

FOR MANDELA'S VISIT, SOME WORDS OF CAUTION

The arrival in the United States next week of African National Congress (ANC) leader Nelson Mandela comes at a critical stage in South Africa's internal political evolution and U.S.-South African relations. South African President F.W. de Klerk has set out on a daring new political path with great promise for his embattled nation. He has renounced his country's longstanding policy of racial segregation, called apartheid, and taken steps toward creating an economic, political, and legal structure in which South Africa's black majority enjoys full rights and participation. Though unthinkable only five years ago, South Africa's apartheid system — like communism — now appears headed for the dustbin of history.

As Washington celebrates the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and Nicaragua, so too should it celebrate apartheid's demise. South Africa is the economic and political engine that drives southern Africa — a region of both strategic and economic importance to the U.S. A democratic South Africa could set in motion a series of democratic changes in the region, which would likely spur regional economic growth and improvements in human rights. With apartheid behind it, South Africa itself is likely to move forward to a bright future of peace, freedom, and prosperity, so long as apartheid is replaced with a system that guarantees the fundamental rights of all South Africans.

It is appropriate that one of apartheid's most heralded resistance figures, Nelson Mandela, will be welcomed to the U.S. next week. Mandela will meet with George Bush on Monday. He will address a joint meeting of Congress the following day, joining the ranks of Winston Churchill, Charles de Gaulle, Douglas MacArthur, and more recently Vaclav Havel and Lech Walesa.

Americans nevertheless have reasons to be skeptical of Mandela. 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. Further, the ANC, in which Mandela serves as Deputy President, has tortured and executed its own members when they have refused to tow the party line, a fact Mandela conceded in a press conference on April 14. ANC dissidents who escaped to Kenya in April contend that at least 120 political prisoners are being detained and tortured in ANC camps in Angola and Uganda. Because of its support for violence against civilians, Mandela's ANC appropriately was labeled a "terrorist" organization last January in the U.S. Defense Department's *Terrorist Group Profiles*.

Second, though Mandela has spoken out against apartheid, he is not likely to support economic and political freedom if he or the ANC takes power in South Africa. At the very moment communism was collapsing in Eastern Europe, Mandela praised the South African Communist Party in his first speech following his release from prison. Mandela said in Cape Town on February 11: "We are heartened by the fact that the alliance between ourselves and the [communist] party remains as

strong as it always was." Mandela also continues to propose the nationalization of South African industry, even though this failed policy has been rejected not only throughout Europe, Latin America, and Asia, but increasingly in Africa.

Third, Mandela continues to embrace such pariah nations as Angola, Cuba, and Libya, raising significant questions about the foreign policy alliances the ANC might seek should it take power in South Africa. Mandela thanked Muammar Qadhafi this May 18 in Tripoli for his "readiness to provide [the ANC] with facilities" and praised Qadhafi's "fight for peace and human rights in the world." Also in May, Mandela lauded Angola's Marxist dictator Jose Eduardo dos Santos, saying "we hope that one day we will be as free as you." Remarkably, Mandela recently hailed Marxist Cuba for its "love of human rights and liberty."

Finally, though Mandela often was considered the world's most famous political prisoner, leading human rights groups such as Amnesty International never recognized him as such because of his personal involvement in violent activities. Mandela was not jailed because of his political viewpoints. Rather, he was imprisoned in 1962 for possessing explosive devices, which were used in sabotage attacks inside South Africa, and for inciting violence. Mandela's violent actions would have resulted in imprisonment in virtually any country of the world.

In his bid to develop a democratic South Africa, President de Klerk faces the extraordinary challenge of developing democratic institutions where none traditionally have existed. De Klerk has made remarkable steps in this direction already, lifting South Africa's state of emergency, reforming the state security system, abolishing hospital and other forms of segregation, releasing political prisoners, and rescinding the prohibition on the ANC, the South African Communist Party, and the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), a black consciousness movement. De Klerk has also offered to begin talks with South Africa's black majority to reach a democratic settlement. Without de Klerk's bold leadership, the prospects for an end to apartheid would be much dimmer.

Like de Klerk, Nelson Mandela is a dynamic and important figure in South African politics. His three decades of perseverance against South Africa's apartheid system can inspire all who battle authoritarianism — in Africa and beyond. Though he has advocated terrorism and probably is no champion of liberal democracy, Mandela was a bold and determined voice against apartheid when South Africa's black majority needed such a voice. In embracing the anti-apartheid struggle, however, Americans must be increasingly careful about whom they choose to support in South Africa. When there was little hope for change in South Africa's apartheid system, it was understandable that many Americans would sympathize with the ANC, which was relentless in its opposition to this system. But now that apartheid is nearing its end, the challenge has become more complicated. In forming its South Africa policy, Washington must now decide what sort of political system it wants in South Africa. Partly because of its terrorism and alliance with South Africa's communist party, not all South African blacks support the ANC, and many have sought political alternatives. Foremost among these is the Zulu-dominated Inkatha movement, led by Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi, which represents some 1.5 million black South Africans.

Because of his role as a leader in the fight against oppression in South Africa, Nelson Mandela should be welcomed to this country. But the man who hails Fidel Castro, Muammar Qadhafi and South Africa's communist party, and who continues to advocate the use of violence against civilians for political purposes, is no friend of peace or liberty. The global collapse of communism shows that the world is leaving Nelson Mandela's ideas behind.

Americans should praise Mandela for his life-long role in opposing apartheid, but they should not think that he alone holds the keys to a democratic South Africa.

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