

C.I.A. Tie Reported In Mandela Arrest

By DAVID JOHNSTON, Special to The New York Times

June 10, 1990

WASHINGTON, June 9 — The Central Intelligence Agency played an important role in the arrest in 1962 of Nelson Mandela, the African National Congress leader who was jailed for nearly 28 years before his release four months ago, a news report says.

The intelligence service, using an agent inside the African National Congress, provided South African security officials with precise information about Mr. Mandela's activities that enabled the police to arrest him, said the account by the Cox News Service.

The report, scheduled for publication on Sunday, quoted an unidentified retired official who said that a senior C.I.A. officer told him shortly after Mr. Mandela's arrest: "We have turned Mandela over to the South African Security branch. We gave them every detail, what he would be wearing, the time of day, just where he would be."

Mark Mansfield, a spokesman for the agency, declined to comment on the news-service report. "As a matter of policy, we do not discuss allegations of intelligence activities," he said.

Reports that American intelligence tipped off the South African officials who arrested Mr. Mandela have circulated for years. Newsweek reported in February that the agency was believed to have been involved.

Mr. Mandela is scheduled to visit the United States beginning June 20 for a five-city tour that will include talks with President Bush and a speech before a joint meeting of Congress.

The news-service report said that at the time of Mr. Mandela's arrest in August 1962, the C.I.A. devoted more resources to penetrating the activities of nationalist groups like the African National Congress than did South Africa's then-fledgling security service.

The account said the American intelligence agency was willing to assist in the apprehension of Mr. Mandela because it was concerned that a successful nationalist movement threatened a friendly South African Government. Expansion of such movements outside South Africa's borders, the agency feared, would jeopardize the stability of other African states, the account said.

A retired South African intelligence official, Gerard Ludi, was quoted in the report as saying that at the time of Mr. Mandela's capture, the C.I.A. had put an undercover

agent into the inner circle of the African National Congress group in Durban.

That agent provided the intelligence service with detailed accounts of the organization's activities, including information on the whereabouts of Mr. Mandela, then being sought as a fugitive for his anti-apartheid activities.

The morning after a secret dinner party with other congress members in Durban, Mr. Mandela, dressed as a chauffeur, ran into a roadblock. He was immediately recognized and arrested.

The retired official said that because of concern over the propriety of the C.I.A.'s actions in the Mandela case, "higher authorities" required that the State Department approve any similar operations in the future. The report said the State Department refused on at least three occasions to allow the agency to provide South African officials with information about other dissidents.