

# Introduction to black literature history essay



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

In the English class we got the instruction to make an assignment about Black Literature. We had to work in groups. We choose the topic ' Apartheid'. In this assignment you will learn more about apartheid in South-Africa and who was involved with the anti-apartheid activism. In the first place you learn more about the history of South-Africa. You will also read how apartheid arose. You will know more about Steve Biko and about Nelson Mandela. After you read this assignment you will know more about the resistance and suppression. We hope that we can let you realize that apartheid is unfair and something that must never exist again.

### **Our main question:**

What was ' apartheid' in South-Africa?

### **Sub questions:**

1. 1 What was the situation in South-Africa before 1948?
1. 2 How did the apartheid come about?
1. 3 What was the suppression and resistance in South-Africa?
1. 4 Who was Nelson Mandela and what did he do?
1. 5 Who was Steve Biko and what did he do?
1. 6 How did the apartheid end?

## **Begin of apartheid**

### **1. 2 How did apartheid come about?**

On 26 May 1948 South Africa went to the poll. To the surprise of everyone, the racially side National Side won, under command of D. F Malan. The side  
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had won the election with the promise of apartheid. Eventually the side would be on top for 46 years. The election meant the beginning of the expansion of apartheid in South Africa. Before 1948 the position of black people was very bad, but after 1948 the white people had entered a lot of new laws, and those laws made the position of the black people even worse.

The racial doctrine of South Africa had many similarities with the Nazi's in Germany. In South Africa were many ethnic groups, which had to be pure. One of the most important tasks of the state was the registration of these ethnic groups. The government tried to keep the purity of the race (off course well the black race). The government tried it using the laws: Law on mixed Marriages and Law of Amoralty. On the law of Amoralty was heterosexual between man and woman between different colours forbidden, and you can be condemned for it. The separating about races continued.

The thinkers of the state wanted a completed white South African state, without that the white people depended of the black work. The voters of the state only wanted cheap and hardworking black workers. The National Side had combined these two visions. That's how homelands were arising. South Africa had circa 10 of these homelands. Some of these were independent and others had autonomy. The South African authorities determined who may live there and who not. These homelands were therefore dependent of South Africa.

In these homelands was almost no industry and the employment was very low. The black workers who had jobs, had to do it with a very meagre pay. They couldn't maintain their own families. I find it horrible that the

authorities have done that to their population, they can also intervene in this situation, but they didn't. Only after the end of apartheid, the homelands were definitely reunited.

The homelands gave the authorities increasingly possibilities to separate the black from the white. The black people more and more dispelled from the cities. After a while it was almost impossible to get a job in the city as black people. But there were exceptions, black people who had worked for 10 years successively by the same employer; those people may stay in the city. Black people who wanted to go in a 'white area' had to wear a pass. This was a terrible thing, and apartheid has showed his terrible worthy.

## **Begin of Apartheid**

Also the education was separated. From 1948 was there an increasingly participation of black people in the education. But the quality of this education for black people was very low. The 'white education' was especially pointed at the expansion of apartheid.

A 'black reaction' on the policy of the Nation Side could not stay away. The in 1912 established organisation 'African National Congress' (ANC) was leading the way. The ANC was actually for Africans, but also not-Africanise people could join it through all kinds of sister organisations.

The ANC undertook from 1952 a lot of actions against the apartheid regime. The actions were inspired by the peaceful actions from Ghandi in India. But not everywhere were the measures of apartheid equally hard, where the measures hard were, there had the ANC actions against it. During the fifties,

the resistance of the Africans increased. But the government responded the same; they reacted hard against the campaigners.

In 1955 and 1956 were 11 of the 27 members of the board of ANC arrested because of high treason and participation of a communistic organisation, including Nelson Mandela. Particularly that last thing was mortal sin. The 'Cold War' was on his peak and South Africa was a faith ally of the USA. When in the fifties in many countries in Africa the communism a huge influence threatened to be, South Africa was seen as a traitor to the USA. This was also one of the most important reasons why the international communities didn't do anything to the apartheid regime.

Nelson Mandela said that the black people gradually more and more voting rights would get. He was convinced that the actions of the campaigners must get success, because the black people had the majority in South Africa. A beautiful statement of Nelson Mandela against the apartheid regime: 'We are not anti-white; we are only against the white domination'. The ANC was also not anti-white; they said: we have always condemned racism.

The charges of high treason and participation of the communistic organisation was repealed for the most suspects. The judges judged unanimously that the ANC and their allies had devoted themselves for 'overthrow the current government' and the founding of a 'fundamentally state'. The ANC had used illegal middles and a few suspects had called-up some violence. But the government had no evidence for this. The end of this process was also the beginning of a new phase in struggle against the apartheid.

## **Nelson Mandela**

### **1.3 Who was Nelson Mandela and what did he do?**

Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela was born in 1918 near Umtata; he was the son of the local chieftain. When Nelson was nine, his father died of tuberculosis. A regent named Jongintaba took care of him. The little Nelson was going to Weselyn mission school. This school was located next to the regent's place. When Nelson was sixteen he went to the Clarkebury Boarding Institute. Nelson finished this school in 2 years instead of the usual 3 years.

Nelson Mandela is married three times in his life. In 1944 he married with Evelyn Ntoko Mase. Nelson and his first wife have four children. A son named Madiba Thembekile he was born in 1969. He had another soon named Makgatho, he had two daughters. They had both the name Makaziwe. They had the same name because the first daughter died after nine months and the second daughter was named to her sister. This marriage ends in 1957 in a divorce. He married again in 1958 with Nomzamo Winifred Madikizela. She was also a strong humanrights activist. From this marriage he got two daughters, Zinani and Zinziswa.

He divorced in 1992 but he was officially divorced in 1996. He married in 1998 again when he was 80 years old with the widow of the former president of Mozambique. Her name is Graca Machel. Graca had a record because she was the first woman that has been married with two presidents. Nelson Mandela was president of South-Africa from 1994 till 1999. He was the first "black" president of South-Africa. Before he was a president he had a job as a lawyer. Nelson Mandela is one of the most respected men of South-Africa

because he was an anti-apartheid activist. Nelson Mandela was chairman of the African National Congress from 1991 till 1999.

This is Nelson Mandela in 1937 This is Nelson Mandela in 2008

## **The ANC**

Nelson Mandela is an anti-apartheid activist. Apartheid was the official system of the racial segregation in South-Africa. I think that this is the most stupid thing that you can think. I don't know how people can think that they are better than others. In my opinion everybody is the same. So I totally agree with the view of Nelson in his anti-apartheid fight. Nelson Mandela was member of the ANC. This political group was anti-apartheid. This group was made to help the black people in South-Africa. ANC see his self as a nationalistic group of all colours and supporters of a non-racial society. In 1964 Nelson Mandela, ANC-leader, was Indicted because the government thought that he tried to start a revolution. He was banned to Robbenisland. The ANC was since then forbidden. I think that this was not fair because Nelson Mandela didn't do anything wrong. I think the government was just afraid that he was getting too much influence on the people and that the white people were getting to lose there authority. The prison number of Nelson was 46664 that is now the symbol of the aids project. During his prisonship, his son died from aids. He wasn't allowed to come to the funeral of his son. I think this an inhuman decision, because I think that every father or mother has the right to be at the funeral if there son/daughter died. When Nelson was released at 2 February 1990 the whole world watch it on the television. When Nelson was released the ANC was no longer forbidden. At

the free elections in 1994 did the ANC get the most votes (62% of all the votes) with Nelson as leader.

At the ceremony to celebrate his success, he said:

“ Let there be justice for all. Let there be peace for all. Let there be work, bread, water and salt for all. Let each know that for each the body, the mind and the soul have been freed to fulfil themselves. Never, never and never again shall it be that this beautiful land will again experience the oppression of one by another and suffer the indignity of being the skunk of the world.”

I like this speech, because he says what he wants and he want a good healthful life for all the people in South-Africa, no matter which colour they have. In this speech he shows his love for the country and I like that.

### **Nelson Mandela's prisonship**

Nelson Mandela was in prison on Robbenisland. He stayed here 18 years of his 27 years of prisonship. While he was a prison his reputation did grow a lot. He was well known as the most significant black man of South-Africa. During the prisonship he had to work a lot with the other prisoners in a lime quarry. It was heavy work and the conditions were very basic.

Even prisoners were segregated by race. This is in my opinion so stupid. That people are segregated even in prison. For example I don't understand how people can think that a white murder is better than a black murder. In the prisons the black people were not equal to white prisoners. In my eyes people who think like this are just very stupid, and selfish. In the prison Nelson and the other black prisoners get the fewest food and other basic



stuff. Nelson Mandela was a politic prisoner, so he was separated of the other black prisoners and he did get lesser privileges. Nelson Mandela told that he was part of the D-group. The D-group was the group with the lowest classification. He told too that in this group he may only write one letter in six months. He said that letters were delayed on purpose. He said too that the letters were almost made unreadable by the people that had to censors. When I read this, I get angry that how unfair people there are in the world. In March 1982 Nelson Mandela were transferred to the Pollsmor prison. Other ANC-leaders like Walter Sisulu, Andrew Mlangeni, Ahmed Kithara and Raymond Mhlaba did go too to this prison. In 1988 Nelson went to another prison. This prison was Victor Vester Prison and here would he stay until he gets released in 1990. In this prison Nelson did get more privileges. His old friend Harry Schwarz and other people from abroad may come to finished him. Nelson knew hARRY since he was in University. Harry was a lawyer either. The local and international pressure on the South-Africa government was growing a lot, under the slogan Let Nelson free! In 1889 the president Botha had a stroke and he was been replaced by Frederik Willem de Klerk. Frederik announced that Nelson would be released in February 1990.

Nelson's prison yard and Nelson's cell on Robbenisland

It's very basic.

## **Mandela day**

Mandela day is every year on 18 July. On Mandela day we help other people for 67 minutes. We do this because Nelson fought 67 years for social justice. Mandela day isn't meant for a Holiday, but just for a normal day with the

meaning to help other people just some more than usual. The first Mandela day was in 2009 for Nelson's 91st birthday.

## **Winnie Mandela**

Nomzamo Winifred Zanyiwe Madikezla, well known as Winnie Mandela, was an anti-apartheid activist and wife of Nelson Mandela. She and her ex-husband are symbol for the protest against the apartheid government. She was separated of Nelson for more than twenty years because Nelson was in prison on Robbenisland. During the time that Nelson Mandela was in prison Winnie kept the fight against apartheid on. She fought for freedom because her husband couldn't do much in his imprisonment. For example she became chairman of the forbidden ANC for women. So she did illegal actions to show the people her resistance. She helped a lot with the underground political groups. Winnie was becoming very popular because of her resistance. The apartheid government of South-Africa didn't watch while she was becoming more popular. So they decide to arrest her like what they did too with Nelson Mandela. She was convicted because of the Terrorism Act. She was held in prison for sixteen months. Around the time that she got arrest she had just seen a heart specialist. So she would have had something wrong with her hart. The government of South-Africa hoped that her conditions would be getting worse. I think this is the same as wanted her dead. Because they always say that important politic prison's died because of an accident or a natural way. But most of the time they were murdered (like Steve Biko).

This is Winnie Mandela when she is happy. You can see the smile on her face. It is good she smiles after the period of all bad things in her live. This picture was taken in 2009

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In the beginning of her imprisonment she had a cell that was really small. If she stretched here arms she could touch the both walls. So she had no space than 1 meter in the length. You could imagine that she had barely space to exercise. The only thing she had in her cell was a plastic bottle of water. She could drink only five small glasses of water a day. A bucket made by the prison guards. She had to use this bucket as here toilet. She had only three blankets and a sisal mat. So she couldn't do much to keep her self busy. She had no pen and paper to draw or to write. Winnie felt that being in prison or being held anywhere was one of the cruellest things in the world that a human beings could do to each other. After one week in this cell she was transferred to another cell, the condemned cells. It was not much better in this cell, because this is the cell where the prisoners are, who are getting executed in a few days. There was not a nice atmosphere where she could talk to people, it was all very depressed. In the condemned cell there were two grille doors next to the prison door. The time that she lived here was cruel, she remembered that when the bunch of keys clicking, It was the time that a prisoner would be taken and be excuted. In this time she felt that they were hitting the inner core of her soul. This was one of the worst time of her live.

### **The Resistance of Nelson Mandela**

In the beginning of his protest against apartheid he wanted a non-violent protest. He didn't want that anyone was going to die. So he protests with demonstrations. He and another lawyer named Oliver Tambo founded a law firm. This firm was for black people and the prices were really low. They did this to help the black people that were accuses for unfair things that they

couldn't help. This non-violent protest hadn't much effect. The apartheid government was still racist. So they started to sabotage the government. In 1961 Nelson Mandela became leader of ANC's armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK). This means Spear of the Nation.

Nelson Mandela coordinated sabotages on the government's buildings like post-office, courts and other apartheid targets. He planned too to make a guerrilla-war against the apartheid regime. Mandela collected much money from abroad for this project. He and his colleague and ANC member Wolfie Kades started the sabotage at 16 December 1961. With this actions they didn't wanted to hurt or to kill people but there was always a risk that someone could be injured. Nelson Mandela said that this sabotages were there only hope to victory. He said that years of non-violent activism hadn't had much success so he hoped that this had to give the decisive. Later in 1980 there was a guerrilla war against the apartheid government. The government stroke back and many citizens died during this war. Mandela had to admit that the ANC also violenced the human rights, but that it was for a good meaning: no more apartheid and equal rights for everyone no matter which skin colour. But after a long war against the apartheid government Nelson Mandela won.

There is nowadays no more apartheid. I am happy that in the most countries everybody is equal. Unfortunately there is in (South) Africa much poverty and much aids patients. This is why Nelson Mandela got now his own Fund: Children's Fund and Gary Player Foundation for children that have no parents and the 46664 AIDS fund. He made this last fund because he saw that many people died of this disease and his son died because of aid at 6 January

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2005. Nelson's fight against aids is all written in Stephanie Nolen's book: Stories of Aids in South Africa. Nelson spoke in many aids conferences like in Durban in 2000 and in Bangkok in 2004.

## **Nelson Mandela Awards and Honours**

Nelson Mandela has received many Awards and Honours (more than 250) over 40 years, the most known is the Nobel peace Prize in 1993. He received this prize with Frederik Willem de Klerk. Nelson Mandela did also get the highest honour of Johannesburg, the freedom of City. He received also a medal of George W. Bush. This medal was the Presidential Medal of Freedom. In Canada he received the Order of Canada and from turkey he got the Atatürk Peace Award. He did get a lot of peace honours for his activism against apartheid. He is a well known person.

This is the Lenin Peace medal

Awarded in 1990

## **Nelson Mandela Quotes**

### **Nelson Mandela:**

Never, never and never again shall it be that this beautiful land will again experience the oppression of one by another.

I like this quote, because he shows in this quote the love for his country and that he don't want that it will be oppressed by any one.

### **Nelson Mandela:**

After climbing a great hill, one only finds that there are many more hills to climb.

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I think this quote is special because it says when you solved a problem there are a lot more problems that you have to solve. In your life you will be climbing many hills but I think you can always reach the top. I think it's a special one because every body has to deal with their problems.

### **Nelson Mandela:**

I detest racialism, because I regard it as a barbaric thing, whether it comes from a black man or a white man.

This quote is Nelson Mandela's vision. He says what he doesn't want, no matter from who and I like that. Because of this thinking we have now a better world.

### **Nelson Mandela:**

It always seems impossible until it's done.

In this quote he says that you must never give up. Always keep fighting for your target. When you reach your goal and you look back you will see that it wasn't impossible. I like this quote because he says you can live your dream if you keep fighting for it, it will be done. Nelson did this too he dreamed about a world without apartheid and after a long fight he had success.

### **Nelson Mandela:**

We must use time wisely and forever realize that the time is always ripe to do right.

In this quote he says that if you want to do something right, you don't must wait for later. You can do it now, because maybe later you can't do it any more. I really like this quote because if you want to do something, you need

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to do it now and not later. For example if you had fights with your father and you never have contact anymore and you want to see him again, you don't must wait for later, because maybe he isn't here anymore. This quote is about little dreams and big dreams.

### **Nelson Mandela:**

Let there be work, bread, water and salt for all.

In this quote Nelson shows his love for the humanity. He wants everybody to be happy and a healthful life. I like it, because I want the same.

### **Nelson Mandela:**

Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.

In this quote he means that not violent is the strongest weapon, but that education is the strongest weapon. A good education will give you the ability to think, talk, read, write and count. With these five things you can convince people and they will follow you, and you will change the world.

### **Nelson Mandela:**

A good head and a good heart are always a formidable combination.

This quote Nelson says with a good sense and a good willingness it will be always a good combination and I agree with that.

### **Nelson Mandela:**

The greatest glory in living lies not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall.

I really like this quote because he says life is not about all your lows, but about all your highlights after you lows. I think that in your life you have to look back on your good moments and not too your bad moments. Every person has ups and downs in his life but it's all about the ups and I really like it how Nelson expressed this.

### **Nelson Mandela:**

I am the captain of my soul.

In this little sentence he says that he is the only captain of his soul. No body can control his soul. You can take away someone's possession, but you can never take away someone's soul. That is why I like this quote. He lost his freedom for a long time, but did never lost his soul.

### **Nelson Mandela:**

Nothing is black or white.

In this quote Nelson says every body is the same. There is no black or white. Everybody is the same and I totally agree with it. Of course there are people with a black skin and white skin, but the outside doesn't matter. It is all about the inside. It's the same as like an object. You got a black guitar or you got a white guitar. It doesn't matter if they are black or white because the sound will still be the same. I think this is a simplified representation of reality.

### **Nelson Mandela:**

It is not where you start but how high you aim that matters for success.



In this quote Nelson says if you got a target you can reach it. No matter where you start even if you poor you can be rich and I like this.

## **Nelson Mandela Museum**

There is a Nelson Mandela Museum in Mthatha. The first time this museum opened was at 11 February 2000. This was 10 years after Nelson Mandela's release. This museum is not a tribute for Nelson Mandela, but a place to let Nelson's vision live. This museum is to inspire people. When you are in this museum you will take the shoes of Nelson on for a journey to freedom. You will know everything about his life. You will know more about his school years and about his prisonship and what he has done for South-Africa and the world. When Nelson Mandela is dead his ideas and vision will be still living further in this museum.

## **Nelson Mandela Children's Fund**

The Nelson Mandela Children's Fund (NMCF) is a fund that helps the children in South-Africa. Nelson made this fund because of his love for children and he didn't want that they had to suffer more. From 1996 till 1998 they collect 36 million to finance 760 projects. In these projects they help families. They provide them of the primary necessity. In 1999 they made a plan where they split up the areas in South-Africa in levels of poverty. In 2000 they launched a new project with strategic way of help.

## **My Opinion**

I learned much about this assignment because I didn't know much about Nelson. I knew who he was and what he has done but not this much. I was surprised about how unfair people can be. I have read things and saw things

in a movie that I didn't know that people did do these cruel things too each other. I am happy that there are people like Nelson Mandela who wants to fight for things like freedom and fair rights. Nelson Mandela did get what he wants. There is no more apartheid in the world, but there are still other problems like poverty and diseases. I think it's good what Nelson Mandela did. He fought for freedom and no apartheid. He reached the top of the hill, but there were more hills. So he made the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund to help children that are poor. He started to climb another hill and I think that is good. He really wanted to make the world better and I like that.

Unfortunately many people died in the journey to a non-apartheid world.

Because of this Nelson Mandela said:

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 mountaintop of our desires.

All the people who died when they were protesting against the apartheid government didn't die for nothing. There is no more apartheid and their children can live in a non-apartheid world. With the help of Nelson Mandela Children's Fund can they have a good childhood and a healthful life. I am happy that Nelson Mandela did do this.

## **Steve Biko**

### **1. 4 Who was Steve Biko and what did he do?**

Stephen Biko was a well-known anti-apartheid activist in South-Africa. He was born on 18 December 1946, in King William's Town, in the Eastern Cape

of South Africa. He was a champion of civil rights in South Africa. Steve was four years old when his father died.

Biko married Ntsiki Mashalaba in 1970. They had two children: Nkosinathi and Samora. He also had two children with Dr Mamphela Ramphele: He had a daughter, Lerato, born in 1974, she died of pneumonia when she was two months old, and he had a son, Hlumelo, who was born in 1978, after Biko's death. Biko had also a daughter with Lorraine Tabane, Motlatsi, born in 1977. Short, Biko had relatively many children of different women.

Biko was a student leader, later he established the Black Consciousness Movement. Biko studied to be a doctor at the University of Medical School. He spoke English fluently and fairly fluent African.

Biko was involved with the multiracial National Union of South African Students, but after he became convinced that Black, Indian and other Coloured students needed an organisation of their own, he helped the South African Students' Organisation (SASO), whose program included political self-reliance and the unification of university students in a 'black consciousness'. In 1968 Biko was selected to be the first president.

SASO was evolved into the influential Black Consciousness Movement (BCM). Biko was also involved with the World Student Christian Federation (WSCF), which was for the Christian students.

Biko was banned in 1973 by the apartheid regime. That means that Biko was not allowed to speak to more than one person at a time or to speak in public. It was restricted to the King William's Town.

And he may not write and speak with the media. Also forbidden was: Everything what Biko says to quote, even the simple conversations or speeches.

” Het meest krachtige wapen in de hand van de onder- -drukker is de geest van de onderdrukte.”

## **Steve Biko**

Biko excelled at school, but he was put apart because of his political interest. During his study at the University of Fort Hare he became political active. In 1968 Biko became co-founder of the SASO and organised among other speeches to the black communities. He wanted the black people to create a greater self-consciousness. SASO became an enormous success and fast enough was Biko one of land's most prominent activists against the apartheid regime. In 1972 Biko was selected to be the leader of the organisation: Black Peoples Convention (BPC). While he was selected, the apartheid regime intervened. Biko was banned to his place of birth: King William's Town. Between August 1975 and September 1977, Biko was arrested and he was interrogated four times by the apartheid regime on and on. On August 21st Biko was locked in Port Elizabeth.

On 7 September, the doctors established some wounds on Biko's head. Four days later, Biko lost his consciousness. The doctors advised a hospitalisation, but instead of that Biko was dumped naked in the trunk of a Land Rover. He was transported to Pretoria, a journey of about 1200 km! Terrible. A few hours after arrival in Pretoria, Biko died. When I heard this, I couldn't believe it. Why are people so cruel against other people? Biko did nothing wrong, I

find it ridiculous what the white men did to him. Unbelievable. The coroner proved that Biko died of seriously brain damage and internal bruises. Biko was one of the nineteen victims who died in weird circumstances. To the funeral of Biko came 15000 peoples, including twelve diplomats of several western countries.

The death of Biko aroused much indignation, both in black countries and in western countries. The minister of Justice Kruger explained that Biko after a hunger strike while Kruger said: " His death leaves me cold." Later, under pressure of the media an other explanation came outside: Biko was died of a seriously brain damage.

The message about Biko's dead was in the world a smash in the face for everyone. Steve Biko Steve Biko was now seen as a symbol of black resistance and against the apartheid regime. There came movies and storeys round Steve Biko. He was the man who spook up his heart to the apartheid regime.

Black Consciousness Movement is an organisation which would mobilize and dominate much of the urban black population. The best known representative of the BCM was Steve Biko, who nonviolent resistance against apartheid for stood. An unforeseeable apartheid policy is that black and white separated went to school. The universities were a super breeding ground for the foundation of the organisation " Black Consciousness Movement (= BCM)".

A large part of this creation (BCM) came from the American organisation " Black Power". The organisation was formed after a massacre in Sherville, in <https://assignbuster.com/introduction-to-black-literature-history-essay/>

the middle of the 60s. Just like the Black Power Movement, the BCM was also a not structured organisation; it was more a collection of people who had certain ideas. One of the most important writer and ideologist was: Steve Biko. BCM was against was an anti-apartheid organisation.

## **Steve Biko**

During the seventies, the tensions increased in South Africa. The black people got more and more resentment against apartheid. In May 1976 was the Angelican Bishop Desmond Tut, who later would play a great role in the anti-apartheid movement, was aware of the tensions, and warned for an eruption. He feared that South Africa would be fast scene of a bloodshed and violence.

On Juny 16th w