

Nelson Mandela: Fighting for Freedom B1

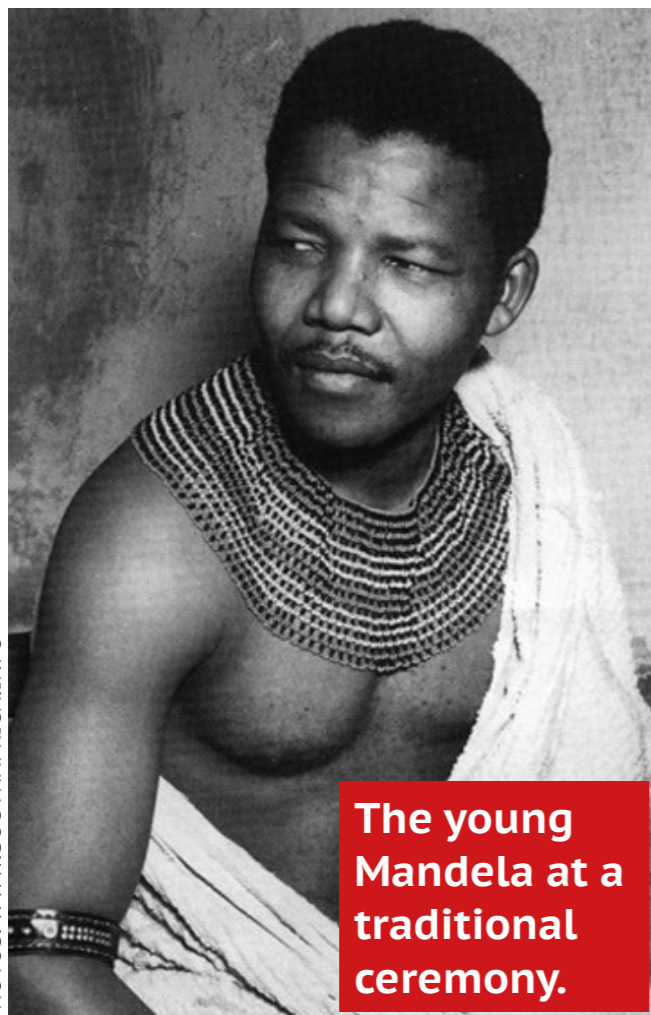


Nelson Mandela was the leader of the battle for justice for all South Africans.

When Mandela was born in 1918, South Africa was controlled by white colonists from Holland, France and Britain. Black people could only live where Whites decided, in rural "homelands" where the agricultural land wasn't good, or in "townships" – ghettos outside the

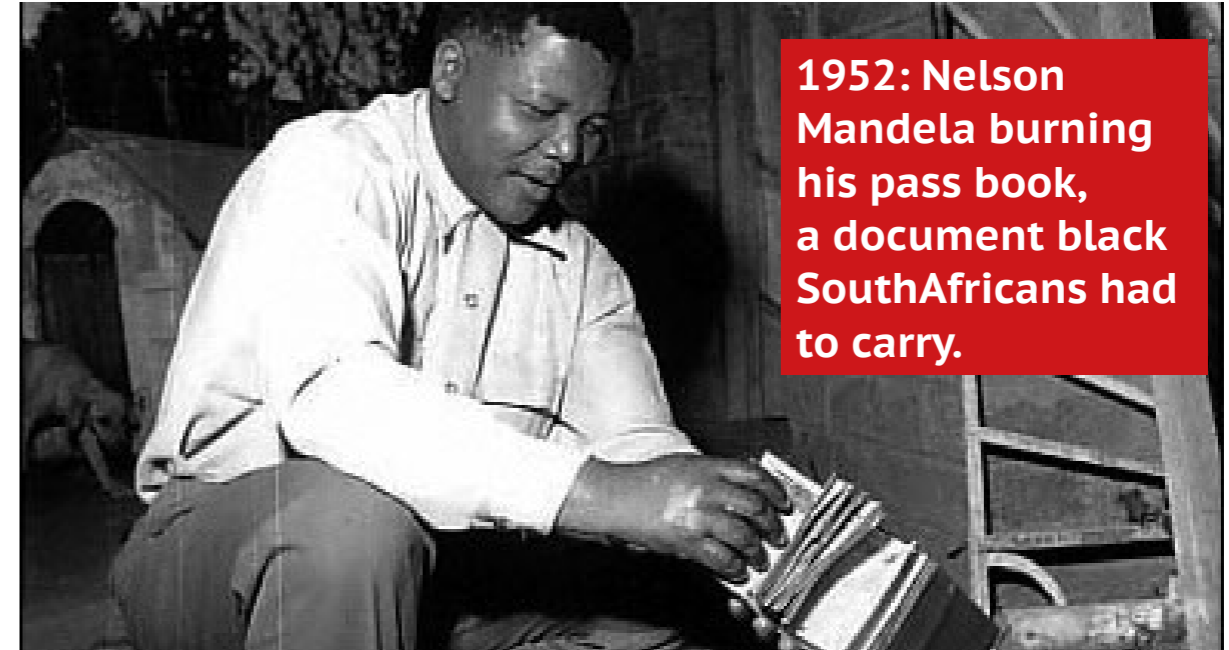
big cities or near mines or other places where black people worked. Blacks couldn't vote and had limited access to education.

Because Mandela was the son of an African chief, he went to school and university, and became a lawyer. But the situation for black people became worse. In 1948, the government introduced "apartheid": a system that classified every South African as white, black, coloured, or Asian, and gave them different rights.



The young Mandela at a traditional ceremony.

PHOTOS: WWW.SOUTHAFRICA.INFO



1952: Nelson Mandela burning his pass book, a document black South Africans had to carry.

PHOTOS: WWW.SOUTHAFRICA.INFO

ANC

Mandela joined the African National Congress, which opposed apartheid but refused violence. But, in 1960, all opposition movements were banned. Mandela became the commander of the ANC's military movement to sabotage government buildings and symbols. In 1964, he and many other ANC leaders were arrested and sentenced to life imprisonment.

Mandela spent 27 years in prison. The government offered to free him if he left the country, but he refused. He knew he was a symbol for the many people who opposed apartheid, in South Africa and the world. There were more and more protests in South Africa, and the government could only keep control by using more and more violence.

A Cape Town beach in 1985.



Manuel Hartan

Freedom

Finally, in 1990, the South African president, FW de Klerk, promised to end apartheid, and released Mandela and the other political prisoners. The ANC helped negotiate a new constitution, with equal rights for South Africans of all colours. In April 1994, South Africa, "the Rainbow Nation", had its first democratic elections, and Mandela was elected president.

Nelson Mandela retired from politics in 1999 but he continued to work for peace and particularly to help children with AIDS until he died in 2013. On his birthday, 18 July, the United Nations celebrate Mandela Day, recognising this hero.



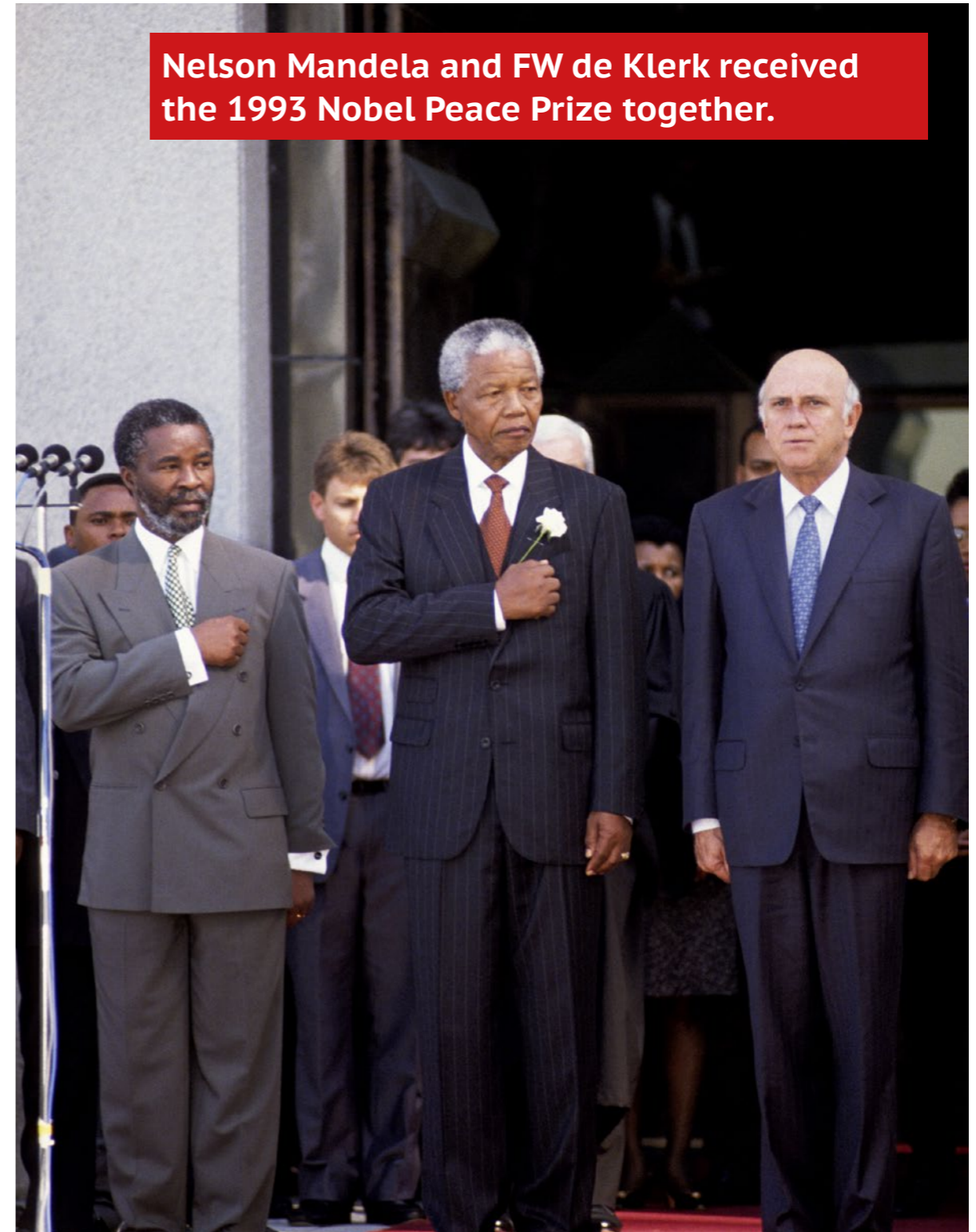
DR

A Man of Many Names

Mr Mandela's parents named him **Rolihlahla**, a name in his native isiXhosa language.

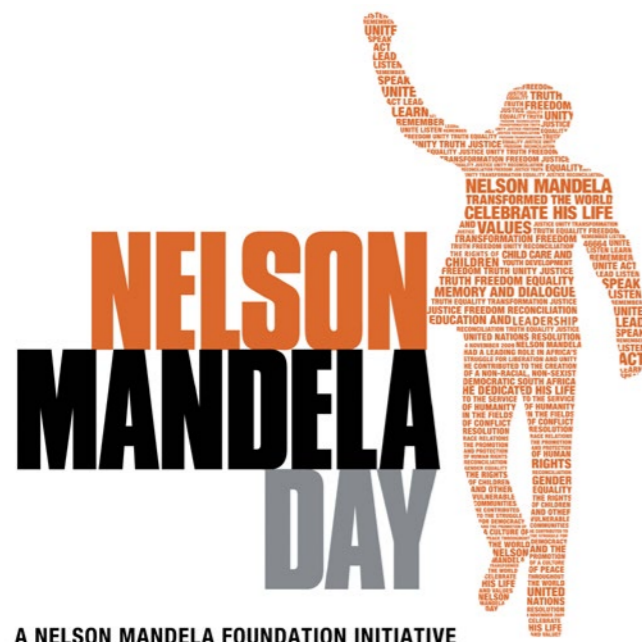
His first primary school teacher called him **Nelson**: it was common to give African children European names white South Africans found easier to pronounce.

Many people called him affectionately **Madiba**, which was the name of his clan.



Nelson Mandela and FW de Klerk received the 1993 Nobel Peace Prize together.

UN PHOTO



In 2009, the United Nations declared Nelson Mandela's birthday, 18 July, International Mandela Day.

On that day, people around the world give service to their communities, as Nelson Mandela gave service to the people of South Africa.

It is also a day when people campaign to improve the conditions of prisoners, in recognition of all the years Mandela spent in prison.

“
WHAT COUNTS IN LIFE
IS NOT THE MERE FACT
THAT WE HAVE LIVED.
IT IS WHAT DIFFERENCE
WE HAVE MADE TO THE
LIVES OF OTHERS THAT
WILL DETERMINE THE
SIGNIFICANCE OF THE
LIFE WE LEAD.”

”
- NELSON MANDELA