948 with the program of racial separation known as apartheid, Mr. Mandela led a decade-long campaign of civil disobedience that included strikes and other protests and resulted in thousands of arrests and more than a dozen deaths.

Charged With Treason

Mr. Mandela and Mr. Tambo formed South Africa's first black law partnership in Johannesburg in 1952. Soon after, they were charged under the Suppression of Communism Act for roles in the civil disobedience campaign. Mr. Mandela, who said he was a nationalist, not a Communist, received the first of many banning orders restricting his activities.

Spurred by a vision of an egalitarian South Africa, Mr. Mandela and other black leaders in 1955 adopted a charter calling for a nonracial state, a division of land among those who worked it and other policies that became the credo of the African National Congress. Mr. Mandela and 155 others were charged with treason in 1956 for backing the charter.

While on trial the next year, he married Winnie Nomzamo Madizela, with whom he later had two daughters. He helped conduct the defense at the trial, which ended in 1960 with acquittals for all. He immediately went underground, fearing he would be rearrested.

Since his arrest on Aug. 5, 1962 — 27 years and six months ago — Mr. Mandela had not been free until yesterday. In July 1963, while he was in prison, the police found the underground headquarters of the African National Congress on a farm near Johannesburg and seized documents outlining plans for a guerrilla campaign, including Mr. Mandela's diary.

He and seven co-defendants were tried for high treason, found guilty and sentenced to life in prison.

"I do not deny that I planned sabotage," he said in his statement from the dock. "I did not plan it in a spirit of recklessness, nor because I have any love of violence. I planned it as a result of a calm and sober assessment of the political situation that had arisen after years of tyranny, ex-

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MANDELA PREDICTS NEGOTIATIONS SOON

Outlook Is More Optimistic on Black Political Rights

By CHRISTOPHER S. WREN

Special to The New York Times

JOHANNESBURG, Feb. 12 — Nelson Mandela predicted today that negotiations on a new constitution extending political rights to blacks could get under way soon despite his unresolved differences with President F. W. de Klerk.

Mr. Mandela reiterated his demand, first made in prison, that the Government create a political climate for negotiations by completely lifting the national state of emergency and releasing all political prisoners, including those charged with crimes like murder or arson.

"Once we have removed these obstacles, we will be entitled to say that the situation has been normalized," he said.

Without elaborating on the reasons for his positive outlook, Mr. Mandela said that if Mr. de Klerk could persuade his governing National Party to accept those conditions, "I think that very soon obstacles to negotiation will be removed and that we can sit and talk."

Mr. Mandela spoke in Cape Town this morning at his first news conference since being freed on Sunday after 27½ years in prison.

In Washington, President Bush said that he was not willing to lift sanctions against South Africa now, but that he was prepared to take other steps to show support for President de Klerk, whom he praised as "a man who is making dramatic changes." Page A11.]

In contrast to his tough address to a

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Mandela Sees Negotiations On Rights for Blacks Soon

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rally after his release on Sunday, Mr. Mandela extended his hand today to South Africa's white minority, saying the African National Congress, which he represents, would try to allay their fears about the prospect of an equal vote for the country's black majority.

1,000 Wait in Soweto

"Whites are fellow South Africans and we want them to feel safe," Mr. Mandela said, adding that "we appreciate the contribution they have made to the development of this country."

This afternoon, Mr. Mandela and his wife, Winnie, slipped out of Cape Town and flew unannounced by chartered executive jet to a small airport near Johannesburg. There the party got into five waiting automobiles that drove off

The outlook is more optimistic than that of Sunday's speech.

in different directions to elude several hovering helicopters chartered by pursuing television crews.

The South African Press Association reported that it had been told the Mandelas would not go back tonight to the small concrete house in Soweto where they lived before Mr. Mandela was jailed for plotting against white rule. More than a thousand excited Soweto residents were milling around their home. The Mandelas were believed to be staying overnight with a wealthy black businessman who lives in an ostensibly white northern suburb of Jo-

hannesburg.

On Tuesday, Mr. Mandela is scheduled to address a major rally at a soccer stadium near Soweto before finally arriving home to what is expected to be a tumultuous reception.

The Guests of Archbishop

The Mandelas spent Sunday night as guests of the the Anglican Archbishop, Desmond M. Tutu, in his residence in Bishopscourt, a fashionable suburb of Cape Town that supposedly is also reserved for whites.

This morning, journalists were summoned to Archbishop Tutu's residence for the news conference, which was held in the shade of a spreading quinine tree on the manicured and spacious back lawn.

Mr. Mandela, who wore a sober gray suit with a light blue shirt and patterned tie, first walked about the garden with his wife and family for the benefit of television camera crews and photographers, sometimes punching his fist skyward in a militant salute, before sitting down behind a table to answer questions for nearly an hour.

He began by apologizing for having failed to appear at a news conference initially scheduled in Cape Town on Sunday, then answered one question after another thoughtfully and with measured cadence. By the end of the news conference, his gracious demeanor and candor elicited an unusual round of applause from the journalists sprawled across the lawn before him.

"I think it was originally the intention of the Government that we should be forgotten," Mr. Mandela told his respectful audience. "It was the press that never forgot us and we are therefore indebted to you."

Many Meetings With Minister

Mr. Mandela confirmed that he had been talking with Government officials for the last three years. He said he met countless times with Justice Minister

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