

How did nelson mandela aid the downfall of apartheid

[People](#), [Nelson Mandela](#)



How did Nelson Mandela aid the downfall of Apartheid? Nelson Mandela was born in 1918 in South Africa to a Thembu chief. Thirty years later he would start one of the most famous movements of our time, the anti-apartheid movement. Apartheid was an official policy of forced segregation of the races and was implemented in 1948 by the National Party when it came to power in South Africa. Under apartheid, all black citizens were forced to carry passbooks stating all of their information. Two laws, which were at the heart of apartheid, included the Population Registration Act, which labeled everyone in South Africa by race, and the Group Areas Act, which forced racial groups to live in different places. In a nutshell it was the white run government trying to separate everything between the black South African's and the white South African's. Both laws were put into place to establish apartheid, which literally means "apartness", the separation of the races. At that time 80% of the South African population was not white and barred from voting in elections. The head of this crazy idea was Prime Minister Daniel Malan, who was head of the National Party. He took racism and oppression to new heights, but Nelson Mandela dedicated his life to bringing it back down again. This essay seeks to tell the story of how it happened. Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela was born on the 18th of July 1918, in the small village of Mvezo, Transkei, South Africa. At the time of Nelson's birth, his father was reigning Mvezo chief, named Gadla Henry Mphakanyiswa, and his wife, Nosekeni Fanny was a Methodist. His Father named him 'Rolihlaha', which means "pulling the branch of the tree", or in other words, "troublemaker". It wasn't until "Rolihlaha" began attending school that he would gain the nickname Nelson, given to him by his English teacher. Nelson's surname

comes from his grandfather, Mandela, the 'illegitimate' son of the King of the Thembu tribe. Mandela was born to a woman from another tribe, making him ineligible for his Father's title, which of course meant that Henry and Nelson were not born as royalty. To make matters worse for Nelson's possible dreams of 'inheritance', he was not even eligible for his father's former position as chief, as Henry was deprived from his leading role after alienating colonial authorities. Perhaps this 'injustice' is what subconsciously spurred Nelson Mandela on to becoming the first Black president of South Africa. Later when Nelson was studying for his Bachelor Degree in Arts at the Fort Harte University, he became involved in a boycott initiated by the Students' Representative Council (SRC) against the universities Bantu influenced policies. After which Nelson was told to leave Fort Hare, and discontinue his studies with them, though Nelson prevailed and moved to Johannesburg to complete his Bachelor in Arts. Following this Nelson went on to study Law at the University of Witwatersand. It is important to add that his pursuit of a degree in Law did not go unhindered; as this was the time when he became involved with the African Nationalist Congress (ANC) in 1994, in which he went on to become the youth president in the same year, and hold other ANC leadership positions later on, through which he helped revitalize the organization and oppose the Apartheid policies of the ruling National Party. The ANC was a left-wing Black-nationalist political party, which gained prominence through its unending protest of the adoption of the Apartheid system by the Afrikaner Nationalist Party in 1948. The Nationalist Party was a white-dominated South African political party, founded in 1914, which ruled the country from 1948 to 1994. It's following included most of the Dutch-

descended Afrikaners and many English-speaking whites, whose ancestry stems from the Dutch Indian and English colonial settlers. Apartheid, which is 'Afrikaans' for "Separateness", was a policy that governed relations between South Africa's white minority and non-white majority, and sanctioned racial segregation and political and economic discrimination against non-whites. The implementation of Apartheid, often called "separate development" since the 1960s, was made possible through the Population Registration Act of 1950, which classified all South Africans as either Bantu (all black Africans), Coloured (those of mixed race), or white. Racial segregation, sanctioned by law, was widely practiced in South Africa before 1948, but the National Party, which gained office that year, extended the policy and gave it the name Apartheid. Examples of previous racial segregation are; The Group Areas Act of 1950, which established residential and business sections in urban areas for each race, meaning that members of other races were barred from living, operating businesses, or owning land outside of their appointed area. In practice this act and two others; the Natives Resettlement Act of 1954 and the Group Development Act of 1955, which became known collectively as the Land Acts, completed a process that had begun with similar Land Acts adopted in 1913 and 1936; the end result was to set aside more than 80 per cent of South Africa's land for the white minority. To help enforce the segregation of the races and prevent blacks from encroaching on white areas, the government strengthened the existing "pass laws", which required non-whites to carry documents authorizing their presence in restricted areas. Other laws forbade most social contact between the races, authorized segregated public facilities, established separate

educational standards, restricted each race to certain types of jobs, curtailed non-white labour unions, and denied non-white participation, through white representatives, in the national government. Nelson Mandela and his fellow ANC leader Oliver Tambo established South Africa's first black law practice in 1952, specializing in cases resulting from the post-1948 Apartheid legislation. Later in that year, Mandela played an important role in launching a campaign of defiance against South Africa's pass laws. He travelled throughout the country as part of the campaign, trying to build support for his proposed non-violent means of protest against the discriminatory laws. Nelson Mandela later said that his tactics of non-violence were inspired by those of Ghandi. In 1955, Nelson was involved in drafting the Freedom Charter, a document calling for non-racial social democracy in South Africa. His involvement in the charter, and his other means of anti-apartheid activism made him a frequent target of the authorities; in March 1956 he was banned (severely restricted in travel, association, and speech) as the government saw him a threat to the country's stability, and in December he was arrested with more than 100 other people, who were involved with the formulation of the charter, on charges of treason that were designed to harass anti-apartheid activists. Mandela went on trial that same year and eventually was acquitted in 1961. During the extended court proceedings, he divorced his first wife and married Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, who was seen as the female counterpart of Nelson and the female voice and force of anti-apartheid. The ANC was banned after the massacre of unarmed black South Africans by police forces at Sharpeville in 1960, in which police fired on a crowd of black South Africans, killing or wounding some 250 of them, after

they had descended on a local police station in protest of the Pass Laws. The events of Sharpeville, and the abolition of the ANC caused a huge uproar in the international community, with demonstrations taking place in many countries, who's protests were joined by the United Nations act of condemning the Afrikaner National Party, and Apartheid. On the 1st of April, 1960, the UN passed Resolution 134 regarding " the situation arising out of large-scale killings of unarmed and peaceful demonstrators against racial discrimination and segregation in the Union of South Africa", recognizing that the Sharpeville Massacre was brought about by the policies of the government of the Union of South Africa and that if these policies were allowed to continue, they could endanger international peace and security. More demonstrations from South Africa's Black population were to follow after the massacre. Prompting the government to declare a state of emergency, therefore calling out their reserve army and detaining more than 18, 000 people suspected of participating in the initial protest of Sharpeville. After bearing witness to the traumatic events of Sharpeville Nelson Mandela abandoned his non-violent stance and he began advocating acts of sabotage against the South African regime. At this stage, it is worth considering whether his non-violent stance would have paid off or not, as with India and America, many horrific events and persecutions were endured among the oppressed peoples, yet with time their strength, and their loyalty to non-violence lead them to their goal. Perhaps Mandela acted too hastily after the Sharpeville massacre, forfeiting his country's legendary peaceful ascension to freedom. As mentioned before, Mandela himself said that Ghandi was his inspiration behind his non-violent strategy, though it is plausible to say that

this inspiration did not feed his drive to uphold such a burdensome strategy against such an unyielding enemy, or that the intricate conditions of his country's struggle were not compatible with Ghandi's philosophy of Satyagraha, to put it simply, it is possible that Nelson underestimated the opposition to his idyllic goal. After declaring the end of his ' oath of non-violence' he went underground, during which time he became known as the Black Pimpernel for his ability to evade capture, and was one of the founders of Umkhonto we Sizwe, " Spear of the Nation", which was the military wing of the ANC. In 1962 he went to Algeria for training in guerrilla warfare and sabotage, returning to South Africa later that year. On August 5th, shortly after his return, Mandela was arrested at a roadblock in Natal, as news of his exploits had met the ears of the government and he was seen as even more of a wanted man; he was subsequently sentenced to five years in prison. In October 1963 the imprisoned Mandela and several other men were tried for sabotage, treason, and violent conspiracy in the infamous Rivonia Trial, named after a fashionable suburb of Johannesburg where raiding police had discovered quantities of arms and equipment at the headquarters of the underground Umkhonto we Sizwe. Mandela's speech from the dock, in which he admitted the truth of some of the charges made against him, was a classic defence of liberty and defiance of tyranny. On June 12, 1964, he was sentenced to life imprisonment, narrowly escaping the death penalty, due to fears that his execution would further upset the stability of South Africa, in both the local and international community. If Nelson Mandela was executed, it is important to think about whether South Africa was predestined to find freedom through some other muse?, or the radical enlightenment of the

Nationalist Party. It is safe to say that there were many other people prolific people engaged in this conflict, such as Oliver Tambo, who themselves theoretically had the potential to bring down Apartheid without Nelson's further participation but there is also comfort in reality, with Nelson's life being spared, and his life imprisonment acting as fuel to the anti-apartheid fire. From 1964 to 1982 Mandela was incarcerated at Robben Island Prison, off Cape Town. He was subsequently kept at the maximum-security Pollsmoor Prison until 1988, when, after being treated for tuberculosis, he was transferred to Victor Verster Prison near Paarl. The South African government periodically made conditional offers of freedom to Mandela, most notably in 1976, on the condition that he recognize the newly independent-and highly controversial-status of the Transkei Bantustan and agree to reside there. An offer made in 1985 required that he renounce the use of violence. Mandela refused both offers, the second on the premise that only free men were able to engage in such negotiations and, as a prisoner, he was not a free man. Throughout his incarceration, Mandela retained wide support among South Africa's black population, and his imprisonment became a cause célèbre among the international community that condemned apartheid. As South Africa's political situation deteriorated after 1983, and particularly after 1988, he was engaged by ministers of Pres. P. W. Botha's Nationalist Party government in exploratory negotiations; he met with Botha's successor, de Klerk, in December 1989. On the 11th of February 1990, the South African government under President de Klerk released Mandela from prison. Shortly after his release, Mandela was chosen as the deputy president of the ANC; he later became president of the party in July

1991. Mandela led the ANC in negotiations with de Klerk to end apartheid and bring about a peaceful transition to non-racial democracy in South Africa. In April 1994 the Mandela-led ANC won South Africa's first elections by universal suffrage, and on May 10th Mandela was sworn in as president of the country's first multi-ethnic government. He established the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, TRC, in 1995, which investigated human rights violations under apartheid, and he introduced housing, education, and economic development initiatives designed to improve the living standards of the country's black population. In 1996 he oversaw the enactment of a new democratic constitution. Mandela resigned from his post with the ANC in December 1997, transferring leadership of the party to his designated successor, Thabo Mbeki. In conclusion, this essay finds that Nelson Mandela was dogmatic, and prolific in the ending of Apartheid, with his rallying of support and morale, and his enduring self-sacrifice for his people's common goal, summing up his unfaltering community battle for liberty and equality in South Africa. John James