

STRICTLY EMBARGOED UNTIL DELIVERY

12 NOON - FRIDAY 6 SEPTEMBER, 1991

ADDRESS OF NELSON MANDELA, PRESIDENT OF THE AFRICAN  
NATIONAL CONGRESS ON RECEIVING AN HONORARY LL.D. DEGREE AT  
THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, 6 SEPTEMBER 1991

MR CHANCELLOR. MR VICE-CHANCELLOR, DISTINGUISHED MEMBERS OF THE UNIVERSITY  
COUNCIL AND SENATE, MEMBERS OF THE UNIVERSITY STAFF AND STUDENTS, FRIENDS  
IT IS A GREAT HONOUR THAT THIS UNIVERSITY BESTOWS ON ME AND THROUGH ME ON THE  
AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS AND ALL DEMOCRATIC ORGANISATIONS DEDICATED TO THE  
CREATION OF PEACE AND FREEDOM IN SOUTH AFRICA

NO INSTITUTION, ESPECIALLY NOT AN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION CAN FUNCTION IN AN  
ENVIRONMENT WHERE CONFLICT IS THE ORDER OF THE DAY. WHERE THE STRUCTURE OF  
SOCIETY PROMOTES CONFLICT, WHERE VIOLENCE IS ENCOURAGED. SUBSIDIZED AND INFLAMED.  
NO INSTITUTION COMMITTED TO THE PURSUIT OF TRUTH CAN FLOURISH IN A SOCIAL ORDER  
COMMITTED TO THE PURSUIT OF RACISM AND THE PRESERVATION OF RACIAL DOMINATION  
IT IS THEREFORE NATURAL THAT A UNIVERSITY SUCH AS THIS ONE, WHICH HAS A PROUD  
RECORD IN DEFENCE OF ACADEMIC FREEDOM. IN OPPOSITION TO APARTHEID OPPRESSION AND  
REPRESSION, WHILE ALSO MAINTAINING HIGH STANDARDS OF ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE, SHOULD  
SHARE THE VALUES THAT MOTIVATE THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS.

I AM NOT SUGGESTING THAT THERE IS OR SHOULD BE ANY FORMAL STRUCTURAL CONNECTION  
BETWEEN OURSELVES AND THIS UNIVERSITY. WE PRIZE THE AUTONOMY OF EDUCATIONAL  
INSTITUTIONS AND CONSIDER THAT THEY FUNCTION BEST WHEN INDEPENDENT OF POLITICAL  
ORGANISATIONS AND THE STATE. THIS IS INDEED ONE OF THE LESSONS OF OUR TIME.  
THAT BEING SAID WE DO SHARE MUCH AND WE MUST BUILD ON WHAT WE SHARE. WHAT WE  
SHARE IS VALUES THAT ARE UNIVERSALLY RESPECTED AND THIS WE MUST ADVANCE AND  
DEFEND. AMONGST THESE VALUES ARE A BELIEF IN DEMOCRACY. PEACE, EQUALITY.  
NONRACIALISM AND NONSEXISM. THIS NATURALLY PROVIDES ROOM FOR COOPERATION BUT IT  
ALSO MAKES US ALLIES IN OPPOSITION TO APARTHEID AND IN OUR DEDICATION TO SECURE  
PEACE, WHICH NECESSITATES A DEMOCRATIC FOUNDATION.

THIS IS NOT THE PLACE FOR ME TO DETAIL POSSIBLE BASES FOR FUTURE COOPERATION.  
ALREADY THERE IS FRUITFUL COOPERATION BETWEEN THE ANC AND SCHOLARS FROM THIS  
UNIVERSITY IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR POLICIES, AMONGST OTHER AREAS IN THE ECONOMY,  
HEALTH AND LAND. ACADEMICS ARE ALSO ENGAGED IN JOINT PROJECTS WITH VARIOUS  
DEPARTMENTS IN DEVELOPING OUR UNDERSTANDING OF NUMEROUS OTHER ISSUES.  
EVEN OUTSIDE OF THIS WE BENEFIT A GREAT DEAL FROM THE PUBLISHED RESEARCH OF MANY

OF YOUR SCHOLARS, IN PARTICULAR, THOSE DEMYSTIFYING TRADITIONAL EUROCENTRIC  
TREATMENT OF THE HISTORY OF THIS COUNTRY AND RECAPTURING SOME OF THE HIDDEN  
HISTORY OF OUR STRUGGLE AND THE HISTORY OF ORDINARY PEOPLE WHO DID NOT APPEAR IN  
EARLIER TEXTS WHICH RECORDED BLACKS MAINLY AS OBSTACLES IN THE WAY OF WHITE  
(INQUEST

BEFORE PASSING ON TO THE MAIN ISSUES THAT I WANT TO TACKLE IT IS IMPORTANT FOR ME TO  
RECORD ONE OTHER DEBT TO THIS UNIVERSITY. THIS UNIVERSITY HAS PRODUCED SOME OF THE  
FINEST MEN AND WOMEN WHO HAVE MADE OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE STRUGGLE TO  
FREE OUR COUNTRY AND SECURE A BETTER LIFE FOR ALL. WE PARTICULARLY WISH TO PAY  
TRIBUTE TO TWO PEOPLE WHO GAVE THEIR VERY LIVES FOR THIS CAUSE-RUTH FIRST, WHOM I  
KNEW AS A FINE JOURNALIST AND HUMANIST. AND DAVID WESTER WHOM I UNFORTUNATELY  
NEVER HAD THE OPPORTUNITY OF MEETING. BUT WHOSE DEDICATION TO THE CAUSE OF  
FREEDOM IS WELL RECORDED

THESE TWO PATRIOTS HAD TO DIE BECAUSE THERE ARE SOME PEOPLE IN THIS COUNTRY  
FIND THE IDEA OF HUMAN FREEDOM REPULSIVE. THESE PEOPLE GAVE THEIR LIVES SO THAT  
OTHERS COULD ONE DAY LIVE IN FREEDOM. WE OWE IT TO THEIR MEMORY TO ENSURE THAT  
THE DAY OF FREEDOM WILL COME SOONER RATHER THAN LATER. IT WILL COME WHETHER THE  
RACISTS WANT IT OR NOT. IT WILL COME BECAUSE THE MAJORITY OF SOUTH AFRICANS HAVE  
NEVER ACCEPTED THE DENIAL OF THEIR FREEDOM AND WILL NOT REST UNTIL PEACE AND  
JUSTICE HAVE INDEED TRIUMPHED

THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE COUNTRY HAS CHANGED SINCE FEBRUARY 2 1990. INDEED THE  
LANGUAGE OF LIBERATION IS THE CONVENTIONAL LANGUAGE OF NOT ONLY THE ANC BUT ALSO  
THE NATIONALIST PARTY. WE MAY COUNT THIS AS A VICTORY. BUT WE ALSO NEED TO BE  
CAUTIOUS AND NOT SUSPEND OUR CRITICAL JUDGMENT.

THIS WEEK THE NATIONALIST PARTY HAS OFFERED CONSTITUTIONAL PROPOSALS FOR A NEW  
SOUTH AFRICA. PROPOSALS THAT IT DESCRIBES AS AMOUNTING TO PARTICIPATORY  
DEMOCRACY. THAT IS OUR LANGUAGE. WE ALSO SEEK PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY AND THAT  
IS WHY THE VERY FIRST CLAUSE OF THE FREEDOM CHARTER SAYS "THE PEOPLE SHALL  
GOVERN" THAT IS WHY THE CHARTER CONTINUES BY STATING AMONGST OTHER THINGS 1146  
ALL BODIES OF MINORITY RULE, ADVISORY BOARDS, COUNCILS AND AUTHORITIES SHALL BE  
REPLACED BY DEMOCRATIC ORGANS OF SELF-GOVERNMENT.'

I THINK THAT IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE PAY ADEQUATE ATTENTION TO THESE PROPOSALS  
BECAUSE IT IS CRUCIAL THAT IT IS NOT JUST EXPERTS AND POLITICAL ORGANISATIONS THAT  
INVOLVE THEMSELVES IN CONSTITUTIONAL DEBATE. IT IS THE CONCERN OF ALL SOUTH  
AFRICANS WHO WANT TO LIVE IN PEACE AND FREEDOM.

IT IS OUR JOB, ALSO TO CONSIDER WHETHER ONE OR OTHER CONSTITUTIONAL PROPOSAL WILL  
SECURE THAT END. IT IS OUR JOB TO LOOK FOR REAL SOLUTIONS AND NOT ALLOW OURSELVES  
TO BE DECEIVED IF SOMETHING FALLS SHORT OF WHAT IS REQUIRED OR CONCEALS WHAT IS IN  
FACT SUBVERSIVE OF WHAT IS REQUIRED

THE LANGUAGE OF LIBERATION IS ONE THING. IT IS OUR JOB TO SEE WHAT THE NP ACTUALLY UNDERSTANDS BY PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY. ON CLOSER EXAMINATION WE SEE THAT THEY ARE NOT SPEAKING OF THE PEOPLE GOVERNING. THEY ACTUALLY HAVE IN MIND A SCHEME TO PREVENT THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE FROM BEING REALIZED THROUGH DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT. 'THEY PROPOSE A SYSTEM THAT WILL ENTRENCH MINORITY PRIVILEGES BY ENSURING THAT ANY MAJORITY PARTY IS POWERLESS TO MAKE SIGNIFICANT SOCIAL CHANGES, POWERLESS TO REMOVE MINORITY PRIVILEGES AND IN MANY WAYS POWERLESS TO RULE. LET US LOOK AT THESE PROPOSALS A LITTLE CLOSER. IN THE FIRST HOUSE OF PARLIAMENT, THEIR PROPOSALS COINCIDE WITH OURS, WHERE THERE WILL BE ELECTIONS ON THE BASIS OF ONE PERSON ONE VOTE, THROUGH PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION. BUT THIS HOUSE CANNOT MAKE LAW ALONE. ITS LEGISLATION MUST BE PASSED BY A SECOND HOUSE. THE SECOND HOUSE IS BASED ON 9 REGIONS, EACH OF WHICH HAS AN EQUAL NUMBER OF SEATS, THAT IS TO SAY, THE MOST POPULOUS REGION THE PWV HAS THE SAME STATUS IN THIS HOUSE AS THE NORTHERN CAPE. IMMEDIATELY THIS REDUCES THE WEIGHT OF THE MAJORITY OF THE POPULATION. BUT THE SUGGESTIONS DO NOT STOP THERE. IN THE ELECTIONS FOR EACH REGION, EVERY PARTY WHICH GETS MORE THAN 10% OF THE VOTE WILL HAVE AN EQUAL NUMBER OF SEATS. IN OTHER WORDS IF THE ANC GETS 70% OF THE VOTE AND THE NP, DP AND IF GETS 10% EACH, THE ORGANISATION WITH MAJORITY SUPPORT WILL IN FACT HOLD A MINORITY OF SEATS!

THAT IS WHY THE NP CALLS IT A HOUSE OF MINORITIES. MORE CORRECTLY IT SHOULD BE DESCRIBED AS A HOUSE TO PROTECT MINORITY PRIVILEGE AND BLOCK THE INTENTION OF ANY DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT TO RECONSTRUCT THE COUNTRY ON AN EQUITABLE BASIS. BUT THIS IS NOT ALL. AT THE LEVEL OF EXECUTIVE CONTROL THE GOVERNMENT CLAIMS TO FOLLOW A CONSTITUTIONAL PATTERN OF WESTERN EUROPE - WHERE COALITION GOVERNMENTS ARE FREQUENTLY FORMED. THE DIFFERENCE IS THAT THE NP PROPOSALS SUGGEST THAT SUCH COALITIONS SHOULD BE CONSTITUTIONALLY OBLIGATORY.

NO ONE PARTY CAN HOLD THE POSITION OF HEAD OF STATE FOR MORE THAN ONE YEAR. THIS MUST BE ROTATED BETWEEN THREE TO FIVE PARTY HEADS, EACH HOLDING OFFICE FOR NO MORE THAN A YEAR AT A TIME. THEY MUST MAKE ALL DECISIONS BY CONSENSUS AND THEY PICK A CABINET REPRESENTING ALL OF THESE PARTIES TO CARRY OUT THEIR DECISIONS. THERE CAN BE A MOTION OF NO CONFIDENCE IN THE WHOLE RULING TRIUMVIRATE OR QUADRVIRATE BUT NOT IN AN INDIVIDUAL LEADER.

THIS IS SAID TO BE A WAY OF ENSURING THAT THERE IS PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY. IT IS IN FACT A RECIPE FOR GOVERNMENTAL PARALYSIS AND IT IS PLAIN AND SIMPLY AIMED AT PREVENTING MAJORITY RULE FROM HAVING ANY MEANING. IT IS AIMED AT ENSURING THAT THE ACCUMULATED PRIVILEGES OF WHITE MINORITY RULE REMAIN INVIOLENT.

THE NP PROPOSALS ARE A RECIPE FOR CONTINUED CONFLICT. THEY ARE A SET OF PROPOSALS THAT, IF SERIOUSLY ADVANCED, CAN ONLY RETARD PROGRESS TOWARDS A NEGOTIATED SOLUTION. THIS IS A CYNICAL EXERCISE DESIGNED UNDER FANCY CONSTITUTIONAL LANGUAGE

TO DUPE SOUTH AFRICANS

AND WHAT DOES DE KLERK SAY OF THE VALUES EMBRACED IN THESE PROPOSALS? IN HIS SPEECH TO THE NP SPECIAL CONGRESS:

IN OUR DEFENCE OF THESE VALUES, WE SHALL NOT WAVER. THE NATIONAL PARTY HAS THE CAPACITY TO PREVENT THE ADOPTION OF A CONSTITUTION WHICH WILL MILITATE AGAINST THESE VALUES. WE WILL NOT HESITATE TO USE THAT ABILITY.'

IN OTHER WORDS THE REGIME IS NOT ONLY COMMITTED TO MAINTAINING MINORITY PRIVILEGES AND PARALYSING MAJORITY RULE. BUT WILL USE ITS CAPACITY TO PREVENT A CONSTITUTION BASED ON ALTERNATIVE VALUES FROM BEING ADOPTED. WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

IS THE NATIONAL PARTY GOING TO PREVENT NEGOTIATIONS OVER MODELS THAT ARE FUNDAMENTALLY OPPOSED TO THAT WHICH THEY PROPOSE? ARE WE GOING TO BE LIMITED TO NEGOTIATING A CONSTITUTION WITH ONE OR OTHER VARIANT OF THE MINORITY VETO? . WHAT IS THIS CAPACITY THAT DE KLERK THREATENS TO DEPLOY? IT IS SURELY THE CAPACITY OF A GOVERNMENT WHICH WE ARGUE SHOULD NOT BE THE HUNGARIAN AUTHORITY IN THE PERIOD OF TRANSITION TO DEMOCRACY. IT IS A GOVERNMENT WHICH CLAIMS IT CANNOT MAKE WAY FOR AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT BECAUSE IT IS THE CONSTITUTIONALLY ELECTED AUTHORITY OF THIS COUNTRY. THE AUTHORITY OF THIS CONSTITUTION DERIVES FROM THE SUPPORT OF JUST OVER 1 MILLION VOTERS IN THE 1983 REFERENDUM. IT IS ALSO A GOVERNMENT ELECTED BY JUST OVER 1 MILLION PEOPLE OF A POPULATION OF NEARLY 40 MILLION.

IN SHORT, WE SPEAK OF A GOVERNMENT WITHOUT A SHRED OF LEGITIMACY AND A CONSTITUTION THAT IS NOT A SOUTH AFRICAN CONSTITUTION BUT A RECORD OF THE RIGHTS OF WHITE SOUTH AFRICANS AND THE DISPOSSESSION AND DISABILITIES OF THE BLACK MAJORITY WE REPRESENT FAR MORE PEOPLE THAN THE SMALL NUMBER THAT VOTED FOR THE NATIONAL PARTY OR ITS CONSTITUTION. OUR CONSTITUTIONAL VISION IS SUPPORTED IN BROAD TERMS NOT ONLY BY THE ANC BUT BY ALL DEMOCRATS. .

SO WE ARE NOT PERSUADED BY ARGUMENTS CONCERNING THE CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY OF THIS GOVERNMENT. WE SAY THAT EVIDENCE MOUNTS UP DAILY TO SUPPORT OUR CASE FOR AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT. EVIDENCE SUCH AS INKATHA GATE AND THE STATE TOLERATION AND COMPLICITY IN THE VIOLENCE HAVE PERSUADED MANY PEOPLE THAT OUR DEMAND FOR AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL UNITY IS NECESSARY TO CREATE A CLIMATE OF FREE POLITICAL ACTIVITY APPROPRIATE FOR NEGOTIATIONS.

WE HAD HOPED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD FIND THE WILL AND EXERCISE THE POWER THAT IT HAS TO BRING AN END TO THE VIOLENCE. IT HAS NOT AND APPEARS UNWILLING TO DO SO. IT IS CLEAR TO US THAT THE MAIN OBSTACLE IN THE WAY OF PEACE IS THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT. IT MUST GO SO THAT WE CAN FORM A GOVERNMENT ENJOYING BROAD CONFIDENCE AND WITH THE WILL TO TACKLE THE PROBLEMS THAT URGENTLY FACE US

THIS IS NOT 'n-IE TIME FOR SELFISH SHORT TERM POLJTICAL ADVANTAGES TO BE SOUGHT. THE VIOLENCE IS SOMETHING THAT IS DAMAGING THE COUNTRY AS A WHOLE. IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT ALL PATRIOTIC SOUTH AFRICANS APPEAL TO THE GOVERNMENT TO MAKE WAY, EXERCISE REAL PATRIOTISM AND HAND OVER POWER TO AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT THAT WILL GEI' US OUT OF THE PRESENT MESS AND TAKE US FORWARD TO PEACE UNDER A DEMOCRATIC CONSTITUTION I SPOKE OF THE NEED TO THINK OF THE LONG TERM IN'IERESTS OF THE COUNTRY AS A WHOLE. SOME PEOPLE MAY HAVE BEEN SURPRISED AT OUR APPEALS FOR THE RELEASE OF RIGHT WING HUNGER STRIKERS. OUR INTERVENTION HAS NOT ONLY BEEN MADE BECAUSE THESE PEOPLE MUST LIVE TO PROVIDE THE EVIDENCE THATTHEY POSSESS OF MIJTARY AND NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE SERVICE INVOLVEMENT IN CRIMINAL ACNONS. THAT IS ONE REASW FOR OUR INTEFNEN'NON. THERE WERE TWO OTHER REASONS. ONE IS THAT WE DO NOT WANT ANY MORE UNNECESSARY DEATHS IN A COUNTRY WHERE LJVES, ALBEIT MAINLY BLACK UVES ARE VERY CHEAP. THE SECOND REASON IS THAT THE ANC WANTS TO CREATE A BASIS FOR FUTURE RECONCILIATION IN A DEMOCRANC STATE. NO MATTER HOW REPUGNANTWE FIND THE BELIEFS AND ACTIONS OF THE EXI'REME RIGHT, THEY FORM A PART OF THE SOUTH AFRICA OF THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE. WE DO NOT WANT THEVI TO REMAIN IN THE FUTURE SOUTH AFRICAAS A RENAMO TYPE FORCE. LET US TRY TO REACH THESE PEOPLE NOW AND ASSURE THEM THAT THEY HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR FROM MAJORITY RULE. NOTHING TO FEAR IF THE ANC BECOMES THE FUTURE GOVERNMENT OF THIS COUNTRY. NOTHING TO FEAR FROM BLACK PEOPLE AND FROM EQUALITY. WE KNOW THAT THIS IS A DIFFICULT TASK, BUT AS NATION BUILDERS, AS AN ORGANISATION COMMITTED TO CREATING A NEW SOUTH AFRICA WHICH WILL TRULY BE A HOME FOR ALL WHO UVE IN IT WE HAVE TO UNDERTAKE THIS TASK. MR CHANCELLOR, FORGIVE ME FOR MAKING HARDLY ANY REERENCE TO EDUCA'HONAL MATTERS IN MY ADDRESS. I FELT THAT IT WOULD BE MORE APPROPRIATE AT THIS TIME TO ADDRESS CENTRAL ISSUES CONCERNING OUR PEOPLE AS A WHOLE, ISSUES THAT WILL CONDITION WHETHER OR NOT THE DOORS OF LEARNING AND CULTURE WILL BE mULY OPENED. MAY I THANK YOU AGAIN FOR THE HONOUR YOU HAVE BESTOWED ON ME. I WILL TRY TO PROVE WOR'n-IY OF THIS HONOUR. THAT MEANS I WILL PURSUE THE QUEST FOR PEACE AND DEMOCRACY WITH AU. THE VIGOUR AT MY DISPOSAL. AND THATWILL BE THE TASK OF THE ANC AS A WHOLE. I ASK ALL MEMBERS OF THIS UNIVERSITY, IN WHATEVER WAY THEY CAN TO JOIN US IN THIS PATRIOTIC TASK. THANK YCLJ