

Mandela Ends Tour Of U.S. With Oakland Appearance

By JOHN KIFNER, Special to The New York Times

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OAKLAND, Calif., June 30 — A weary Nelson Mandela ended a grueling eight-city American tour today, transformed into a popular hero hailed by millions who a few months ago were probably giving scant attention to apartheid in South Africa.

“We are at a crucial historical juncture,” Mr. Mandela told a cheering crowd of 58,000 people packing the Oakland Coliseum and turning it into a sea of black, green and yellow banners of the African National Congress. “We shall not turn back.”

In the last appearance of his tour, the deputy president of the African National Congress smiled broadly and told the crowd, “Despite my 71 years, at the end of this visit I feel like a young man of 35. I feel like an old battery that has been recharged. And if I feel so young, it is the people of the United States of America that are responsible for this.”

Although he had refrained from speaking on American issues for most of his visit, Mr. Mandela said he had received a number of messages from “the first American nation, the American Indians,” including a group prevented by logistical mixups from presenting him ceremonial robes today.

“I can assure you they have left me very disturbed,” Mr. Mandela said, “and if I had time I would visit their areas and get from them an authoritative description of the difficulties under which they live.” He said he would do so on a future visit to the United States in October.

Mr. Mandela landed here this afternoon and was greeted by Representative Ronald V. Dellums, the California Democrat who has for years pushed legislation for sanctions against the South African government. Mr. Mandela then thanked the Bay Area for its support of his goal of “one person, one vote” and “a democratic, nonracial, nonsexist” society.

The area was a must stop on Mr. Mandela’s trip, organizers said, because the cities of Oakland, Berkley and San Francisco have ordinances calling for divestment of stocks in American companies doing business in South Africa, and regional longshoremen have refused to unload South African goods.

From the airport Mr. Mandela went to the rally at the stadium, after which he returned to the airport, held a brief news conference and began a flight to Ireland.

Aides said the trip to Ireland was to thank the Dublin government for its support in the European Community's recent decision to maintain sanctions against South Africa. They said they knew of no plans for Mr. Mandela to meet with the Irish Republican Army, an outlawed organization that has given aid to the African National Congress.

Mr. Mandela's American tour has been instant history, a televised pageant that riveted audiences in New York, Boston, Washington, Atlanta, Detroit, Los Angeles and, finally, the Bay Area.

Local television stations went live with airport arrival ceremonies and nightly concert-rallies, and newspapers issued souvenir sections. At times, the coverage verged on adulation, like when a television anchor in Detroit called Mr. Mandela "this dear man."

Over and over, people along the way gave the same answer when reporters asked why they had turned out for the former political prisoner from a faraway land: "This is history."

Boarding Mr. Mandela's rented plane in Los Angeles this morning, Roger Wilkins, the trip director, said, "The purpose of the trip was for him to get his message about the current state of politics in South Africa and the nature of the African National Congress struggle to the American people."

Mr. Wilkins declined to say how much money had been raised at fund-raising events along the way, including a \$5,000-a-place reception and dinner for film stars and other celebrities in Los Angeles Friday night. The total appeared to run over \$5 million.

For Mr. Mandela, who was released last year after 27 years in a South African prison, the trip was in some ways a revelation, too, close aides said.

"The political life of the U.S. is not so new, because, of course, he has been reading about it," said Zwelakhe Sisulu, editor of the South African weekly New Nation, who is accompanying Mr. Mandela.

Instead, Mr. Sisulu said, it was the cultural experience that came across as new and Mr. Mandela particularly enjoyed meeting sportsmen and musicians.

"He had always thought of them as tall, huge people," Mr. Sisulu said, "and he remarked to Quincy Jones on how small they were in person. "I think he was very surprised at the warmth of the American people; that was what was most striking. If anything, I think this was a humbling experience."

There was concern throughout his trip for the health of Mr. Mandela, who in the past few days has appeared to be walking slowly and stiffly. Friday night, he paused and

mopped his face several times as he spoke in the Hollywood Coliseum. As Mr. Mandela has waited to speak in the past few days, his face has seemed drawn and tired, but it lighted up as he faced a crowd.

Along his itinerary, Americans, particularly black Americans, wanted Mr. Mandela to join in their political agenda, speaking about poor education, drugs and poverty.

But, except for his statement about the American Indians, he remained totally focused on South Africa.