

NEWS CONFERENCE*

Cape Town, May 4, 1990

Mandela: The striking feature of the discussions which were heard during the last three days has been their cordiality. We have held discussions on sensitive matters in a spirit of conciliation and understanding.

The ANC has taken the initiative to get the government and the ANC to sit down together and hammer out a peaceful solution.

We look at these discussions with satisfaction because it is the realisation of a dream for which we have worked patiently and consistently over the last three years. We say so, not in the spirit of either boasting or claiming credit for the success of the discussions. We went into these discussions in the spirit that there should neither be victors nor losers, and at the end of the discussions, not only are we closer to one another, the ANC and the Government, but we are all victors. South Africa is a victor.

The important thing is going to be the implementation of this agreement, and there is a realisation on the part of both delegations that it is important that these obstacles which we have identified in the document should be removed at the earliest possible convenience.

We in the African National Congress are convinced that both our organisation, as well as the government, mean to do just that,

* Joint news conference with President F.W. de Klerk after talks between the Government and the ANC delegation. Only extracts are reproduced here.

and we hope we will get the support of all South Africans and the international community in this important objective. Thank you.

Correspondent: What about other parties in South Africa on negotiations? What about ending violence?

Mandela: The African National Congress and the government are the main players in this country in the search for peace. There can be no peace in this country unless these two parties, these two organisations, come to an agreement, to an effective settlement.

But, the African National Congress has never claimed to be the sole representative of the black people in this country. We recognise, a fact which we have stated over and over again, that there are other interested parties in this regard, and it would only be proper at some stage to seek their views on the important question which we have been discussing over the last three days.

Correspondent: Mr. Mandela, the statement that has been made sets itself out against intimidation. One presumes, therefore, that the ANC accepts the right of other parties to oppose it against a sort of intimidation and violence we have experienced in Natal. Is that correct?

Mandela: The ANC has on countless occasions emphasised the importance of tolerance in the course of our political work.

The right of other parties to canvass and put forward their views without interference from other political organisations, that is our standpoint. It has always been our standpoint.

If there has been any sort of intimidation from any member of the ANC then that has been done outside the policy of the organisation.

We must remember in making judgment on questions of this nature that we are in a totally different position from that of the government and other white parties in this country. Our organisation has been banned for the last 30 years. Experienced leaders of the organisation had been forced into exile. Other well-trained and experienced leaders of the movement had been thrown

into jail, and those members who had remained inside the country had been gagged. Therefore there was nobody to explain the policy of the organisation to instil discipline.

You must remember that many of the youth, who are active today, were born during the last 30 years when the organisation was illegal and when there was nobody to explain the policy of the organisation. If, therefore, any of our members were guilty of intimidation, you must judge their action against this background.

Now that the organisation has been legalised, we have considered it to be our duty to stress the question of discipline, the question of tolerance, and I think we are getting support from our membership, and I, therefore, would urge you to look at the matter from the background which I have outlined.