

Nelson MANDELA



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01. Nelson Mandela ou le triomphe des principes

Le président sud-africain Jacob Zuma a annoncé, jeudi 5 décembre, la mort de Nelson Mandela, âgé de 95 ans. Le grand homme sud-africain a eu plusieurs vies, mais c'est lors de sa transition de prisonnier à président qu'il a montré ce qui faisait de lui une personnalité exceptionnelle : son intégrité non dénuée de réalisme politique.

La mort de Nelson Mandela, annoncée jeudi 5 décembre, n'est rien de moins que la mort d'un des plus grands hommes du XXe siècle, sinon le plus grand dans la sphère politique. Pas seulement parce que ses combats ont épousé les luttes majeures de son époque (égalité des droits, anticolonialisme, antiracisme), mais parce qu'à chacune des étapes de sa vie, il a fait triompher ses principes, même quand il les a trempés dans le réalisme politique. Il a eu des pairs dans ses luttes – combat révolutionnaire, leader syndical et politique, emprisonnement, pouvoir, retraite –, des personnalités qui ont marqué leur temps sur les cinq continents, mais aucun n'est parvenu à franchir toutes ces phases avec autant de réussite et surtout d'intégrité.

Gandhi et Martin Luther King sont les deux noms que l'on associe le plus souvent à celui de Nelson Mandela – le premier l'a inspiré, le second a porté le combat pour l'égalité dans la nation majeure du XXe siècle – mais aucun des deux n'a gouverné. Leurs parcours restent donc "purs" et leur assassinat a grandi leur légende. Quant aux grands révolutionnaires ou "libérateurs" de cette ère, la plupart ont grossi les rangs des dictateurs (Lénine, Staline, Castro, Mao...) ou fini précipitamment au cimetière (Guevara, Lumumba...). Du côté de ceux qui ont gouverné dignement (Nehru, Havel, Walesa), aucun n'avait un passé de résistant aussi marquant que celui de Mandela et, de toute manière, aucun n'est parvenu à s'affranchir des basses querelles internes, ni à organiser de succession réussie. Et puis il y a tous ceux qui ont brillé à un moment charnière du siècle, mais n'ont guère été des inspirateurs au-delà de leurs frontières (Churchill, de Gaulle, Roosevelt).



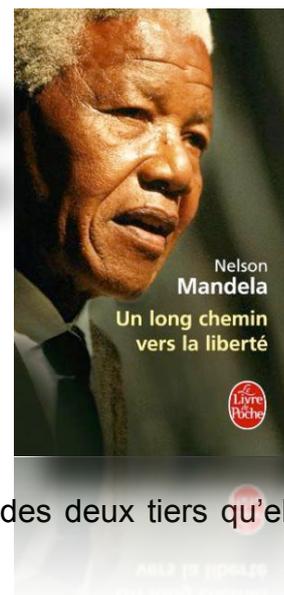
Le musée de l'Apartheid à Johannesburg © TC

La grandeur de Mandela passe évidemment par son activisme de jeunesse et ses vingt-sept années d'emprisonnement durant lesquelles il n'a rien cédé. Mais elle se niche surtout dans sa transition réussie de résistant héroïque à chef d'État. Dès le début des années 1980, le pouvoir sud-africain lui avait fait des offres de libération assorties de différentes conditions (ayant généralement trait au comportement de l'ANC, le parti qu'il avait dirigé). Mais il les a toutes refusées, préférant sortir de prison selon ses propres termes. Ce qui ne l'a pas empêché de commencer à négocier avec des représentants du gouvernement d'apartheid pendant plusieurs années depuis sa cellule. Au nom du pragmatisme, mais aussi parce qu'il savait qu'une fois libre, le régime de ségrégation s'effondrerait et qu'il lui faudrait alors gouverner. Mandela ne voulait pas être pris en défaut ni se retrouver à la tête d'un pays sans avoir rien préparé.

Ces négociations se sont poursuivies pendant trois ans après son affranchissement. Trois années durant lesquelles Mandela a pu prendre la mesure du monde qu'il rejoignait pleinement – un monde où le communisme, auquel l'ANC était associé, s'effondrait –, éviter les erreurs et préparer la réconciliation nationale.

S'il a toujours su composer avec la réalité politique, il n'a jamais trahi ses principes ni ses amis

En 1990, lorsqu'il sort de prison, Mandela n'est pas la figure révérée et consensuelle qu'il est devenu par la suite. Mais ses premiers gestes et ses premières paroles sont à mille lieues de tout esprit de revanche. Il va même jusqu'à qualifier Frederik de Klerk, le président afrikaner qui l'a fait sortir de prison, d'"homme intègre" (il le regrettera plus tard), et à pousser un soupir de soulagement lorsque l'ANC, aux élections de 1994, n'obtient pas la majorité des deux tiers qu'elle espérait et qui lui aurait permis de rédiger seule la nouvelle Constitution.



"Je voulais une constitution sud-africaine, pas une constitution de l'ANC. Je voulais un gouvernement d'union nationale", écrira-t-il dans ses superbes mémoires, *Un long chemin vers la liberté*. Dans les dernière pages de cet ouvrage, il ajoute : "Quand j'ai franchi les portes de la prison, telle était ma mission : libérer à la fois l'opprimé et l'opresseur."

Une fois élu président en 1994, Mandela mettra en place la commission Vérité et réconciliation, qui sera considérée comme LE modèle du genre. Beaucoup de Noirs sud-africains reprocheront à cette instance l'absence de sanctions et le sentiment qu'ils ont parfois eu que les bourreaux s'en sortaient avec une légère réprimande. Mais dans la tête de Mandela et du président de la commission, l'archevêque Desmond Tutu, l'accent a toujours été mis sur le second terme de l'intitulé : la réconciliation. Et même si, vingt ans après la fin de l'apartheid, l'Afrique du Sud demeure un pays complexe, torturé et occasionnellement violent, la nation arc-en-ciel n'est pas qu'un vain mot. C'est le pays le plus riche du continent, mais aussi un des plus démocratiques et des mieux intégrés.

En tant que président, Mandela fera ce que peu de ses pairs ont su faire : il abandonnera le pouvoir après un unique mandat. Il aurait aisément pu devenir "président à vie", mais très peu pour lui. Là encore, il sera exemplaire. Il ne se battra même pas pour imposer son héritier préféré, Cyril Ramaphosa, laissant Thabo Mbeki, le favori de l'ANC, prendre sa place. Enfin, une fois la vieillesse devenue trop débilite, il saura s'éloigner de la vie publique avec ces mots élégants : "Je me retire de ma retraite. Ne m'appellez pas, je vous contacterai." Les dernières années de sa vie se dérouleront à l'abri des regards – sauf ceux de ses proches – laissant son image intacte et intouchable.

Nelson Mandela a commis des faux pas durant sa longue vie politique : de son acceptation de la violence comme outil politique, à son soutien persistant à des dirigeants peu recommandables mais qui l'avaient aidé dans son combat contre l'apartheid (Kadhafi ou Mugabé). Il n'a jamais été irréprochable, comme il était le premier à l'admettre avec sincérité, ce qui rend ses réussites encore plus remarquables. S'il a toujours su composer avec la réalité politique du moment, il n'a jamais trahi ses principes ni ses amis, et il n'a jamais perdu de vue le cap qu'il s'était fixé.

"J'ai parcouru ce long chemin vers la liberté", écrit-il au dernier paragraphe de ses mémoires. "J'ai essayé de ne pas hésiter ; j'ai fait beaucoup de faux pas. Mais j'ai découvert ce secret : après avoir gravi une haute colline, tout ce qu'on découvre, c'est qu'il reste beaucoup d'autres collines à gravir. Je me suis arrêté un instant pour me reposer, pour contempler l'admirable paysage qui m'entoure,

pour regarder derrière moi la longue route que j'ai parcourue. Mais je ne peux me reposer qu'un instant ; avec la liberté viennent les responsabilités, et je n'ose m'attarder car je ne suis pas arrivé au terme de mon long chemin."

Les dernières mois de sa vie ont été étonnants : toute la nation sud-africaine est restée suspendue, jours après jour, à ses bulletins de santé. Non pas pour attendre une improbable rémission, mais plutôt comme s'il s'agissait de profiter des derniers instants de vie du grand homme, de partager encore un bout d'existence avec lui sur cette Terre. Car rares sont les personnalités politiques qui ont eu autant de vies en une seule et qui les ont toutes menées avec succès, élégance et dignité.

LIRE AUSSI

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theguardian

[David Smith](#) in Johannesburg
[The Guardian](#), Friday 6 December 2013

02. Thank you, M. Mandela, thank you

Nelson Mandela, South Africa's first black president, dies aged 95

South Africa's first black president died peacefully in company of his family at home in Johannesburg, Jacob Zuma announces

• [All the latest reaction to Nelson Mandela's death](#)



Nelson Mandela's death was announced on South African TV by current president Jacob Zuma. Photograph: Getty Images

Nelson Mandela, the towering figure of **Africa's** struggle for freedom and a hero to millions around the world, has died at the age of 95.

South Africa's first black president died in the company of his family at home in Johannesburg after years of declining health that had caused him to withdraw from public life.

The news was announced to the country by the current president, Jacob Zuma, who in a sombre televised address said Mandela had "departed" around 8.50pm local time and was at peace.

"This is the moment of our deepest sorrow," Zuma said. "Our nation has lost its greatest son ... What made Nelson Mandela great was precisely what made him human. We saw in him what we seek in ourselves.

"Fellow South Africans, Nelson Mandela brought us together and it is together that we will bid him farewell."

Zuma announced that Mandela would receive a state funeral and ordered that flags fly at half-mast.

Early on Friday morning Archbishop Desmond Tutu led a memorial service in Capetown where he called for South Africa to become as a nation what Mandela had been as a man.

Mandela's two youngest daughters were at the premiere of the biopic *Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom* in London last night. They received the news of their father's death during the screening in Leicester Square and immediately left the cinema.

Barack Obama led tributes from world leaders, referring to Mandela by his clan name – Madiba. The US president said: "Through his fierce dignity and unbending will to sacrifice his own freedom for the freedom of others, Madiba transformed South Africa – and moved all of us.



[Link to video: Jacob Zuma: Nelson Mandela 'is now at peace'](#)

"His journey from a prisoner to a president embodied the promise that human beings – and countries – can change for the better. His commitment to transfer power and reconcile with those who jailed him set an example that all humanity should aspire to, whether in the lives of nations or our own personal lives."

David Cameron said: "A great light has gone out in the world" and described Mandela as "a hero of our time".

FW de Klerk – the South African president who freed Mandela, shared the Nobel peace prize with him and [paved the way for him to become South Africa's first post-apartheid head of state](#) – said the news was deeply saddening for South Africa and the world.

"He lived reconciliation. He was a great unifier," De Klerk said.

Throughout Thursday night and into Friday morning people gathered in the streets of South Africa to celebrate Mandela's life.

In Soweto people gathered to sing and dance near the house where he once lived. They formed a circle in the middle of Vilakazi Street and sang songs from the anti-apartheid struggle. Some people were draped in South African flags and the green, yellow and black colors of Mandela's party, the African National Congress.

"We have not seen Mandela in the place where he is, in the place where he is kept," they sang, a lyric anti-apartheid protesters had sung during Mandela's long incarceration.

Several hundred people took part in lively commemorations outside Mandela's final home in the Houghton neighbourhood of Johannesburg. A man blew on a vuvuzela horn and people made impromptu shrines with national flags, candles, flowers and photographs.



Link to video: Street celebrations of Nelson Mandela's life break out in South Africa

Mandela was taken to hospital in June with a recurring lung infection and slipped into a critical condition, but returned home in September where his bedroom was converted into an intensive care unit.

His death sends South Africa deep into mourning and self-reflection, nearly 20 years after he led the country from racial apartheid to inclusive democracy.

But his passing will also be keenly felt by people around the world who revered Mandela as one of history's last

great statesmen, and a moral paragon comparable with Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi and Martin Luther King.

It was a transcendent act of forgiveness after spending 27 years in prison, 18 of them on Robben Island, that will assure his place in history. With South Africa facing possible civil war, Mandela sought reconciliation with the white minority to build a new democracy.

He led the African National Congress to victory in the country's first multiracial election in 1994. Unlike other African liberation leaders who cling to power, such as Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe, he then voluntarily stepped down after one term.



South Africans hold a candle outside the house of former South African president Nelson Mandela following his death in Johannesburg. Photograph: Alexander Joe/Afp/Getty Images

Mandela was awarded the Nobel peace prize in 1993.

At his inauguration a year later, the new president said: "Never, never, and never again shall it be that this beautiful land will again experience the oppression of one by another ... the sun shall never set on so glorious a human achievement. Let freedom reign. God bless Africa!"

Born Rolihlahla Dalibhunga in a small village in the Eastern Cape on 18 July 1918, Mandela was given his English name, Nelson, by a teacher at his school.

He joined the ANC in 1943 and became a co-founder of its youth league. In 1952, he started South Africa's first black law firm with his partner, Oliver Tambo.

Mandela was a charming, charismatic figure with a passion for boxing and an eye for women. He once said: "I can't help it if the ladies take note of me. I am not going to protest."

He married his first wife, Evelyn Mase, in 1944. They were divorced in 1957 after having three children. In 1958, he married Winnie Madikizela, who later campaigned to free her husband from jail and became a key figure in the struggle.

When the ANC was banned in 1960, Mandela went underground. After the Sharpeville massacre, in which 69 black protesters were shot dead by police, he took the difficult decision to launch an armed

struggle. He was arrested and eventually charged with sabotage and attempting to overthrow the government.

Conducting his own defence in the Rivonia trial in 1964, he said: "I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities.

"It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die."

He escaped the death penalty but was sentenced to life in prison, a huge blow to the ANC that had to regroup to continue the struggle. But unrest grew in townships and international pressure on the apartheid regime slowly tightened.

Finally, in 1990, FW de Klerk lifted the ban on the ANC and Mandela was released from prison amid scenes of jubilation witnessed around the world.

In 1992, Mandela divorced Winnie after she was convicted on charges of kidnapping and accessory to assault.

His presidency rode a wave of tremendous global goodwill but was not without its difficulties. After leaving frontline politics in 1999, he admitted he should have moved sooner against the spread of HIV/Aids in South Africa.

His son died from an Aids-related illness. On his 80th birthday, Mandela married Graça Machel, the widow of the former president of Mozambique. It was his third marriage. In total, he had six children, of whom three daughters survive: Pumla Makaziwe (Maki), Zenani and Zindziswa (Zindzi). He has 17 grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who headed the truth and reconciliation committee after the fall of apartheid, said: "He transcended race and class in his personal actions, through his warmth and through his willingness to listen and to emphasize with others. And he restored others' faith in Africa and Africans."

Mandela was diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2001 and retired from public life to be with his family and enjoy some "quiet reflection". But he remained a beloved and venerated figure, with countless buildings, streets and squares named after him. His every move was scrutinized and his health was a constant source of media speculation.

Mandela continued to make occasional appearances at ANC events and attended the inauguration of the current president, Jacob Zuma. His 91st birthday was marked by the first annual "Mandela Day" in his honor.

He was last seen in public at the final of the 2010 World Cup in Johannesburg, a tournament he had helped bring to South Africa for the first time. Early in 2011, he was taken to hospital in a health scare but he recovered and was visited by Michelle Obama and her daughters a few months later.

In January 2012, he was notably missing from the ANC's centenary celebrations due to his frail condition. With other giants of the movement such as Tambo and Walter Sisulu having gone before Mandela, the defining chapter of Africa's oldest liberation movement is now closed.

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03. Barack Obama: Nelson Mandela was a symbol for justice, equality and dignity

The story told by Mandela's life is not one of infallible human beings and inevitable triumph. It is the story of a man who was willing to risk his own life for what he believed in

- [Nelson Mandela dies aged 95 – live updates](#)



Barack Obama visiting Mandela's cell in 2006. Photograph: Howard Burditt/Reuters/Corbis

Like many people around the world, I came to know of [Nelson Mandela](#) from a distance, when he was imprisoned on Robben Island. To so many of us, he was more than just a man – he was a symbol of the struggle for justice, equality, and dignity in South Africa and around the globe. His sacrifice was so great that it called upon people everywhere to do what they could on behalf of human progress.

In the most modest of ways, I was one of those people who tried to answer his call. The first time that I became politically active was during my college years, when I joined a campaign on behalf of divestment, and the effort to end apartheid in [South Africa](#). None of the personal obstacles that I faced as a young man could compare to what the victims of apartheid experienced every day, and I could only imagine the courage that had led Mandela to occupy that prison cell for so many years. But his example helped awaken me to the wider world, and the obligation that we all have to stand up for what is right. Through his choices, Mandela made it clear that we did not have to accept the world as it is – that we could do our part to seek the world as it should be.

Over the years, I continued to watch Nelson Mandela with a sense of admiration and humility, inspired by the sense of possibility that his own life demonstrated and awed by the sacrifices necessary to achieve his dream of justice and equality. Indeed, his life tells a story that stands in direct opposition to the cynicism and hopelessness that so often afflicts our world. A prisoner became a free man; a liberation figure became a passionate voice for reconciliation; a party leader became a president who advanced democracy and development. Out of formal office, Mandela continued to work for equality, opportunity and human dignity. He has done so much to change his country, and the world, that it is hard to imagine the history of the last several decades without him.

A little more than two decades after I made my first foray into political life and the divestment movement as a college student in California, I stood in Mandela's former cell in Robben Island. I was

a newly elected United States senator. By then, the cell had been transformed from a prison to a monument to the sacrifice that was made by so many on behalf of South Africa's peaceful transformation. Standing there in that cell, I tried to transport myself back to those days when President Mandela was still Prisoner 466/64 – a time when the success of his struggle was by no means a certainty. I tried to imagine Mandela – the legend who had changed history – as Mandela the man who had sacrificed so much for change.

The story told by Mandela's life is not one of infallible human beings and inevitable triumph. It is the story of a man who was willing to risk his own life for what he believed in, and who worked hard to lead the kind of life that would make the world a better place.

In the end, that is Mandela's message to each of us. All of us face days when it can seem like change is hard – days when our opposition and our own imperfections may tempt us to take an easier path that avoids our responsibilities to one another. Mandela faced those days as well. But even when little sunlight shined into that Robben Island cell, he could see a better future – one worthy of sacrifice. Even when faced with the temptation to seek revenge, he saw the need for reconciliation, and the triumph of principle over mere power. Even when he had earned his rest, he still sought to inspire his fellow men and women to service.

Prior to my election as president of the United States, I had the great privilege of meeting Mandela, and since taking office I have spoken with him occasionally by phone. The conversations are usually brief – he was in the twilight of his years, and I am faced with the busy schedule that comes with my office. But always, in those conversations, there were moments when the kindness, and generosity, and wisdom of the man shone through. Those are the moments when I was reminded that underneath the history that has been made, there was a human being who chose hope over fear – progress over the prisons of the past. And I was reminded that even as he became a legend, to know the man – Nelson Mandela – was to respect him even more.

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theguardian

theguardian.com,
Friday 6 December 2013 12.30 GMT

04. Nelson Mandela quotes: 'Real leaders must be ready to sacrifice all for the freedom of their people'

Nelson Mandela, South Africa's first black president, has died. Here are his thoughts on freedom, equality and how he would like to be remembered



Nelson Mandela: 'I will continue fighting for freedom until the end of my days.'
Photograph: Mike Hutchings/Reuters

Nelson Mandela, who led South Africa from apartheid to democracy, was a humble, eloquent and inspirational figure who advocated peace, democracy and human rights.

Here are some of his quotes which mobilised a movement and made him an icon to millions.

On dreaming big

"One day I will be the first black president of South Africa."
- 1952

On freedom

"There is no easy walk to freedom anywhere and many of us will have to pass through the valley of the shadow of death again and again before we reach the mountain tops of our desires."
- 21 September 1953. Presidential address to ANC conference, adapted from a statement by former Indian prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru

On resistance

"The struggle is my life. I will continue fighting for freedom until the end of my days."
- 26 June 1961

On sacrifice

"If I had my time over I would do the same again. So would any man who dares call himself a man."
- November 1962. Mitigation speech after being convicted of inciting a strike and leaving the country illegally

On equality

"During my lifetime I have dedicated myself to this struggle of the African people.

I have fought against white domination, and I have fought against black domination.

I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities.

It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die."

- 20 April 1964. Rivonia trial

On adversity

"Difficulties break some men but make others.

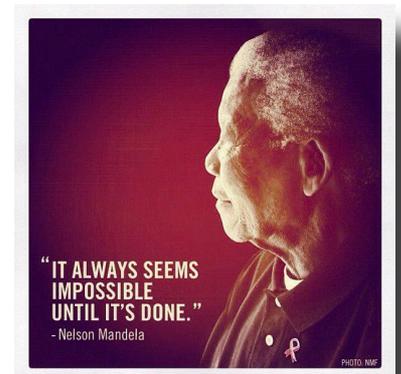
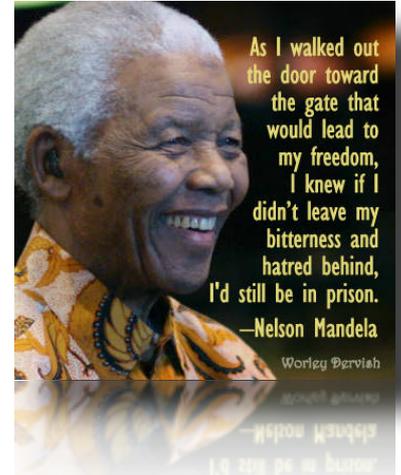
No axe is sharp enough to cut the soul of a sinner who keeps on trying, one armed with the hope that he will rise even in the end."

- 1 February 1975. Letter to Winnie Mandela

On authority

"I have never regarded any man as my superior, either in my life outside or inside prison."

- 12 July 1976. Letter written to commissioner of prisons while on Robben Island



On apartheid

"Between the anvil of united mass action and the hammer of the armed struggle we shall crush apartheid and white minority racist rule."

- June 1980



On compromise

"Only free men can negotiate; prisoners cannot enter into contracts."

- 10 February 1985. Reply to an offer to release him if he renounced violence

On being a man of the people

"I cannot and will not give any undertaking at a time when I, and you, the people, are not free. Your freedom and mine cannot be separated."

- 10 February 1985. Message from prison, read by his daughter to a rally in Soweto

On sacrifice

"I am not less life-loving than you are. But I cannot sell my birthright, nor am I prepared to sell the birthright of the people to be free."

- February 1985. Response to the offer of freedom from PW Botha. Remark quoted in A Part of My Soul Went With Him by Winnie Mandela

On his release

"Friends, comrades and fellow South Africans, I greet you all in the name of peace, democracy and freedom for all. I stand here before you not as a prophet but as a humble servant of you, the people.

Your tireless and heroic sacrifices have made it possible for me to be here today. I therefore place the remaining years of my life in your hands."

- 11 February 1990. Speaking on his release from Robben Island from the balcony of Cape Town city hall

On humanity

"Since my release, I have become more convinced than ever that the real makers of history are the ordinary men and women of our country; their participation in every decision about the future is the only guarantee of true democracy and freedom."

- 1990. The Struggle is My Life

On lost time

"I never think of the time I have lost. I just carry out a programme because it's there. It's mapped out for me."

- 3 May 1993

On vigilance

"If the ANC does to you what the apartheid government did to you, then you must do to the ANC what you did to the apartheid government."

- July 1993. Speaking to South Africa's trade union congress

On the anti-apartheid movement

"I had no specific belief except that our cause was just, was very strong and it was winning more and more support."

- February 1994. Visit to Robben Island

On a free press

"A critical, independent and investigative press is the lifeblood of any democracy. The press must be free from state interference.

It must have the economic strength to stand up to the blandishments of government officials.

It must have sufficient independence from vested interests to be bold and inquiring without fear or favour. It must enjoy the protection of the constitution, so that it can protect our rights as citizens."

- February 1994

On the South African elections

"Years of imprisonment could not stamp out our determination to be free.

Years of intimidation and violence could not stop us. And we will not be stopped now."

- 26 April 1994. Press conference

On becoming president

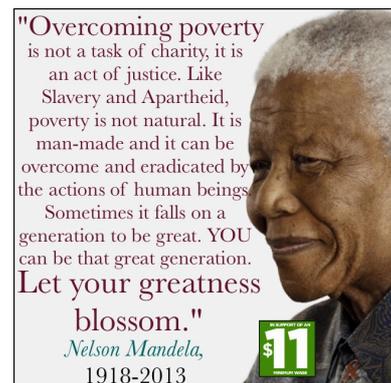
"My fellow South Africans, today we are entering a new era for our country and its people. Today we celebrate not the victory of a party, but a victory for all the people of South Africa."

- 9 May 1994. Speech following his election to the presidency, Cape Town

On the future

"The task at hand will not be easy, but you have mandated us to change South Africa from a land in which the majority lived with little hope, to one in which they can live and work with dignity, with a sense of self-esteem and confidence in the future."

- 10 May 1994. Speech at his inauguration as president



On death

"Death is something inevitable. When a man has done what he considers to be his duty to his people and his country, he can rest in peace. I believe I have made that effort and that is, therefore, why I will sleep for the eternity."

- 1994. Interview for the documentary Mandela

On poverty in South Africa

"In South Africa, to be poor and black was normal, to be poor and white was a tragedy."

- 1994, Long Walk to Freedom

On morality

"Man's goodness is a flame that can be hidden but never extinguished."

- 1994. Long Walk to Freedom

On life's obstacles

"I have discovered the secret that after climbing a great hill, one only finds that there are many more hills to climb."

- 1994. Long Walk to Freedom

On his legacy

"It would be very egotistical of me to say how I would like to be remembered. I'd leave that entirely to South Africans. I would just like a simple stone on which is written 'Mandela'."

- 1997

On wisdom

"It is in the character of growth that we should learn from both pleasant and unpleasant experiences."

- November 1997

On leadership

"Real leaders must be ready to sacrifice all for the freedom of their people."

- April 1998

On being remembered

"There will be life after Mandela. On my last day I want to know that those who remain behind will say: 'The man who lies here has done his duty for his country and his people.'"

- 1999

On the power of words

"It is never my custom to use words lightly. If 27 years in prison have done anything to us, it was to use the silence of solitude to make us understand how precious words are and how real speech is in its impact on the way people live and die."

- July 2000

On a meaningful life

"What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead."

- May 2002

On HIV/Aids

"When the history of our times is written, will we be remembered as the generation that turned our backs in a moment of global crisis or will it be recorded that we did the right thing?"

- June 2005

On integrity

"Those who conduct themselves with morality, integrity and consistency need not fear the forces of inhumanity and cruelty."

- July 2003

On humour

"You sharpen your ideas by reducing yourself to the level of the people you are with and a sense of humour and a complete relaxation, even when you're discussing serious things, does help to mobilise friends around you. And I love that."

- August 2005

On success

"Everyone can rise above their circumstances and achieve success if they are dedicated to and passionate about what they do."

- December 2009. Letter to cricketer Makhaya Ntini

On female attention

"I can't help it if the ladies take note of me; I am not going to protest."

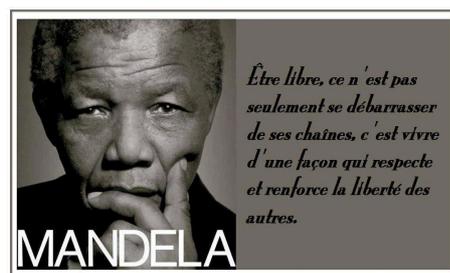
On personal weakness

"That was one of the things that worried me – to be raised to the position of a semi-god – because then you are no longer a human being. I wanted to be known as Mandela, a man with weaknesses, some of which are fundamental, and a man who is committed, but never the less, sometimes he fails to live up to expectations."



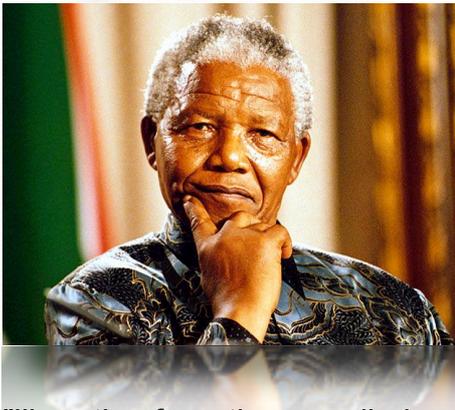
"En faisant scintiller notre lumière, nous offrons aux autres la possibilité d'en faire autant." Nelson Mandela

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05. Nelson Mandela's Epitaph, in His Own Words

Remembering Mandela with the epic 1964 speech he believed might be his last.



[Nelson Mandela, 1918-2013 Alpha/Globe Photos/ZUMAPRESS.com](#)

"My Lord, I am the First Accused." Those were **Nelson Mandela's opening words** as he stood in the dock in the Palace of Justice in Pretoria, South Africa, on the morning of April 20, 1964—nearly half a century before **his death December 5 at the age of 95**. Mandela and **eight other defendants** had been charged with violating the Sabotage Act and the Suppression of Communism Act, accused of plotting violence against the apartheid government with the aim of overthrowing it. By fomenting "chaos, turmoil, and disorder," the **prosecutor explained**, the accused hoped to achieve

"liberation from the so-called yoke of the white man's domination." Mandela, who was already serving a five-year sentence for organizing a strike and leaving the country without a passport, assumed that they would be sent to the gallows.

With the verdict all but certain, Mandela and his codefendants decided to turn their trial into an indictment of the apartheid state. When he had been asked for his plea, **Mandela replied**, "The government should be in the dock, not me. I plead not guilty." Yet the lengthy statement he prepared to open his defense was not an attempt to prove his innocence—in fact, he readily admitted to many of the charges made against him. He instead took the opportunity to forcefully promote his cause. But he also knew that he was offering a doomed man's final words, in essence, a self-written epitaph.

Mandela took two weeks to write the speech. A white lawyer who reviewed a draft **exclaimed**, "If Mandela reads this in court they will take him straight out to the back of the courthouse and string him up." Mandela's own lawyer urged him to cut out the final paragraph, but Mandela held firm. "I felt we were likely to hang no matter what we said, so we might as well say what we truly believed," Mandela recalled in his autobiography, *Long Walk to Freedom*. The **final lines** of Mandela's **60-page**, 176-minute statement have since become its most famous:

During my lifetime I have dedicated my life to this struggle of the African people. I have fought against white domination, and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons will live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal for which I hope to live for and to see realized. But, My Lord, if it needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die.

Those lines will no doubt be reprinted in many of Mandela's obituaries. (They also provide the climax of the trailer for the **new Mandela biopic** starring Idris Elba.) But the **rest of his speech** at the **Rivonia trial** is worth reading. It not only provides the context behind its most quotable section but also says

much about who Mandela was—and would be when he emerged from prison nearly three decades later.

Today, Mandela is remembered as a champion of reconciliation and peaceful transition to democracy. But it bears remembering that he saw limits to Gandhi-esque nonviolence, and that he **did not renounce "armed struggle"** until the apartheid government agreed to negotiate. His trial statement began with a lengthy discussion of why he and other leaders of the anti-apartheid African National Congress had decided to move away from their commitment to nonviolent struggle. Specifically, they had secretly organized a resistance group, **Umkhonto we Sizwe** (Spear of the Nation) to a launch campaign of sabotage and guerilla warfare against the state.

Some of the things so far told to the Court are true and some are untrue. I do not however, deny that I planned sabotage. I did not plan it in a spirit of recklessness, nor because I have any love for violence. I planned it as a result of a calm and sober assessment of the political situation that had arisen after many years of tyranny, exploitation, and oppression of my people by the whites.

[...] I have already mentioned that I was one of the persons who helped to form Umkhonto. I, and the others who started the organization, did so for two reasons. Firstly, we believed that as a result of Government policy, violence by the African people had become inevitable, and that unless responsible leadership was given to canalise and control the feelings of our people, there would be outbreaks of terrorism which would produce an intensity of bitterness and hostility between the various races of the country which is not produced even by war.

Secondly, we felt that without sabotage there would be no way open to the African people to succeed in their struggle against the principle of white supremacy. All lawful modes of expressing opposition to this principle had been closed by legislation, and we were placed in a position in which we had either to accept a permanent state of inferiority, or to defy the Government. We chose to defy the Government. We first broke the law in a way which avoided any recourse to violence; when this form was legislated against, and when the Government resorted to a show of force to crush opposition to its policies, only then did we decide to answer violence with violence.

But the violence which we chose to adopt was not terrorism. We who formed Umkhonto were all members of the African National Congress, and had behind us the ANC tradition of nonviolence and negotiation as a means of solving political disputes. We believed that South Africa belonged to all the people who lived in it, and not to one group, be it black or white. We did not want an inter-racial war, and tried to avoid it to the last minute.

Mandela's insistence that a campaign of limited armed action would not cause unnecessary casualties or devolve into civil war was optimistic. Yet the logic behind the decision to take up arms was **Jeffersonian**: Their repeated petitions answered only by repeated injury, what further options did black South Africans have?

Mandela also offered a detailed response to the charges that he and the ANC were, as the prosecutor put it, **"communistically inclined"**, which included gracefully **comparing his adversaries to Hitler**:

It is true that there has often been close cooperation between the ANC and the Communist Party. But cooperation is merely proof of a common goal—in this case the removal of white supremacy—and is not proof of a complete community of interests.

My Lord, the history of the world is full of similar examples. Perhaps the most striking illustration is to be found in the cooperation between Great Britain, the United States of America, and the Soviet Union in the fight against Hitler. Nobody but Hitler would have dared to suggest that such cooperation turned Churchill or Roosevelt into communists or communist tools, or that Britain and America were working to bring about a communist world.



In 1964, Nelson Mandela expressed his admiration for "the American Congress." In 1990 he addressed a joint session. Pamela Price/ZUMAPRESS.com

Yes, Mandela said, he had made common cause with communists to defeat apartheid, but he was not himself a communist. Technically, this wasn't entirely true: According to **recent research**, Mandela briefly joined the South African Communist Party during the early '60s to facilitate his underground organizing. But in court he made clear that he was a democratic socialist, elucidating why he did not share the communists' vision for a post-apartheid South

Africa: But from my reading of Marxist literature and from conversations with Marxists, I have gained the impression that communists regard the parliamentary system of the work—of the West as undemocratic and reactionary. But, on the contrary, I am an admirer of such a system.

The Magna Carta, the Petition of Rights, the Bill of Rights are documents which are held in veneration by democrats throughout the world.

I have great respect for British political institutions, and for the country's system of justice. I regard the British Parliament as the most democratic institution in the world, and the independence and impartiality of its judiciary never fail to arouse my admiration.

The American Congress, that country's doctrine of separation of powers, as well as the independence of its judiciary, arouse in me similar sentiments.

I have been influenced in my thinking by both West and East. All this has led me to feel that in my search for a political formula, I should be absolutely impartial and objective.

I should tie myself to no particular system of society other than that of socialism. I must leave myself free to borrow the best from West and from the East.

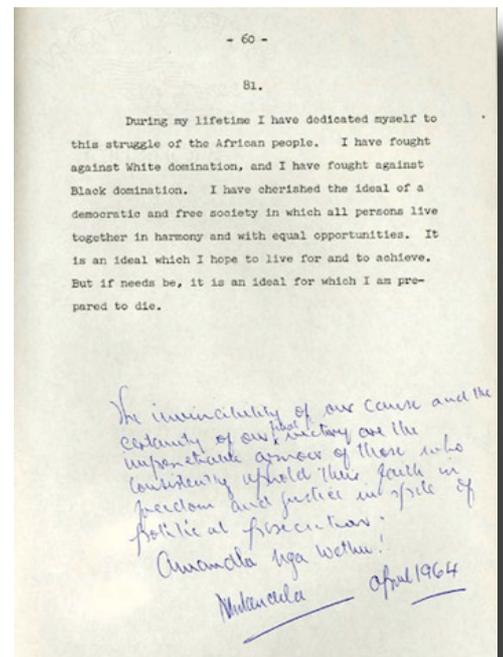
The anti-apartheid movement's fight, Mandela continued, was not against whites, but the poverty, violence, and indignity caused by white supremacy—"and we do not need communists or so-called 'agitators' to teach us about these things."

In the paragraphs leading up to his fate-tempting conclusion, Mandela sketched out a vision of democracy in which race-based politics would become irrelevant:

The final page of Mandela's 1964 courtroom speech Mandela Centre of Memory

Above all, My Lord, we want equal political rights, because without them our disabilities will be permanent. I know this sounds revolutionary to the whites in this country, because the majority of voters will be Africans. This makes the white man fear democracy.

But this fear cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the only solution which will guarantee racial harmony and freedom for all. It is not true that the enfranchisement of all will result in racial domination. Political division, based on color, is entirely artificial and, when it disappears, so will the domination of one color group by another. The ANC has spent half a century fighting against racialism. When it triumphs as it certainly must, it will not change that policy.



This then is what the ANC is fighting. Our struggle is a truly national one. It is a struggle of the African people, inspired by our own suffering and our own experience. It is a struggle for the right to live.

The speech, delivered in Mandela's characteristically deliberate style (listen to excerpts [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#)), marked the boundaries of his idealism and pragmatism, his militancy and moderation, his courage and caution. The manifesto remains one of the clearest political portraits of Mandela, whose revolutionary past seemed to fade as he became [a global icon](#), a genial grandpa who sat for photo-ops with [an endless parade](#) of celebrity well-wishers.

On June 11, 1964, Judge Quartus de Wet ruled that Mandela and seven of his codefendants were guilty. The following day, he delivered his sentence. Noting that the state had accused the defendants of high treason without formally charging them with such, de Wet decided "not to impose the supreme penalty." Instead, they would receive life imprisonment. He had spared Mandela from martyrdom, but condemned him—and South Africa—to endure many dark years before witnessing the dream described by a man who could not have imagined he had nearly 50 more years to live.



[DAVE GILSON](#) is a senior editor at Mother Jones. Read more of [his stories](#).

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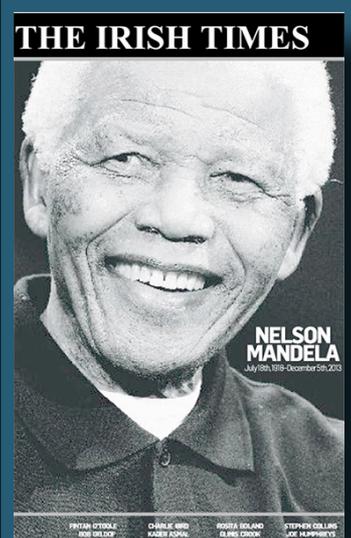
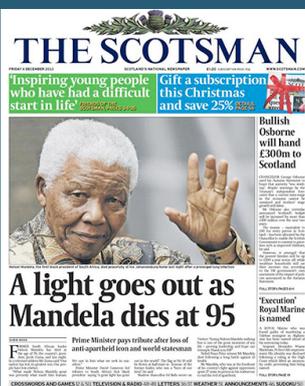
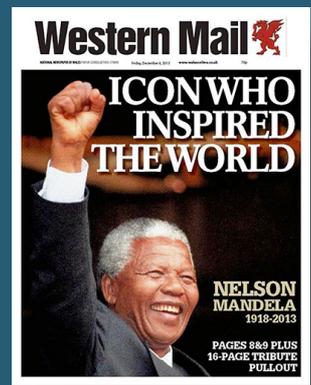
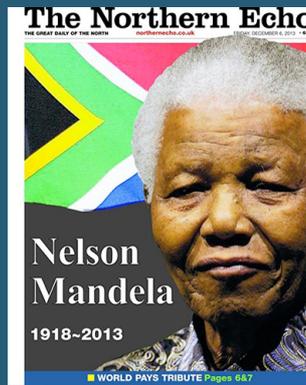
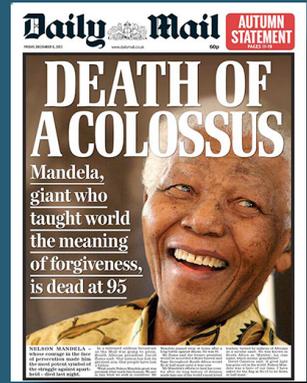
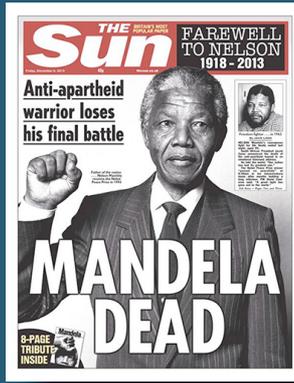
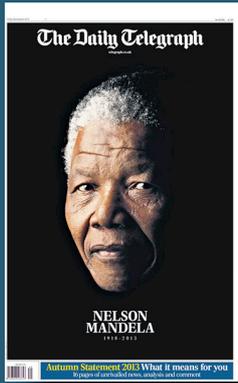


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Nelson MANDELA's death on newspaper covers :



Nelson MANDELA's death on newspaper covers :



Nelson MANDELA's death on newspaper covers :

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NEW YORK POST

Nelson Mandela dead at 95

Los Angeles Times

A life dedicated to liberty

Anti-apartheid icon reconciled a nation

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Libération

Nelson Mandela, en paix

Le leader anti-apartheid s'est éteint jeudi soir à l'âge de 95 ans, à son domicile de Johannesburg.

The New York Times

Peaceful Liberator of a Torn South Africa

South African's 'Calmness Through Deep Divides'

South Africa's 'Calmness Through Deep Divides'

The Washington Post

A nation's healer is dead

USA TODAY

NELSON MANDELA 1918 - 2013

World loses 'a giant for justice'

THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC

WORLD MOURNING MANDELA

South African president: 'Our nation has lost its greatest son'

SF Examiner

Nelson Mandela, 20th century colossus, dies at 95

NBC NEWS.com

'OUR PEOPLE HAVE LOST THEIR FATHER': NELSON MANDELA DIES AT 95

Obama: 'He no longer belongs to us, he belongs to the ages'

South Africa's President Zuma: 'Moment of our deepest sorrow'

Tributes pour in from around world: 'Created hope for generations'

Mandela's culture legacy, from Cosby to Freeman

WATCH: Mandela in his own words

WATCH: Groundbreaking 1994 win

WATCH: Historic release from prison

MailGuardian

Nelson Mandela dies

Tata Mandela, how do we say goodbye?

ANC on Mandela: 'A large baobab tree has fallen'

De Klerk pays tribute to Mandela's 'unique contribution'

Address by President Jacob Zuma on the departure of former president, Nelson Mandela

Archive: The first legal photo of Mandela at 22 years

Tata Mandela, how do we say goodbye?

Mandela: A tribute site

Nelson MANDELA's death on newspaper covers :

The Times LIVE newspaper cover features a large photograph of Nelson Mandela. The main headline reads "NELSON MANDELA 1918-2013". Other headlines include "Mandela and his three wives - Deyi, Wuside and Greda", "Crowds gather at Mandela's funeral home", "Nelson Mandela dies aged 95", "DA should join hands with Mandela's passing", "Nelson shocked by Mandela's passing", "Distress from Mandela's speeches", and "Times LIVE commemorates the life of South Africa's ICON OF FREEDOM".

The Star newspaper cover features a large photograph of Nelson Mandela. The main headline reads "NELSON MANDELA has died". Other headlines include "Looking back helps us move forward", "You love your phone more than me!", "Patients caught in bloody Aids battle", "Five new ways with chicken - recipes", "Mudersdrift fearful after brutal attack...", "Hit the (eco) gym this summer", "Eastern Cape ANC attacks Thuli", "Kheir was in business with co-accused", and "Impasse thwarts Aspa, Sopa merger".

The South China Morning Post newspaper cover features a large photograph of Nelson Mandela. The main headline reads "Nelson Mandela, 20th century colossus and beloved statesman, dies at 95". Other headlines include "Surge in use of bitcoin leads to ban on China trading" and "We've not tried this before: Biden calls for 'candid' relationship with China".

The Sydney Morning Herald newspaper cover features a large photograph of Nelson Mandela. The main headline reads "In his own words: Mandela's quotes". Other headlines include "Qantas credit rating downgraded to 'junk'", "Clarke tops century as Aussies pile on misery for England", "Ashes tribute for Nelson Mandela", "Killer murdered lover's de facto partner of the way 'serenely'", "All you need to know about quinoa", and "No more cash for Holden: PM".

The Australian newspaper cover features a large photograph of Nelson Mandela. The main headline reads "Mandela, a 'giant for justice', dies". Other headlines include "We've got Christmas sorted" and "Mandela's passing".

The Age newspaper cover features a large photograph of Nelson Mandela. The main headline reads "He's gone and hearts are broken". Other headlines include "Qantas downgraded to junk status", "Clarke tops a century as Australia piles on the runs", "Cabbie jailed for schoolgirl rape", "Films that are sexiest on re-watching", "Supermarket fuel discounts capped", and "Awkward: when you prefer being with your ex".

The ABC News website features a large photograph of Nelson Mandela. The main headline reads "Nelson Mandela dead at 95". Other headlines include "Former South African president Nelson Mandela, one of the 20th century's best loved and most powerful leaders, has died aged 95 surrounded by family at his Johannesburg home" and "Tributes flow for Mandela".

The Guardian website features a large photograph of Nelson Mandela. The main headline reads "Nelson Mandela dies at the age of 95". Other headlines include "Barack Obama: my inspiration", "An incredibly moral figure", "I am prepared to die", and "Liber to highlight from Mandela's famous speech".

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06. Le "long chemin vers la liberté" de Nelson Mandela

⇒ Diaporama visible depuis le site du journal :

http://www.lemonde.fr/international/portfolio/2013/06/10/la-vie-politique-de-nelson-mandela_3150467_3210.html

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THINKPROGRESS

BY [IGOR VOLSKY](#) AND [ZACK BEAUCHAMP](#)
ON DECEMBER 6, 2013 AT 11:04 AM

07. The Right Wing's Campaign To Discredit And Undermine Mandela, In One Timeline

The world is celebrating Nelson Mandela as a selfless visionary who led his country out of the grips of apartheid into democracy and freedom. But some of the very people lavishing praise on South Africa's first black president worked tirelessly to undermine his cause and portray the African National Congress he lead as pawns of the Soviet Union.

In fact, American conservatives have long been willing to overlook South Africa's racist apartheid government in service of fighting communism abroad. Below is a short history, and some explanation, of how conservatives approached Mandela with the hostility they did:

1960s

National Review predicts end of white rule would result in "the collapse of civilization."

After Mandela was sentenced to life in prison, the magazine [observed](#) that "The South African courts have sentenced a batch of admitted terrorists to life in the penitentiary, and you would think the court had just finished barbecuing St. Joan, to hear the howls from the Liberal press." By March of the following year, conservative Russell Kirk argued in the pages of the magazine that democracy in South Africa "would bring anarchy and the collapse of



civilization” and the government “would be domination by witch doctors (still numerous and powerful) and reckless demagogues.”

1980s



Reagan described apartheid South Africa as a “good country.”

After President Jimmy Carter imposed sanctions on South Africa Reagan reversed course, labeling the African National Congress a terrorist organization. As he explained to CBS’ Walter Cronkite in 1981, the United States should support the South Africa regime because it is “a country that has stood by us in every war we’ve ever fought, a country that, strategically, is essential to the free world in its production of minerals.” In 1985, he told an interviewer:

“They have **eliminated** the segregation that we once had in our own country — the type of thing where hotels and restaurants and places of entertainment and so forth were segregated — that has all been eliminated.” He later walked back the comment.



Jerry Falwell urges supporters to oppose sanctions.

The late Jerry Falwell **urged** “supporters to write their congressmen and senators to tell them to oppose sanctions against the apartheid regime.” “The liberal media has for too long suppressed the other side of the story in South Africa,” he said. “It is very important that we stay close enough to South Africa so that it does not fall prey to the clutches of Communism.”

180 House members opposed free Mandela resolution.

In 1986, 145 Republicans and 45 Democrats voted down a **none-binding House resolution** urging the Government of South Africa to indicate its willingness to negotiate with the black majority by granting unconditional freedom to Nelson Mandela, recognizing the African National Congress; and establishing a framework for political talks. This included Dick Cheney, John McCain, Newt Gingrich, Dan Coats, Pat Roberts, Joe Barton.



20 Senators and 83 House members oppose sanctions.

The 1986 bill cut virtually “**all U.S. economic ties** with South Africa, requiring American companies to cease operating there within 180 days.” Lawmakers had to **override Reagan’s veto**. Sens. Thad Conrad, Orrin Hatch and Reps. Hal Rogers, Joe Barton, and Howard Coble all voted against imposing sanctions on the regime.



Jack Abramoff leads think tank dedicated to tearing down Mandela.

In 1986, the South African government helped **fund and establish** The International Freedom Foundation (IFF), a conservative think tank designed

to “reverse the apartheid regime’s pariah status in Western political circles” and “portray the ANC as a tool of Soviet communism, thus undercutting the movement’s growing international acceptance as



the government-in-waiting of a future multiracial South Africa.” The Washington branch of the IFF listed, among others, Senator Jesse Helms, James Inhofe as advisers. The lobbyist Jack Abramoff led the organization.

U.S. Senator testified in support of the apartheid government.



“In the late 1980s and early '90s, after returning from his Mormon mission to South Africa,” Sen. Jeff Flake (R-AZ) [lobbied](#) for South African interests and in 1987, “testified before the Utah State Senate in support of a resolution expressing support for the government of South Africa while racial segregation laws were enforced — largely to support U.S. mining interests in the region.”

Now, it would be unfair to say conservatism spoke univocally in condemnation of Mandela. A group of upstart Republicans in the mid-80s, led by Reps. Vin Weber, Robert Walker, and Newt Gingrich [pushed hard](#) for the United States to take a more critical stance on apartheid.

But this group was bucking the conservative mainstream at the time. “South Africa has been able to depend on conservatives in the United States . . . to treat them with benign neglect,” Weber said. That has a lot to do with the enduring conservative hostility towards rapid change. Conservatives see broad challenges, even to oppressive systems, as dangerous “revolutionary” change, whereas slower “evolutionary” tweaks in a better direction would be preferable.

Reagan’s South Africa point man, Chester A. Crocker, made this revolutionary/evolutionary binary into one of his three main principles for thinking about South Africa policy. “The circumstances in South Africa do not justify giving up on the hopes for evolutionary change (as distinguished from a revolutionary cataclysm),” he wrote in a famous Foreign Affairs essay. Many in the West, Crocker believed, held “a mistaken assumption that American and South African clocks are synchronized—that our impatience signifies the imminence of the revolution.”

It was Crocker, of course, who was mistaken, writing only about a decade before Mandela was freed from prison. But this skepticism about the possibility and desirability of radical change (Crocker seemed to think any dissolution of the apartheid government would necessarily be in part a violent one), together with the obvious cultural affinity that mainstream conservatives felt with Westernized Afrikaner elites, made conservatives distinctly inclined to view Mandela’s calls for political transformation with jaded eyes.

1990s

Heritage Foundation says Mandela is no “freedom fighter.” “Americans nevertheless have reasons to be skeptical of Mandela,” the foundation warned as he planned to visit the United States in 1990. “First, Nelson Mandela [is not a freedom fighter](#). He repeatedly has supported terrorism. Since Mandela’s release from prison and his subsequent refusal to renounce violence, the Marxist-dominated ANC has launched terrorism and violence against civilians, claiming several hundred lives.”



Conservative think tank links Mandela to communists. “When Mandela made his first visit to the United States in 1990, following his release from prison, the IFF placed advertisements in local papers designed to dampen public enthusiasm for Mandela,” *Newsday* reported. “One ad in the *Miami Herald* portrayed Mandela as an ally and defender of Cuba’s Fidel Castro. The city’s large Cuban community was so agitated that a ceremony to present Mandela with keys to the city was scrapped.

2000s

“[Mandela’s] vicious anti-Americanism and support for Saddam Hussein should come as no surprise, given his long-standing dedication to Communism and **praise for terrorists**. The world finally saw that his wife Winnie, rather than being a saintly freedom-fighter, was a murderous thug.”



National Review labels Mandela a “communist” for opposing the Iraq war.

This positioning of Mandela as being on the wrong side of a divide between “friends” and “enemies” — once communism, in the 2000s Saddam and terrorism — is the most important ideological lesson to learn from this history of hostility to Mandela. Conservatives have a deep tendency to judge foreign conflicts principally by the proximity of each side to the enemy du jour.

The treatment of South Africa in Jeane Kirkpatrick’s famous “**Dictatorships and Double Standards**” essay, where she argued that authoritarian anti-Communist states were more amenable to transition to democracy than revolutionary socialist governments, exemplifies this point nicely. She listed Jimmy Carter’s more confrontational South Africa policy as an example of the Carter Administration taking “at face value the claim of revolutionary groups to represent ‘popular’ aspirations and ‘progressive’ forces—regardless of the ties of these revolutionaries to the Soviet Union.”

Modern conservatives explaining the movement’s Mandela position in the past 12 hours have repeatedly employed Kirkpatrick-style to argue that conservative positions were, at the time, reasonable. “In retrospect, it’s easy to think of Mandela as the grandfatherly statesman,” Matt Lewis **writes**, “but the Soviet Union posed an existential threat; it’s not like nuclear weapons weren’t aimed at us. Such a thing has a way of focusing your priorities. In that milieu, one can understand why the U.S. would have been very cautious about anyone who had even ‘dabbled’ in Communism.” Deroy Murdock **describes** the view at the time as “Nelson Mandela was just another Fidel Castro or a Pol Pot, itching to slip from behind bars, savage his country, and surf atop the bones of his victims.”

Now, both Lewis and Murdock readily admit that this view was in hindsight mistaken. But the overemphasis on the friend/enemy distinction that blinded conservative’s to the justness of the ANC’s cause has hardly gone away.

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THINKPROGRESS

BY AVIVA SHEN  AND JUDD LEGUM 
ON DECEMBER 6, 2013 AT 10:11 AM

08. Six Things Nelson Mandela Believed That Most People Won’t Talk About



In the desire to celebrate Nelson Mandela's life — an iconic figure who triumphed over South Africa's brutal apartheid regime — it's tempting to homogenize his views into something everyone can support. This is not, however, an accurate representation of the man.

Mandela was a political activist and agitator. He did not shy away from controversy and he did not seek — or obtain — universal approval. Before and after his release from prison, he embraced an unabashedly progressive and provocative platform. As one commentator put it shortly after the announcement of

the freedom fighter's death, "Mandela will never, ever be your minstrel. Over the next few days you will try so, so hard to make him something he was not, and you will fail. You will try to smooth him, to sandblast him, to take away his Malcolm X. You will try to hide his anger from view."

As the world remembers Mandela, here are some of the things he believed that many will gloss over.

1

Mandela blasted the Iraq War and American imperialism. Mandela **called Bush** "a president who has no foresight, who cannot think properly," and accused him of "wanting to plunge the world into a holocaust" by going to war in Iraq. "All that (Mr. Bush) wants is Iraqi oil," he said. Mandela even speculated that then-Secretary-General Kofi Annan was being undermined in the process because he was black. "They never did that when secretary-generals were white," he said. He saw the Iraq War as a greater problem of American imperialism around the world. "If there is a country that has committed unspeakable atrocities in the world, it is the United States of America. They don't care," he said.

2

Mandela called freedom from poverty a "fundamental human right." Mandela considered poverty one of the greatest evils in the world, and spoke out against inequality everywhere. "Massive poverty and obscene inequality are such terrible scourges of our times — times in which the world boasts breathtaking advances in science, technology, industry and wealth accumulation — that they have to rank alongside slavery and apartheid as social evils," he **said**. He considered ending poverty a basic human duty: "Overcoming poverty is not a gesture of charity. It is an act of justice. It is the protection of a fundamental human right, the right to dignity and a decent life," he said. "While poverty persists, there is no true freedom."

3

Mandela criticized the "War on Terror" and the labeling of individuals as terrorists, even Osama Bin Laden, without due process. On the U.S. terrorist watch list until 2008 himself, Mandela was an outspoken critic of President George W. Bush's war on terror. He warned against rushing to label terrorists without due process. While calling for Osama bin Laden to be brought to justice, Mandela said, "The labeling of Osama bin Laden as the terrorist responsible for those acts before he had been tried and convicted could also be seen as undermining some of the basic tenets of the rule of law."

4

Mandela called out racism in America. On a trip to New York City in 1990, Mandela made a point of visiting Harlem and **praising African Americans' struggles** against "the injustices of racist discrimination and economic equality." He reminded a larger crowd at Yankee Stadium that racism was not exclusively a South African phenomenon. "As we enter the last decade of the 20th century, it is intolerable, unacceptable, that the cancer of racism is still eating away at the fabric of societies in different parts of our planet," he said. "All of us, black and white, should spare no effort in our struggle against all forms and manifestations of racism, wherever and whenever it rears its ugly head."

5 Mandela embraced some of America's biggest political enemies. Mandela incited shock and anger in **many American communities** for refusing to denounce Cuban dictator Fidel Castro or Libyan Colonel Muammar Gaddafi, who had lent their support to Mandela against South African apartheid. "One of the mistakes the Western world makes is to think that their enemies should be our enemies," he **explained** to an American TV audience. "We have our own struggle." He added that those leaders "are placing resources at our disposal to win the struggle." He also **called** the controversial Palestinian Liberation Organization leader Yasser Arafat "a comrade in arms."

6 Mandela was a die-hard supporter of labor unions. Mandela **visited** the Detroit auto workers union when touring the U.S., immediately claiming kinship with them. "Sisters and brothers, friends and comrades, the man who is speaking is not a stranger here," he said. "The man who is speaking is a member of the UAW. I am your flesh and blood."

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Rue89

"AMANDLA"

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09. Dix choses que je retiens de Nelson Mandela

Le président sud-africain Jacob Zuma a annoncé ce jeudi soir la mort de Nelson Mandela



Nelson Mandela boxeur, au début des années 50 à Johannesburg, en Afrique du Sud (DR)

On avait de lui quelques vieilles photos noir et blanc. En boxeur, en jeune avocat au costume croisé impeccable, une raie au milieu du crâne, à Johannesburg, ou encore en rebelle clandestin défiant le pouvoir blanc.

Puis, plus rien, 27 ans d'isolement au bagne de Robben Island, au large du Cap, un quart de siècle au cours duquel Nelson Mandela, l'homme invisible, dont la presse sud-africaine n'avait même pas le droit de publier la photo, est devenu un symbole, mieux, un mythe. Non seulement dans son propre pays, mais dans le monde entier.

J'ai vécu quatre ans en Afrique du Sud, de 1976 à 1980, en plein apartheid, et j'ai vu les yeux des jeunes Noirs briller en prononçant le nom de cet homme qui était déjà en prison à leur naissance. Lorsque le mythe est sorti de prison, le 11 février 1990, le monde entier l'a vu marcher fièrement vers la liberté, le poing levé. Et a eu peur d'être déçu.



LE JOURNAL D'ANTENNE 2, LE 11 FÉVRIER 1990

<http://playerv2.ina.fr/economie-et-societe/justice-et-faits-divers/video/CAB90006718/liberation-mandela.fr.html>

L'homme s'est révélé à la hauteur du mythe. Il a su s'élever au-dessus de la vengeance, de l'intérêt partisan ou immédiat, pour sauver un pays qui s'enfonçait dans la guerre civile. Et il a réussi, même si l'Afrique du Sud post-apartheid n'a pas encore surmonté ses immenses problèmes. De cet homme à la vie accomplie, qui occupe assurément une place à part dans l'histoire, je retiendrais dix éléments, non exhaustifs...

1

De sang royal

Nelson Mandela est de sang royal. Et il aurait pu perpétuer la tradition en devenant, comme son père, conseiller du roi des **Thembu**, un peuple installé au Transkei, dans l'est de la province du Cap.

Son prénom à la naissance en 1918 était Rolihlahla, ce qui signifie au sens figuré fauteur de troubles... C'est à l'école qu'on lui attribua le prénom Nelson qui restera le plus utilisé.



Le jeune Rolihlahla en tenue traditionnelle du Transkei (Archives SABC)

Mais il accéda à l'éducation par le biais des missions protestantes, et sa famille lui permit d'aller à l'université noire de Fort Hare, la première institution d'enseignement supérieur destinée aux Noirs en Afrique du Sud, s'éloignant définitivement de l'ordre traditionnel de la campagne.

C'est à Fort Hare, vivier d'une nouvelle génération de nationalistes noirs, qu'il rencontra **Oliver Tambo**, son ami pour toujours, et qui dirigea le Congrès national africain (ANC) en exil quand Mandela était en prison.

Dans leur vision rétrograde de l'Afrique, les autorités sud-africaines ont tenté de séduire Mandela en lui faisant miroiter son royaume perdu.

Roi chez lui plutôt que roi des Sud-Africains

Alors qu'il était condamné à la prison à vie, le pouvoir blanc lui a proposé, à plusieurs reprises, de le libérer à condition qu'il renonce à son action politique, qu'il accepte de s'installer au Transkei, devenu un bantoustan, territoire semi-autonome détaché de l'Afrique du Sud.

Et on lui promettait de l'installer à la tête des Thembu pour que, à défaut d'être le roi des Sud-Africains, il soit roi chez lui, dans son village... Inutile de dire que Mandela a, à chaque fois, refusé cette offre indigne, et n'est sorti de prison qu'à ses propres termes, libre et conquérant.

Mais c'est néanmoins dans les collines du Transkei que Nelson Mandela a choisi de se retirer. C'est à Qunu (la **langue Xhosa** se prononce avec un clic, ce qui donne un impossible Qxounou en faisant claquer la langue), un petit village rural à l'est du pays, qu'il vivait depuis sa dernière apparition publique, à la Coupe du monde de football de 2010.

2

Jeune rebelle

Dans l'immédiat après-guerre en Afrique du Sud, le **Parti national** remporte les élections (blanches) avec un programme qui tient en un mot : apartheid.

Nelson Mandela fait partie d'une nouvelle génération de Noirs, éduqués, urbanisés, qui décident de dire non.

Le tout nouvel avocat, monté à Johannesburg, la plus grande ville du pays, capitale de l'or et des affaires, doublée de sa ville satellite noire Soweto, rejoint la Ligue de la jeunesse de l'ANC, le déjà vieux mouvement nationaliste fondé en 1912 par des pasteurs modérés.

Née en 1944, l'ANC Youth League (**ANCYL**) transformera le mouvement réformiste en formation de combat, d'abord pacifique et non violent à la Gandhi, puis, sous les coups de la répression, en parti clandestin doublé d'une branche militaire.

Nelson Mandela, **Walter Sisulu**, Oliver Tambo, **Govan Mbeki**... Une poignée d'hommes conduira cette marche inexorable vers la liberté. Elle le paiera au prix fort.



Nelson Mandela se présente au tribunal en 1956 à Johannesburg (DR)

Les années 50 ont révélé la personnalité de Mandela. Ce fut une décennie choc pour l'Afrique du Sud : les premières lois d'apartheid, la campagne de défi de l'ANC, l'alliance des congrès (l'ANC noire, le Congrès démocrate blanc, le Congrès indien, héritier de Gandhi, et le Congrès métis), et enfin la Charte de la liberté, adoptée en 1955, programme politique de changement radical du pays.

Dès les années 50, avant même le **massacre de Sharpeville** de 1960 qui précipita l'interdiction de l'ANC et son passage à la lutte armée, le mouvement avait préparé ses arrières.

Ce fut le plan M, M pour Mandela...

La confrontation était devenue inévitable. Nationalisme afrikaner contre nationalisme noir : cela ne pouvait se résoudre que par la force, avec un pouvoir afrikaner déterminé à instaurer dans ce cône sud de l'Afrique, allié aux colonies portugaises d'Angola et du Mozambique et au réduit blanc de Rhodésie (aujourd'hui le Zimbabwe), un bastion anticommuniste et résolument blanc.

Un groupe d'hommes représentait un obstacle sur ce chemin, avec à sa tête Nelson Mandela.

Il sera neutralisé en 1963, après une longue traque qui s'achèvera dans une ferme isolée de Rivonia, près de Johannesburg.

Les principaux dirigeants furent condamnés à la prison à vie et envoyés dans l'île dont ne s'évade pas, **Robben Island**, au large du Cap.

Le fourgon qui emmène Nelson Mandela et ses camarades après leur condamnation en 1964 (DR)

Pour les dirigeants blancs, cela devait être la fin de l'histoire.



3 Communiste ?

C'était une accusation du pouvoir blanc, une rumeur récurrente dans les milieux nationalistes, démentie par Nelson Mandela lui-même. Un historien britannique, Stephen Ellis, vient toutefois de publier un document trouvé dans des archives du Parti communiste sud-africain (SACP), et qui prouverait que Nelson Mandela a bien appartenu clandestinement à cette formation.

Dans les années 50 et 60, l'ANC, le mouvement de Mandela, a conclu une alliance avec le SACP, qui était alors un parti largement composé de Blancs. Par la suite, il a été très difficile de savoir quels leaders de l'ANC étaient également membres du Parti communiste.

Aujourd'hui encore, le SACP est toujours allié à l'ANC, ainsi qu'à la centrale syndicale **COSATU**, au sein d'un front qui soutient l'action gouvernementale.



Meeting du Parti communiste sud-africain en 1996 (Themba Hadebe/AP/SIPA)

Selon le document révélé par Stephen Ellis, datant de 1982, Nelson Mandela a rejoint clandestinement le Parti communiste sud-africain, et a même occupé des positions de responsabilité jusqu'à son arrestation et sa condamnation à la prison à vie.

Mais ce qu'ajoute Ellis, c'est que la principale motivation de Nelson Mandela n'était pas idéologique, mais pragmatique. Il y voyait un moyen d'entrer en contact avec les pays du bloc soviétique, les seuls susceptibles d'aider la lutte armée dans laquelle s'est engagée l'ANC après son passage dans la clandestinité au début des années 60.



Joe Slovo (Wikipédia)

Si c'était le but, ça a bien marché puisque l'URSS et ses alliés ont aidé l'ANC pendant ses années d'exil et de lutte. Le parti communiste sud-africain était dirigé à l'époque par Joe Slovo, un blanc d'origine lituanienne, que Le Figaro avait accusé, en pleine guerre froide, d'être un colonel du KGB.

J'avais rencontré **Joe Slovo** au début des années 80 à Lusaka (Zambie), et il en riait encore : Depuis le temps qu'on dit que je suis colonel du KGB, j'aurais pu avoir une promotion, on dirait que je suis coincé dans ce grade de colonel.

Par la suite, Joe Slovo, dont la femme, **Ruth First**, fut tuée dans un attentat au colis piégé au Mozambique en 1982, a joué un rôle-clé dans les négociations qui ont mis fin à l'apartheid et permis l'élection de Nelson Mandela à la présidence. Il fit partie du premier gouvernement de l'Afrique du Sud post-apartheid jusqu'à sa mort en 1995.

L'ironie de cette révélation tardive sur les motivations non idéologiques du ralliement de Mandela au SACP rejoignent les critiques de l'extrême-gauche sud-africaine, qui **reproche à l'ancien président** d'avoir permis l'instauration d'une démocratie bourgeoise en Afrique du Sud, et d'avoir sauvé le système capitaliste.

4 A l'université de Robben Island

Les militants anti-apartheid qui étaient condamnés à une peine de prison à Robben Island disaient qu'ils allaient étudier outremer, comme quand on part en Angleterre ou en Amérique...

Robben Island a été une grande école pour beaucoup d'entre eux, comme Jacob Zuma, l'actuel président sud-africain, qui n'a reçu aucune éducation formelle et dit avoir tout appris pendant ses dix années passées sur l'île.

L'influence des dirigeants historiques de l'ANC était telle que la direction de la prison finit par séparer le noyau dur des condamnés à perpét', dont Mandela, de deux autres qui étaient appelés à être libérés un jour, pour éviter une trop grande contamination.

On a su après que les prisonniers avaient trouvé le moyen de s'échanger des messages, de recevoir des nouvelles de l'extérieur, et, miracle, que Nelson Mandela était même devenu ami avec l'un de ses gardes, James Gregory, qu'il avait converti à ses vues à force de discuter...



Photo exceptionnelle de Nelson Mandela et de Walter Sisulu au bain de Robben Island (Anonyme)

J'ai eu l'incroyable privilège de participer à l'unique voyage de presse organisé en 1977 par le gouvernement sud-africain à Robben Island, alors que j'étais journaliste à l'AFP à Johannesburg.

Le but des autorités était de contrer un rapport de l'ONU faisant état de mauvais traitements contre les prisonniers, mais nos règles étaient strictes : interdiction de parler aux prisonniers, et soumettre les articles à la censure avant publication.

Nous avons ainsi pu déambuler dans cette prison fraîchement ripolinée pour notre arrivée, voir jardiner Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Herman Toivo Ja Toivo (le fondateur de l'Organisation du peuple du sud-ouest africain, la **SWAPO**, de Namibie), et les autres membres du noyau dur. Mais sans leur parler.

Nous avons pu voir la petite cellule de Nelson Mandela, avec, sur un tabouret près de son lit, la photo de sa femme Winnie, en tenue africaine traditionnelle faite de perles.

La prison à vie dure toute la vie

Dans la cellule de Govan Mbeki, le père du futur président Thabo Mbeki, je m'étonnais à voix haute de voir la Bible sur sa table de nuit, sans avoir réalisé qu'il était en train de nettoyer ses vitres de l'extérieur.

Il m'interpella en riant : Ça vous étonne ?.

Je lui répondis oui en le saluant. De retour au Cap, je fus accusé d'avoir violé les règles de la visite...

Une fois revenus au Cap, nous eûmes droit à une conférence de presse du ministre de la Justice d'alors, Jimmy Kruger, qui, à la question d'une éventuelle libération de Nelson Mandela, répondit avec arrogance : En Afrique du Sud, la prison à vie dure toute la vie.

C'était en 1977. L'année de la mort de **Steve Biko**, le leader étudiant noir tabassé par des policiers, mais dont Jimmy Kruger avait d'abord affirmé qu'il s'était cogné la tête contre un mur de désespoir, faisant rire tout le parlement blanc.

Personne ne pouvait alors imaginer que le prisonnier de Robben Island serait un jour président d'une Afrique du Sud non raciale et démocratique.

5 Le réconciliateur

Dans sa plaidoirie à son propre procès, un texte magnifique et exemplaire, Nelson Mandela a déclaré qu'il luttait pour une Afrique du Sud non raciale, et qu'il était prêt à mourir pour cet idéal.

Vingt-sept ans plus tard, allait-il rester fidèle à cet idéal ? La prison n'aurait-elle pas créé un désir de vengeance, à la mesure de l'oppression subie par la majorité noire d'Afrique du Sud en trois siècles de colonialisme et d'apartheid ?

Dès son discours à la foule réunie au Cap pour saluer sa libération, Nelson Mandela a montré qu'il n'avait pas changé, et que c'est un homme d'Etat, conscient de son rôle historique à un moment charnière, qui sortait de l'ombre.

Il l'a montré tout au long de la période de transition et lors de son unique mandat à la tête du pays, tentant de surmonter les blessures béantes de décennies du pire système de discrimination raciale institutionnalisée que l'homme ait jamais imaginé.



Nelson Mandela remet la coupe du monde au capitaine des Springboks en 1995 (Courrier international)

Rugby, sport blanc, foot, sport noir.

Clint Eastwood a immortalisé l'un de ces gestes avec son biopic *Invictus*, consacré à la victoire de l'Afrique du Sud à la Coupe du monde en 1995.

A l'époque de l'apartheid, dont il faut rappeler qu'il interdisait toute activité multiraciale, le rugby était le sport blanc par excellence, et le foot le sport noir.

Comme le montre le film, s'engager comme il l'a fait auprès de l'équipe des Springboks était un moyen de faire passer un message de réconciliation aux Blancs. Et la victoire est venue couronner un geste hautement symbolique.

Nelson Mandela a eu l'habileté, l'intuition et aussi le bon sens politique de jouer sur la fibre sportive de tous les Sud-Africains, quelle que soit la couleur de leur peau, pour les unir autour de l'éphémère nation arc-en-ciel.

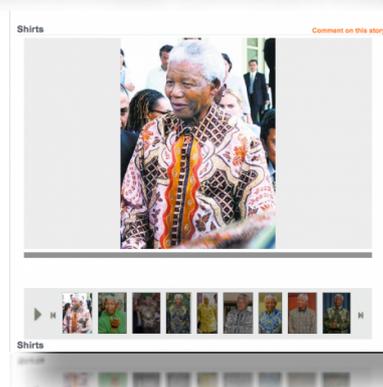


BANDE ANNONCE, INVICTUS PAR CLINT EASTWOOD

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PEO6-fe9qPA>

6 Des chemises classes

Nelson Mandela le trend setter, le faiseur de mode ! C'est au retour d'un voyage en Indonésie en 1994 que Nelson Mandela a demandé au styliste sud-africain Yusuf Surtee (dont on retrouvera par la suite le nom dans un scandale politico-financier) de lui dessiner les chemises amples et colorées qu'il porte presque tout le temps, ne sacrifiant qu'exceptionnellement au costume-cravate. Un style est né.



Diaporama des chemises de Nelson Mandela sur un site sud-africain (lol News)

Le protocole de Sa Majesté britannique n'en revient toujours pas : même à Buckingham Palace, on a pu voir le dirigeant sud-africain porter une magnifique chemise noire en soie et satin, alors que tous les convives étaient en pingouin, nœud papillon et smoking.

Mgr. Desmond Tutu, autre prix Nobel de la paix sud-africain et farouche militant anti-apartheid, avait à l'époque critiqué le style vestimentaire de Nelson Mandela.

Réponse de l'intéressé : C'est étonnant, venant d'un homme qui porte des robes...

7 De piètres héritiers

Nelson Mandela a eu l'intelligence de ne faire qu'un seul mandat à la tête de l'Afrique du Sud, estimant qu'il avait accompli sa mission en permettant une transition sans bain de sang, un début de réconciliation, et en mettant sur pied des institutions démocratiques.

Cette décision exemplaire, antithèse de l'acharnement à rester au pouvoir d'un Robert Mugabe dans le Zimbabwe voisin, ou de trop de despotes africains dans l'Histoire, était doublée de l'assurance d'avoir un successeur digne de ce nom.



Thabo Mbeki (à g.) et Jacob Zuma (à dr.), deuxième et troisième présidents de l'Afrique du Sud post-apartheid, en 2007 (Jerome Delay/AP/SIPA)

Thabo Mbeki avait tout pour lui. Fils de Govan Mbeki, l'un des compagnons de prison de Nelson Mandela, éduqué à l'étranger, l'un des dirigeants de l'ANC en exil pendant la traversée du désert, il avait le pedigree, la formation, l'expérience...

Mais Thabo, comme l'appellent les Sud-Africains, n'a pas été à la hauteur. Son incroyable obsession à nier le lien entre le VIH et le sida, et donc à refuser le recours aux thérapies qui ont sauvé tant de vies depuis leur découverte, a permis à l'épidémie de faire des ravages. Et il a laissé se développer une bourgeoisie noire sans entamer l'océan de pauvreté laissé en héritage par le système de l'apartheid.

Zuma a déclaré avoir pris une douche pour se protéger du sida, le caricaturiste Zapiro le représente toujours avec un pommeau de douche

Mbeki a été démis par **son rival Jacob Zuma** dans un coup de force interne à l'ANC en 2008, mais celui-ci soulève plein d'autres questions aux yeux de nombreux Sud-Africains :



- 1 éthiques après son implication restée sans suite dans une affaire de corruption liée à des achats d'armes ;
- 2 éthiques encore après son procès et sa relaxe pour viol d'une jeune fille séropositive ;
- 3 ou encore sur sa polygamie assumée, et ses dépenses fastueuses dans son kraal natal, le village du Zoulouland où il a son fief.

Nelson Mandela a eu le mérite, mais peut-être aussi le tort regrettent certains Sud-Africains, de ne plus se mêler des affaires de l'ANC ou de l'Etat après avoir passé le relais à Thabo Mbeki en 1999. Mbeki et Zuma ont préservé l'héritage de Mandela, des institutions démocratiques et l'absence de vengeance vis-à-vis des Blancs.

Mais ils n'ont pas relevé les autres défis post-apartheid auxquels Mandela n'avait pas pu s'attaquer, et en premier lieu celui de la crise sociale qui a récemment explosé dans la **tuerie de la mine de Marikana** en août 2012.

8 Winnie l'indomptable



Nelson et Winnie Mandela après la libération du leader de l'ANC (Capture d'écran)

L'histoire retiendra l'image de ce couple qui marche fièrement, le poing levé, à la sortie de prison de Nelson Mandela, cette belle journée du 11 février 1990. Nelson et Winnie.

Ça ne durera pas, et le président devra se séparer de son épouse deux ans plus tard, alors que Winnie est impliquée dans un scandale à propos de la mort d'un jeune militant anti-apartheid maltraité par les partisans de la Première dame avant l'heure.

La belle Winnie a été la deuxième femme de Nelson, et un sacré caractère. Je l'ai vue tenir tête à des policiers surarmés en juin 1976 à Soweto, alors que des dizaines de jeunes écoliers venaient d'être fauchés par les balles des forces de répression. Face à un officier afrikaner, cette femme, qui venait de créer le Black Parents Committee pendant la nuit, se dressait et lui disait fièrement : Vous savez qui je suis ? Je suis la femme de Nelson Mandela.

A l'époque, Nelson Mandela croupissait en prison, et le pouvoir blanc était à son apogée. Winnie était une combattante, et si le nom de Mandela a pris la force d'un tel symbole pendant qu'il était en prison, il lui doit beaucoup.

Mais elle était aussi incontrôlable, farouchement indépendante et incapable de se plier à la discipline d'un parti. Aujourd'hui encore, elle reste un électron libre et radicalisé au sein de l'ANC, populaire parce que rebelle. Populaire aussi parce qu'elle a été la femme de Nelson Mandela, la mère de ses deux filles, Zinzi et Zenani.

9 Graça, femme de deux présidents



Nelson Mandela avec sa femme, Graça, lors de la coupe du monde de football en 2010 (Luca Bruno/AP/SIPA)

Le jour de ses 80 ans, Nelson Mandela se remarie pour la troisième fois. Graça, la femme qui l'accompagnera dans ses années de vieillesse jusqu'à la mort, devient ainsi un cas exceptionnel dans l'histoire : elle aura été l'épouse de deux chefs d'Etat.

Graça a en effet été la femme de **Samora Machel**, le leader du Front de libération du Mozambique (Frelimo) puis président du Mozambique, l'ancienne colonie portugaise voisine de l'Afrique du Sud. Samora Machel est mort en 1986 dans un accident d'avion sur le sol sud-africain, un crash encore entouré de zones d'ombre jamais élucidées.

Le Frelimo et l'ANC étaient compagnons d'armes, deux mouvements de libération engagés dans la lutte armée contre des pouvoirs blancs. Par la suite, le Mozambique a payé au prix fort son soutien à la lutte de l'ANC contre Pretoria, une déstabilisation meurtrière, le soutien sud-africain à une guérilla impitoyable.

Graça, veuve de Samora Machel, s'est rapprochée de Nelson Mandela pendant les années de solitude qui ont suivi le départ de Winnie.

Mais leur mariage ne fut pas simple. Il fallut négocier avec le clan Machel au Mozambique, et c'est le chef traditionnel du clan Mandela au Transkei qui se chargea de la transaction. On a beau être entre anciens combattants de la liberté, il est des traditions qui perdurent.

10 Hugh Masekela



Le musicien sud-africain Hugh Masekela lors d'un concert à Londres pour ses 70 ans (Richard Gardner/Rex Features 1061512b via SIPA)

Le nom de Hugh Masekela est irrémédiablement associé à celui de Nelson Mandela. Ce grand musicien sud-africain appartient à cette génération d'artistes noirs qui a émergé dans les années 50, décennie de bouillonnement culturel et politique.

Miriam Makeba, Todd Matshikiza, Dollar Brand (devenu Abdullah Ibrahim), font partie de ce groupe qui faisait

swinguer Soweto, tandis que Mandela et la Youth League accélèrent de leur côté le tempo politique et radicalisent l'ANC.

Plus tard, en exil tandis que Mandela croupissait encore à Robben Island mais que sa libération était demandée par le monde entier, Hugh Masekela composa une chanson mobilisatrice, à un moment où les chances de revoir un jour le leader de l'ANC libre étaient encore faibles.

Intitulée Bring back Nelson Mandela (Ramenez-nous Nelson Mandela), la chanson joyeuse et entraînante de Hugh Masekela, trompettiste à la Miles Davis, fit danser toute l'Afrique.

Avec un refrain clair et net :

Bring back Nelson Mandela, bring him back home to Soweto ;
I want to see him walking down the streets of South Africa ;
I want to see him hand in hand with Winnie Mandela.
(Ramenez-nous Nelson Mandela, ramenez-le chez lui à Soweto ;
Je veux le voir marcher le long des rues d'Afrique du Sud ;
Je veux le voir la main dans la main avec Winnie Mandela.)

HUGH MASEKELA, BRING BACK NELSON MANDELA, 1987

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=opUEIMG1BQ>



Sur Rue89 :

Mandela-Mugabe, deux destins opposés en Afrique australe

Invictus : Eastwood refait le match gagné par Mandela

Afrique du Sud : Marikana ou l'échec de la bourgeoisie noire

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The New York Times

By [LYDIA POLGREEN](#) and [MARCUS MABRY](#)

Published: December 7, 2013 119 Comments

10. In Nation Remade by Mandela, Social Equality Remains Elusive

Many black South Africans have made gains, but poverty persists in Soweto and elsewhere.



Tomas Munita for The New York Times

BLOEMFONTEIN, South Africa — When Freddy Kenny started his business selling vegetables out of a battered pickup truck in the 1970s, a siren used to sound over this city, his hometown, every night at 9, signaling to him and every other black person that they must leave the city limits immediately or face arrest.

These days, the only thing looming is a 20-foot statue of Nelson Mandela, the man who led South Africa out of apartheid and into an era of democracy, his fist raised in a black power salute. Mr. Kenny, now a supermarket magnate, donated the bronze likeness of Mr. Mandela, South Africa's first black president, and had it erected atop the city's highest point, Naval Hill.

"Madiba always watched over us when he lived," he said Saturday, referring to Mr. Mandela by his clan name. "Now he will watch over us for eternity."

Mr. Kenny's new life, with the perks of privilege of his white counterparts, is a testament to the commitment Mr. Mandela, who died Thursday and whose funeral is next Sunday, placed on making racial reconciliation the centerpiece of his presidency.

He led a party that had fought an armed insurgency against the apartheid government, yet when he emerged from prison he preached forgiveness and harmony. Stripped of bitterness, Mr. Mandela negotiated a peaceful end to white rule, giving birth to the rainbow nation.

But racial equality at the ballot box has proved much easier to achieve than social and economic equality. While Mr. Kenny, a regular at the bar of the Schoeman Park Golf Club, a formerly all-white watering hole for the city's elite, has caught up with and surpassed many white South Africans, he is an exception to a rule of lopsided opportunity and advancement that remains one of the most daunting challenges facing the nation today.

Since the end of apartheid, the government has built well over two million homes, brought electricity to millions of households and vastly increased the number of poor people with access to potable water. The average annual incomes of black-led households almost tripled from 2001 to 2011, **according to census figures** released late last year, and a growing percentage of the adult black population has gone to high school, with an increasing sliver going to college.

But black South Africans are still very far behind whites, and by some measures falling further back. In 2001, white-led households typically earned close to \$17,000 more than their black counterparts, at current exchange rates. By 2011, that disparity had grown to nearly \$30,000. And while the nation has made headway in reducing the number of black people with no education or only a few years of primary school, very few whites have that barrier to overcome; to the contrary, they have advanced to college and beyond at higher rates since apartheid ended.

The nation remains deeply divided in social spheres as well. According to the SA Reconciliation Barometer, a survey of racial and social attitudes, less than 40 percent of South Africans socialize with people of another race. Just 22 percent of white South Africans and a fifth of black South Africans live in racially integrated neighborhoods. Schools remain heavily segregated, too: Only 11 percent of white children go to integrated schools, and just 15 percent of black children do.

During his presidency, Mr. Mandela helped keep decades of oppression and imbalances from boiling over. He encouraged blacks to be patient about acquiring the material goods and services that even lower-class whites took for granted. He asked whites to have faith in multiracial democracy and not flee the country.

But through the long years of his declining health, many asked what would become of South Africa's relative racial comity once he was gone.

Both through his words and his actions, Mr. Mandela gave South Africans "something to live up to," Chanter Jacobs, 19, a white fashion student in Johannesburg, said before Mr. Mandela's death. "He's like a beacon, and you want to make him proud because he's done a lot for our country."

Without Mr. Mandela's living example, Ms. Jacobs worried that South Africans would not try as hard to live up to his ideals. She feared relations between the races could worsen, leading the economy to decline, too.

"I think something might change," she said. "I just don't know how or what."

Others were more sanguine.

"I have a 9-year-old, a 3-year-old and a 1-year-old, and I'm very happy to stay in this country," said Debbie Angus, a white property manager in the upscale Johannesburg suburb of Sandton. She credited Mr. Mandela with uniting multiracial South Africa into one people and said: "I think things are going to just carry forward like they are at the moment. I think he's laid the groundwork for future generations."

In few places is the legacy of racial separation in South Africa more bitter than in the city of Bloemfontein. In the second half of the 19th century, it was the capital of the Orange Free State, an independent Afrikaner republic that was in some ways a prototype of what would become apartheid. It was the city where a group of Afrikaner elites gathered at the all-white Ramblers Hall in 1914 to form the National Party, which would win power in 1948 and entrench racial separation and white supremacy as official government policy.

But it is also a city with a rich history of black activism. It was in a church school here that a group of black community leaders met in 1912 to form the precursor to the African National Congress.

In a **speech delivered on a visit to the city in 1997** while he was president, Mr. Mandela hailed Bloemfontein as a symbol of the country's extraordinary transformation.

"Here the forces and the peoples who make us what we are today interacted and clashed," he said. He continued: "Bloemfontein has come full circle. Once an outpost of an invading colonial force and then the capital of a republic that excluded the majority, today it is the seat of a democratically elected nonracial provincial government."

Yet deep fissures remain, and long-held prejudices are not easily papered over. **A crude video made by residents of an all-white dorm** at the University of the Free State in Bloemfontein in 2008 showed the students berating and humiliating black domestic workers in their dorm, forcing them to eat stew into which one student appeared to have urinated. The students in the video, which was apparently made to protest the planned integration of the residence hall, were expelled and faced criminal charges.

"Racism is never very far below the surface in Bloemfontein," said David Muthavhatsindi, a retired insurance broker who now runs a computer training school. "It is always with us, waiting to pounce." But even once all-white institutions, like the wood-paneled Ramblers Hall, are eager for black members as membership has declined and a new black elite has arisen.

"It isn't like the old days," Johan Van Standen, the club's manager, said recently as he restocked the beer fridges in a bar lined with dusty, sepia-toned photographs of rugby teams from decades long past. "We need everyone to survive. This is a place for anyone in the community to come together."

Men like Mr. Kenny, with their wealth and status, live easily in a multiracial world. But for most black South Africans, race remains a formidable obstacle. Like many young, poor blacks, Mamello Tlakeli, 27, said she had no meaningful contact with white people.

In her last job, as a waitress at a chain seafood restaurant, she said racial prejudice from whites was a constant irritant. Afrikaans-speaking customers would sometimes demand that she speak Afrikaans, even when they could clearly speak English, she said. Most young black South Africans do not speak the language, though many of their parents were forced to learn it in school, a policy that became a rallying point in the anti-apartheid movement.

"Even if they would order in Afrikaans," she said.

During staff meals, white and black employees would sit separately, not by force but by habit.

"It was always very uncomfortable with white colleagues," she said.

Recently unemployed and working as a volunteer at a charity in the hope of getting some professional experience, Ms. Tlakeli said white people in South Africa continued to prosper as they did before apartheid, but blacks remained in the rear.

“There is a huge gap between black and white,” she said. “The rainbow nation is a dream, not a reality.”

Lydia Polgreen reported from Bloemfontein, and Marcus Mabry from Johannesburg. Mukelwa Hlatshwayo contributed reporting from Bloemfontein.

A version of this article appears in print on December 8, 2013, on page A1 of the New York edition with the headline: In Nation Remade by Mandela, Social Equality Remains Elusive.

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theguardian

Desmond Tutu an archbishop emeritus and human rights activist
theguardian.com, Friday 6 December 2013



11. Desmond Tutu on Nelson Mandela: 'Prison became a crucible'

The most fitting memorial to Nelson Mandela is to make a success of what he helped to establish, writes the archbishop and human rights activist

• All the latest reaction to Nelson Mandela's death



[Link to video: Desmond Tutu leads prayer in memory of Nelson Mandela](#)

For 27 years, I knew Nelson Mandela by reputation only. I had seen him once, in the early 1950s, when he came to my teacher-training college to judge a debating contest. The next time I saw him was in 1990.

When he came out of prison, many people feared he would turn out to have feet of clay. The idea that he might live up to his reputation seemed too good to be true. A whisper went around that some in the ANC said he was a lot more useful in jail than outside.

When he did come out, the most extraordinary thing happened. Even though many in the white community in South Africa were still dismissing him as a terrorist, he tried to understand their position. His gestures communicated more eloquently than words. For example, he invited his white

jailer as a VIP guest to his inauguration as president, and he invited the prosecutor in the Rivonia trial to lunch.

What incredible acts of magnanimity these were. His prosecutor had been quite zealous in pushing for the death penalty. Mandela also invited the widows of the Afrikaner political leaders to come to the president's residence. Betsie Verwoerd, whose husband, HF Verwoerd, was assassinated in 1966, was unable to come because she was unwell. She lived in Oranje, where Afrikaners congregated to live, exclusively. And Mandela dropped everything and went to have tea with her, there, in that place.

He had an incredible empathy. During the negotiations that led up to the first free elections, the concessions he was willing to make were amazing. Chief Buthelezi wanted this, that and the other, and at every single point Madiba would say: yes, that's OK. He was upset that many in the ANC said Inkatha was not a genuine liberation movement. He even said that he was ready to promise Buthelezi a senior cabinet position, which was not something he had discussed with his colleagues. He did this to ensure that the country did not descend into a bloodbath.

He said of the Afrikaners: you can very well understand how they must be feeling. He reached out to them using the symbol of the South African rugby team, the springbok, which was excoriated by many black people as a symbol of Afrikaner power.

Rugby was the white man's sport, especially for Afrikaners, and Mandela's master stroke at the World Cup final was when he strode on to the turf wearing his Springbok jersey. Almost any other political leader would have seemed gauche, but he carried it off with aplomb. The whole arena, which was probably 99% white, mostly Afrikaner, erupted into cries of "Nelson! Nelson!" It was extraordinary. And who would have believed that in the townships they would be celebrating a rugby victory?

Of course I saw him angry. After the Boipatong massacre, in 1992, in which 42 people died, the ANC pulled out of negotiations, and he was quite livid. He claimed the intelligence services had warned [the president] FW de Klerk something untoward was going to happen, that there was collusion between the security forces and Inkatha. I don't know whether De Klerk ignored that warning. Madiba said it was clear black lives meant nothing.

Another time, he told me that when he and De Klerk were at the Nobel peace prize ceremony in Oslo, something had upset him greatly. There was a group singing Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika, regarded as the anthem of the liberation struggle, and De Klerk and his wife talked through the singing; they didn't show respect.

But his anger was never greater than his patience or forgiveness. People say, look at what he achieved in his years in government – what a waste those 27 years in prison were. I maintain his prison term was necessary because when he went to jail, he was angry. He was relatively young and had experienced a miscarriage of justice; he wasn't a statesperson, ready to be forgiving: he was commander-in-chief of the armed wing of the party, which was quite prepared to use violence.

The time in jail was quite crucial. Of course, suffering embitters some people, but it ennobles others. Prison became a crucible that burned away the dross. People could never say to him: "You talk glibly of forgiveness. You haven't suffered. What do you know?" Twenty-seven years gave him the authority to say, let us try to forgive.

One of the greatest traumas of his life is what happened between him and Winnie. He really loved Winnie. Soon after he came out of jail, I invited them for a Xhosa meal. And as they sat there, you can't imagine anyone more besotted. The hurt was deep. It's marvellous that he found Graça. But you feel a little sad, because Winnie went through so much, and it would have been a perfect ending to a fairytale had they lived happily ever after.

The most fitting memorial to Mandela is to make a success of what he helped to establish. He was clear that, ultimately, no one is indispensable. He was a great one for stressing that he was a loyal member of the ANC, and that no one was bigger than the movement. But, of course, we know better. Anyone, anywhere in the world, who gets to be a leader knows that here is the benchmark. And they must ask themselves: how do I measure up?

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theguardian

Zakes Mda

The Guardian, Friday 6 December 2013 13.20 GMT



12. Nelson Mandela: neither sell-out nor saint

Mandela saved my country from a bloodbath, but his focus on the symbols of reconciliation was at the expense of real economic reform in South Africa



Illustration by Matt Kenyon

Nelson Mandela was the last of a great generation of freedom fighters who guided South Africa's liberation struggle from the early days of the African National Congress Youth League in the 1940s.

South Africans have fond memories of these leaders – men and women such as Albertina and Walter Sisulu, Oliver Tambo, Anton Lembede and Govan Mbeki – particularly in today's political climate, which is characterised by greed and rampant accumulation of wealth, often through corruption.

These people demonstrated the kind of morality and selflessness that is lacking in South African political life today. That is why Mandela was loved by the majority of South Africans, black and white.

Each time he was taken ill, this outpouring of love came through clearly from radio talk-show callers and TV vox pops.

But that love is not universal in South Africa.

There are many white die-hards who still see him as a terrorist who should never have been released from prison. They are disgruntled about their loss of power and privilege, and they vent that in comments on various South African newspaper websites. At the other end of the spectrum are the black youngsters who are disillusioned with the "new" South Africa and hold Mandela personally responsible for betraying the revolution.

Two years ago, a two-day information blackout after he had been taken to hospital resulted in the **first flurry of speculation on his medical condition**. South Africans feared that he was either dying or was already dead.

But some black youths were in despair for different reasons. **Malaika wa Azania**, a 19-year-old radical from Soweto who was at that time gaining a following among youth throughout the country, posted on Facebook: "Mandela must not die yet. No no no. That would be unfair. People don't get away with crime. Neither must he ..." Her voice was loudest on social media, but she made inroads in mainstream media, writing newspaper opinion pieces on why the settlement reached between the ANC and the white apartheid government in the early 1990s was a fraud perpetrated on black people who are yet to regain their land, stolen by whites during colonial conquest.

This young woman is not a voice in the wilderness. One of the many who think like her is Andile Mngxitama, a pamphleteer who travels the country rallying youth against the establishment, which he feels continues to be anti-black. His stomping grounds are the university campuses.

Such disparate voices claim that Mandela failed black people and sold them out to white capital. His policy of reconciliation did not serve the interests of poor blacks but, instead, reinforced white supremacy, they assert.

I understand the disillusionment of these young people, although I do not share their perspective.

To me, Mandela was neither the devil they make him out to be nor the saint that most of my compatriots and the international community think he was. I see him as a skilful politician, smart enough to resist the megalomania that comes with deification. I do not think the policy of reconciliation was ill-advised; it saved the country from a bloodbath and ushered in a period of prosperity.

But therein lies the rub.

The distribution of that prosperity was very skewed.

South Africa has never been a place of equal opportunity, and that was reinforced instead of changed by Mandela's presidency. His focus on the symbols and atmospherics of reconciliation was at the expense of real economic reform. The disillusionment of young black South Africans began when he was president. So did the unbridled accumulation of wealth by the ruling party apparatchiks, accompanied by the marginalisation of all those deemed to lack "struggle credentials". While cadres of the party gained positions of power and wealth, both in the public and private sectors, the rest of the black population remained poor and unemployed.

In December 1997, I wrote to Mandela, lamenting the corruption, patronage and crony capitalism I felt was taking root. "The youth have a perception that generally our political leaders are thoroughly rotten," I wrote. "Many of our youth are despondent and have lost hope. The older ones talk of having been used as cannon fodder in the struggle, yet now they are forgotten while the leaders ride on the gravy train."

To his credit, Mandela was swift in his response. He phoned and arranged that I meet three of his cabinet ministers to discuss my concerns. The ministers didn't seem to see the seriousness of the situation, but it enhanced my respect for Mandela. He obviously was concerned, but somehow couldn't rein in his comrades' unbridled greed.

I admired Mandela as a statesman: he came out of prison after almost three decades speaking of compassion and inclusiveness. I was surprised by his tone of tolerance and reconciliation, having known him from the early 1950s when he worked with my father, **Ashby Peter Mda**; they were

founders of the ANC Youth League. Mandela was a fire-breathing revolutionary then, a far cry from the benevolent statesman he became.

Despite my admiration and those early connections, I have been very critical of some of his positions.

As a columnist on the Sunday Times during his presidency, I was scathing when his statesmanship got in the way of truth and he lamented the death of a murderous African dictator, **Sani Abacha**, calling it a loss to Africa. I was just as critical when he defended **the deputy speaker of parliament** who was alleged to have obtained a fraudulent driver's licence.

Mandela was extremely loyal to his comrades, sometimes to a fault. This led to the false perception that he condoned corruption. In fact, in his later years, as a retired statesman and an ailing man, he was a victim of that very corruption, surrounded by characters who – despite the gallant efforts of the **Nelson Mandela Foundation** to protect him – were keen to cash in on his name and even his death.

Now the statesman has taken leave of us and our problems.

He has earned his rest.

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theguardian

[Conal Urquhart](#)
[theguardian.com](#), Saturday 7 December 2013 15.26 GMT

13. Maya Angelou writes poem in honour of Nelson Mandela

Angelou's poem, *His Day is Done*, is circulated in 15 languages as a tribute to Mandela 'on behalf of the American people'



Maya Angelou, who first met Nelson Mandela when she was living in Cairo in the 1960s. Photograph: Jemal Countess/Getty Images for AWRT

The American writer **Maya Angelou** has written and recited a poem in honour of **Nelson Mandela**, whom she met in the 1960s when she lived in Cairo.

In the poem, **His Day is Done**, Angelou mourns Mandela's death, praises him as a modern-day David who slew a mighty Goliath and a Gideon, who freed the South African people.

She also marvels at his endurance of racism and imprisonment.

Angelou, best known for the novel, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, was also active in the civil rights movement, and worked with both Martin Luther King and Malcolm X. Mandela read Angelou's books while imprisoned at Robben Island and also recited her poem *Still I Rise* at his presidential inauguration in 1994.

Angelou, 85, has allowed the US state department to circulate the poem in 15 languages, as a tribute to Mandela "on behalf of the American people".



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PqQzjit7b1w&list=UU6ZhpmNnLxIOYipqh8wbM3A>

In the YouTube video, Angelou, wearing dark glasses, says Americans send their souls to South Africans "as you reflect upon your David, armed with a mere stone, facing down the mighty Goliath – your man of strength, Gideon, emerging triumphant."

She continues: "No sun outlasts its sunset, but will rise again and bring the dawn.

"Yes, Mandela's day is done. Yet we, his inheritors, will open the gates wider for reconciliation. And we will respond generously to the cries of blacks and whites, Asians, Hispanics, the poor who live piteously on the floor of our planet," she says.

"Nelson Mandela's day is done. We confess it in tearful voices. Yet we lift our own to say thank you. Thank you, our Gideon. Thank you, our David, our great, courageous man. We will not forget you.

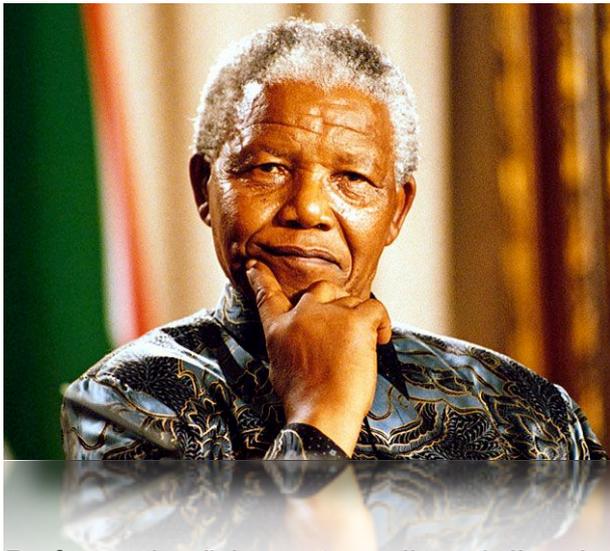
We will not dishonour you. We will remember and be glad that you lived among us, that you taught us and that you loved us all."

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14. Nelson Mandela's Epitaph, in His Own Words

Remembering Mandela with the epic 1964 speech he believed might be his last.



Nelson Mandela, 1918-2013 Alpha/Globe Photos/ZUMAPRESS.com

"My Lord, I am the First Accused." Those were **Nelson Mandela's opening words** as he stood in the dock in the Palace of Justice in Pretoria, South Africa, on the morning of April 20, 1964—nearly half a century before **his death December 5 at the age of 95**.

Mandela and **eight other defendants** had been charged with violating the Sabotage Act and the Suppression of Communism Act, accused of plotting violence against the apartheid government with the aim of overthrowing it.

By fomenting "chaos, turmoil, and disorder," the **prosecutor explained**, the accused hoped to achieve "liberation from the so-called yoke of the white man's domination." Mandela, who was already serving a five-year sentence for organizing a strike and leaving the country without a passport, assumed that they would be sent to the gallows.

With the verdict all but certain, Mandela and his codefendants decided to turn their trial into an indictment of the apartheid state. When he had been asked for his plea, **Mandela replied**, "The government should be in the dock, not me. I plead not guilty." Yet the lengthy statement he prepared to open his defense was not an attempt to prove his innocence—in fact, he readily admitted to many of the charges made against him. He instead took the opportunity to forcefully promote his cause. But he also knew that he was offering a doomed man's final words, in essence, a self-written epitaph.

Mandela took two weeks to write the speech. A white lawyer who reviewed a draft **exclaimed**, "If Mandela reads this in court they will take him straight out to the back of the courthouse and string him up." Mandela's own lawyer urged him to cut out the final paragraph, but Mandela held firm. "I felt we were likely to hang no matter what we said, so we might as well say what we truly believed," Mandela recalled in his autobiography, *Long Walk to Freedom*. The **final lines** of Mandela's **60-page**, 176-minute statement have since become its most famous:

"During my lifetime I have dedicated my life to this struggle of the African people. I have fought against white domination, and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons will live together

in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal for which I hope to live for and to see realized. But, My Lord, if it needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die."



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v8u6Ssh6uL4>

Those lines will no doubt be reprinted in many of Mandela's obituaries. (They also provide the climax of the trailer for the [new Mandela biopic](#) starring Idris Elba.)

But the [rest of his speech](#) at the [Rivonia trial](#) is worth reading. It not only provides the context behind its most quotable section but also says much about who Mandela was—and would be when he emerged from prison nearly three decades later.

Today, Mandela is remembered as a champion of reconciliation and peaceful transition to democracy. But it bears remembering that he saw limits to Gandhi-esque nonviolence, and that he [did not renounce "armed struggle"](#) until the apartheid government agreed to negotiate. His trial statement began with a lengthy discussion of why he and other leaders of the anti-apartheid African National Congress had decided to move away from their commitment to nonviolent struggle. Specifically, they had secretly organized a resistance group, [Umkhonto we Sizwe](#) (Spear of the Nation) to a launch campaign of sabotage and guerilla warfare against the state.

"Some of the things so far told to the Court are true and some are untrue. I do not however, deny that I planned sabotage. I did not plan it in a spirit of recklessness, nor because I have any love for violence. I planned it as a result of a calm and sober assessment of the political situation that had arisen after many years of tyranny, exploitation, and oppression of my people by the whites.

[...] I have already mentioned that I was one of the persons who helped to form Umkhonto. I, and the others who started the organization, did so for two reasons. Firstly, we believed that as a result of Government policy, violence by the African people had become inevitable, and that unless responsible leadership was given to canalise and control the feelings of our people, there would be outbreaks of terrorism which would produce an intensity of bitterness and hostility between the various races of the country which is not produced even by war.

Secondly, we felt that without sabotage there would be no way open to the African people to succeed in their struggle against the principle of white supremacy. All lawful modes of expressing opposition to this principle had been closed by legislation, and we were placed in a position in which we had either to accept a permanent state of inferiority, or to defy the Government. We chose to defy the Government. We first broke the law in a way which avoided any recourse to violence; when this form was legislated against, and when the

Government resorted to a show of force to crush opposition to its policies, only then did we decide to answer violence with violence.

But the violence which we chose to adopt was not terrorism. We who formed Umkhonto were all members of the African National Congress, and had behind us the ANC tradition of nonviolence and negotiation as a means of solving political disputes. We believed that South Africa belonged to all the people who lived in it, and not to one group, be it black or white. We did not want an inter-racial war, and tried to avoid it to the last minute."

Mandela's insistence that a campaign of limited armed action would not cause unnecessary casualties or devolve into civil war was optimistic. Yet the logic behind the decision to take up arms was **Jeffersonian**: Their repeated petitions answered only by repeated injury, what further options did black South Africans have?

Mandela also offered a detailed response to the charges that he and the ANC were, as the prosecutor put it, **"communistically inclined"**, which included gracefully **comparing his adversaries to Hitler**:

It is true that there has often been close cooperation between the ANC and the Communist Party. But cooperation is merely proof of a common goal—in this case the removal of white supremacy—and is not proof of a complete community of interests.

My Lord, the history of the world is full of similar examples. Perhaps the most striking illustration is to be found in the cooperation between Great Britain, the United States of America, and the Soviet Union in the fight against Hitler. Nobody but Hitler would have dared to suggest that such cooperation turned Churchill or Roosevelt into communists or communist tools, or that Britain and America were working to bring about a communist world.



In 1964, Nelson Mandela expressed his admiration for "the American Congress." In 1990 he addressed a joint session. Pamela Price/ZUMAPRESS.com

Yes, Mandela said, he had made common cause with communists to defeat apartheid, but he was not himself a communist. Technically, this wasn't entirely true: According to **recent research**, Mandela briefly joined the South African Communist Party during the early '60s to facilitate his underground organizing. But in court he made clear that he was a democratic socialist, elucidating why he did not share the communists' vision for a post-apartheid South Africa:

"But from my reading of Marxist literature and from conversations with Marxists, I have gained the impression that communists regard the parliamentary system of the work—of the West as undemocratic and reactionary. But, on the contrary, I am an admirer of such a system.

The Magna Carta, the Petition of Rights, the Bill of Rights are documents which are held in veneration by democrats throughout the world.

I have great respect for British political institutions, and for the country's system of justice. I regard the British Parliament as the most democratic institution in the world, and the independence and impartiality of its judiciary never fail to arouse my admiration.

The American Congress, that country's doctrine of separation of powers, as well as the independence of its judiciary, arouse in me similar sentiments.

I have been influenced in my thinking by both West and East. All this has led me to feel that in my search for a political formula, I should be absolutely impartial and objective. I should tie myself to no particular system of society other than that of socialism. I must leave myself free to borrow the best from West and from the East."

The anti-apartheid movement's fight, Mandela continued, was not against whites, but the poverty, violence, and indignity caused by white supremacy—"and we do not need communists or so-called 'agitators' to teach us about these things." In the paragraphs leading up to his fate-tempting conclusion, Mandela sketched out a vision of democracy in which race-based politics would become irrelevant:

[The final page of Mandela's 1964 courtroom speech](#) Mandela Centre of Memory

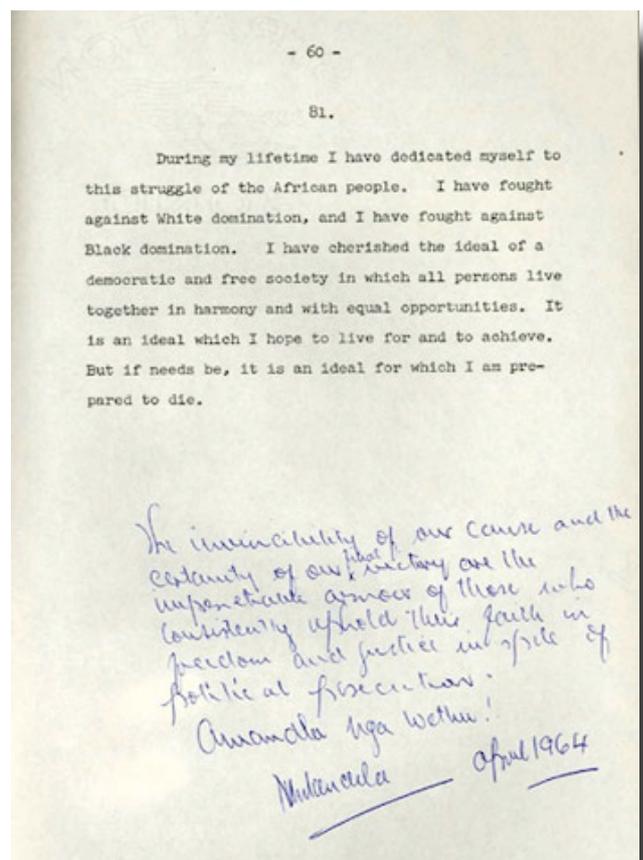
"Above all, My Lord, we want equal political rights, because without them our disabilities will be permanent. I know this sounds revolutionary to the whites in this country, because the majority of voters will be Africans. This makes the white man fear democracy.

But this fear cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the only solution which will guarantee racial harmony and freedom for all. It is not true that the enfranchisement of all will result in racial domination. Political division, based on color, is entirely artificial and, when it disappears, so will the domination of one color group by another. The ANC has spent half a century fighting against racialism. When it triumphs as it certainly must, it will not change that policy.

This then is what the ANC is fighting. Our struggle is a truly national one. It is a struggle of the African people, inspired by our own suffering and our own experience. It is a struggle for the right to live."

The speech, delivered in Mandela's characteristically deliberate style (listen to excerpts [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#)), marked the boundaries of his idealism and pragmatism, his militancy and moderation, his courage and caution. The manifesto remains one of the clearest political portraits of Mandela, whose revolutionary past seemed to fade as he became [a global icon](#), a genial grandpa who sat for photo-ops with [an endless parade](#) of celebrity well-wishers.

On June 11, 1964, Judge Quartus de Wet ruled that Mandela and seven of his codefendants were guilty. The following day, he delivered his sentence. Noting that the state had accused the defendants of high treason without formally charging them with such, de Wet decided "not to impose the supreme penalty." Instead, they would receive life imprisonment. He had spared Mandela from



martyrdom, but condemned him—and South Africa—to endure many dark years before witnessing the dream described by a man who could not have imagined he had nearly 50 more years to live.

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