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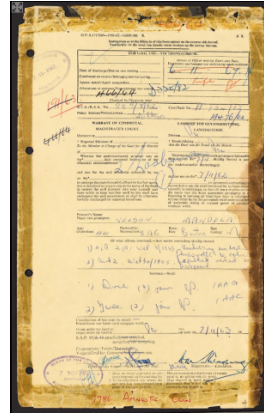
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This image depicts one of the "Warrants of Committal" for Nelson Mandela, sending him to jail ("Gaol"). This particular Warrant is dated November 7, 1962. As a result of this Warrant, Mandela would end-up at Robben Island. Image digitized and online via the Google Mandela Archive at the Nelson Mandela Centre of Memory. Click on the image for a better view.

When Nelson Mandela arrived at Robben Island, in 1964, his new home consisted of extremely cramped quarters. He describes it thus:

I was assigned a cell at the head of the corridor. It overlooked the courtyard and had a small eye-level window. I could walk the length of my cell in three paces. When I lay down, I could feel the wall with my feet and my head grazed the concrete at the other side. The width was about six feet, and the walls were at least two feet thick.

*Each cell had a white card posted outside of it with our name and our prison service number. Mine read, "N Mandela 466/64," which meant I was the 466th prisoner admitted to the island in 1964. I was forty-six years old, a political prisoner with a life sentence, and that small cramped space was to be my home for I knew not how long. (Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom*, page 384.)*

One of his first jobs, at the Robben Island prison, was turning stones (from the island's limestone quarry) into gravel. Physical labor, however, wasn't the worst part.

In their *prior* cells, in Pretoria, Mandela and his fellow prisoners - like his old friend, Walter Sisulu - had felt the support of their families and friends. Isolated on windswept Robben Island, however, they felt very alone. That, of course, was precisely why they were there.

Their situation was made worse by an enforced lack of communication with family members. Prisoners were only allowed to write a single letter, consisting of five hundred words, every six months.

As the years passed, and stories about the repression of South African blacks received international attention, rallies against apartheid and support for Mandela grew worldwide. The suspicious death of activist Stephen Biko, while in police custody, caused more public outrage. Economic sanctions, and sporting boycotts, helped to isolate the regime and its policies.

"Free Mandela" concerts, attracting large crowds of vocal anti-apartheid people, became popular. In one particularly moving performance, Mark Knopfler - with his Dire Straits band members - sang about the plight of "Brothers in Arms."

Would South Africa also end up in a civil war - with fed-up blacks using arms and violence against fearful whites who believed they would have no say if the government were democratically elected? Would South Africa descend into the chaos of brothers-in-arms fighting instead of reconciling?

The answer to those questions was ... "maybe not." Maybe not because Mandela, himself, had changed his thinking during his reflective years:

If you want to make peace with your enemy, you have to work with your enemy. Then he becomes your partner.

The key, to South Africa's future - and to Mandela's - was wrapped-up in those words.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/FREE-MANDELA-Invictus>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/FREE-MANDELA-Invictus>

Media Stream



Robben Island Prisoners - Stone Pounders

Image online, courtesy Robben Island Museum.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Robben-Island-Prisoners-Stone-Pounders>



Robben Island - Limestone Quarry

Image online, courtesy University of Cape Town.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Robben-Island-Limestone-Quarry>

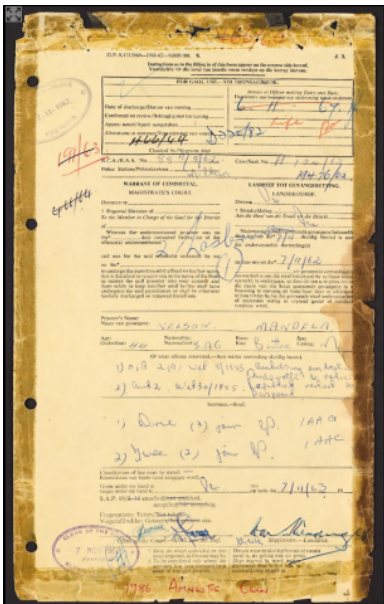


Soweto Uprising - Death of Hector Pieterson

Photo by Sam Nzima, online courtesy National Library of South Africa.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Soweto-Uprising-Death-of-Hector-Pieterson>



FREE MANDELA

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/FREE-MANDELA>



Brothers in Arms - Free Mandela

Clip of "Brothers in Arms," performed by Mark Knopfler and Dire Straits at Wembley Stadium on the 11th of June, 1988.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Brothers-in-Arms-Free-Mandela>



Soweto Eyewitness - Antoinette Sithole

Video clip of Antoinette Sithole, sister of Hector Pieteron, at Winston Salem State University (WSSU). Online, courtesy WSSU Rampages - Ram ReelWSSUrampages's Channel at YouTube.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Soweto-Eyewitness-Antoinette-Sithole>



Biko - Cry Freedom

Clip from *Cry Freedom*, online courtesy YouTube. Copyright, Universal Studios, all rights reserved. Clip provided here as free use for educational purposes.

Director: Richard Attenborough

Producer: Richard Attenborough

Writers: Donald Woods (book); John Briley (screenplay)

Starring:

Denzel Washington - Steve Biko; Donald Woods - Kevin Kline

Studio: Universal Pictures; Marble Arch Productions

Distributor: Universal Pictures; MCA Home Video

Year: 1987

Run time: 157 minutes

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Biko-Cry-Freedom>