

## INTERVIEW BY JOHANNESBURG TELEVISION SERVICE\*

*Soweto, February 15, 1990*

*Mashilwane:* Madiba, to get straight into the matter: When I listened to your speeches, both in Cape Town and Johannesburg, and I listened to what the State President had to say last night, I got a mind that you have found common ground, as the State President and the ANC. But on the other hand, there is still a mood of mounting the struggle.

Can we, Madiba, get the reasons behind this?

*Mandela:* We have made good progress, in my opinion. We have been conducting discussions with the government over the last three years, and I think that we have made good progress. The unbanning of the ANC, and the partial lifting of the state of emergency, and the decision of the government to release certain categories of prisoners is a result of, among others, the discussions that we have been having.

Of course, there are other important factors but the discussions that we have been having have produced results. I am confident, therefore, that we have found common ground. We certainly have laid down the foundations for future negotiations in this country.

*Mashilwane:* But then, Madiba, would you say there are still reasons to continue with the struggle?

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\* Clarence Keyter and Pekwane Mashilwane of the South African Broadcasting Corporation interviewed Mr. Mandela. Only extracts are reproduced here.

**Mandela:** Yes. You must remember the basic demand of the people of this country: it is one person, one vote; it is a non-racial society in which we all live as brothers and sisters, as South Africans.

We are still very far from that.

**Keyter:** But, yet, last night and this morning, Mr. Mandela, you were reported to have said that one man one vote may be negotiable.

**Mandela:** Well, if you decide to settle problems through negotiation, then you must be prepared to compromise, and compromise, as I understand it, is not in regard to peripheral issues. Compromise can only be effective and properly understood if it relates to basic demands, otherwise it is not compromise. Compromise means each of the parties involved should give away something to the other, should accommodate the demands, the fears, of the other party.

**Keyter:** ... Would you be speaking as the most recently released, prominent ANC member or would you be speaking on behalf of the ANC at this point in time?

**Mandela:** No, Mr. Keyter. I am a loyal and disciplined member of the ANC. I had a little bit of discretion when I was discussing with the government from prison, and the organisation understood that it was not possible for me to consult the organisation every time an issue arose, and they gave me express mandate to act on their behalf whilst in prison.

But now that I am released, I must report to the ANC, and I no longer enjoy that discretion. I must now function as part and parcel of the ANC, and it is they who will determine what role I should play.

**Mashilwane:** Upon your release, sir, you said you are looking forward to the type of political settlement that will satisfy both sides, whites and blacks. After saying that, you came up with a philosophy of nationalisation that made most of the people you wanted to address in the settlement a bit shaky.

Can you sir, explain the intentions behind the nationalisation philosophy?

*Mandela:* I am sorry. I regret to note that influential circles among whites in the country and abroad are agitated about our demand for nationalisation, not of the entire economy, but of certain sectors which we regard as being important in so far as the economy of the country.

Nationalisation is part of the history of this country. After all, many sectors of our economy are today nationalised. It is only now that the government is thinking of changing the whole approach on our economic system, that they are calling for privatisation.

Now, we do not understand how they would justify changing the whole approach towards nationalisation, in the sense that privatisation will mean that those people who have the economic resources will be able to buy these industries which have been privatised. We will not be able to do so, because we haven't got the resources, we haven't got the capital.

It appears to us that because now that the possibility is there that we may have an effective voice in government, the whites have decided that the only way of preventing blacks, you see, from having control over the wealth of the country is to privatise.

We can't accept that.

*Keyter:* Mr. Mandela, there have been voices from Britain, from America, from elsewhere, since your speech on Sunday (11 February) where you called for the continuation of sanctions against South Africa, negative sounds, I would guess, seen from your side.

Haven't you thought of rethinking the call on sanctions?

*Mandela:* Mr. Keyter, there is nothing the ANC wants more than to move away from the situation of conflict and confrontation. As I have pointed out before, a statement I want to repeat again: There is not a single political organisation in this country, inside and outside Parliament, which can ever compare with the ANC in its total commitment to peace, to peaceful change.

The armed struggle to which we have resorted, the sanctions, are purely defensive against the violence of apartheid.

If the government gives us a chance, we would welcome moving away from the situation of conflict and confrontation to that of peace.

*Keyter:* Mr. Mandela, apart from what you said, the initial impact, the first impact, which the white South Africans had of your speech on Sunday, and your press conference on Monday, and then addressing the crowd in Johannesburg, was that of fear.

How do you intend coping or channeling that fear so that, at the end, there is a guarantee for whites and blacks in South Africa?

*Mandela:* In the document which I gave to the government last year,\* shortly before I met the state president, P.W. Botha, I said that two issues will have to be addressed by the ANC and the government: firstly, the demand of one person one vote in a unitary state; and secondly, the fears of whites, the concern of whites that the realisation of this demand will result in the domination of whites by blacks. And, I feel that that fear is genuine; it will be wrong, but it is genuine; and the ANC must address that fear.

The whites must be reassured that the realisation of that demand will not lead to domination of whites by blacks. After all, our policy is clearly set out in the Freedom Charter. We have also set it out very clearly in the Harare Declaration.

The government has nothing comparable to these two documents. Even Afrikaners themselves who are in the National Party are still not clear as to exactly what type of society South Africa wants to create. They have not stated out clearly as we have done. Therefore, nobody can complain that we had not given attention to the position of rights because these documents are totally non-racial.

We have ceased to think in terms of colour. We are thinking in terms of South Africans and of course, Europeans that form a very

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\* See Appendix

important part of this population. They have made a contribution which cannot be suppressed in the map of this country....

*Keyter:* If the ANC wants the government to fulfil all the preconditions set by the ANC, what would the ANC do in the process of dismantling all the legislation pointing to apartheid?

Would the ANC like the government to do everything and only the ANC maintaining the position of strength?

Shouldn't they all go and drop both sides, and then go to the negotiating table together?

*Mandela:* Well, I have no doubt, personally, that if we agreed that the government should meet all the preconditions, and the ANC should simultaneously issue a statement committing itself to peace, I think that would be tremendous progress.

You must remember that, originally, we had insisted on dismantling the entire structure of apartheid before we can sit down to negotiate.

As a gesture, as a goodwill gesture, we have removed that, because we realise that this would present the government with a problem, because it is not so easy to dismantle apartheid, and we have merely stressed those preconditions which the government can immediately fulfil, without the necessity of convening Parliament.