



United States  
of America

# Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 97<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 128

WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, AUGUST 5, 1982

No. 106

## Senate

### WINNIE MANDELA

Mr. TSONGAS. Mr. President, the great Roman orator Cicero described courage as "that virtue which champions the cause of right." Winnie Mandela is a living symbol of courage. She has committed her life to working for freedom in a country which continues to deny its citizens the most basic of human rights.

Twice before I have spoken in this chamber about Winnie Mandela. Through the political prisoner adoption program of the Congressional Ad Hoc Monitoring Group on Southern Africa, I have adopted Ms. Mandela. I am pleased to report that her banishment has not disrupted her continuous efforts to bring peaceful, social and political change to South Africa.

An article by Benjamin Pogrund, which appeared in the Boston Globe on June 18, 1982, warmly describes the courageous ideas and life of Winnie Mandela. I ask unanimous consent that the article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the article was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

#### SHE WHO STRIVES IS UNBROKEN

WIFE OF SOUTH AFRICAN POLITICAL PRISONER  
DEFIES HARASSMENT, OFFICIAL BANS

(By Benjamin Pogrund, Special to The  
Globe)

JOHANNESBURG.—Banishing Nomzamo ("she who strives") Winnie Mandela to a remote dead-end black ghetto must have seemed like a good idea to the South African government five and a half years ago. It was a way to get rid of someone who was a painful thorn in official flesh.

But it hasn't worked out that way. For the enforced isolation, the severely restricted existence and the constant police surveillance and harassment have failed, as intended, to break her spirit.

The unceasing official action against her—making her probably the most persecuted of all South Africans—has, if anything, caused her to grow and in the process to draw even wider respect.

Mandela starts with the aura of being the wife of the country's leading political prisoner; Nelson Mandela has been in jail for nearly 19 years; he is serving a life sentence for attempting to overthrow the white Afrikaner government.

But Mandela's strength and personality make her a formidable opponent in her own right: articulate, intelligent and strikingly beautiful and a grandmother in her late 40s. She is fervently committed to the downfall of apartheid, South Africa's system of legal racial distinction and discrimination.

She has long been a force inspiring anti-apartheid protests, which has led to repeated attempts by the government to silence her. For nearly 19 of the 20 years since 1962, she has been either under administrative restrictions or in prison.

#### BANNING ORDERS AGAINST HER

A series of "banning" orders was first used against her. Issued by the government with no reason given and not open to challenge in court, the bannings prevented her from being with more than one person at a time, restricted her movements in the Johannesburg area where she was living and made it a crime for her to be quoted in any way.

In between, she was detained without trial several times and held for months at a stretch—on one occasion under the Terrorism Act, which carries the death penalty upon conviction. But no serious criminal charges ever succeeded. Instead, the only times she has been convicted have been for contravening the banning orders against her. She has been prosecuted eight times for such violations in recent years, with two convictions.

With a record like that, she once told a magistrate during one of her trials, the police visited her at home so often that her house has been almost turned into an extension of a police station.

She lost one job after another. Either the police called on employers, or she had to quit because of the banning restrictions. Thus, she could not work as a social worker with a child welfare society in Johannesburg, nor was she allowed to work in a correspondence college because she was debarred from entering educational institutions.

Every now and again she was subject to personal terror as unknown, never-found thugs threatened and attacked her.

She did not halt her crusading.

Finally, in 1977, the government tool what no doubt it believed would be a final act in silencing her: She was banished to the tiny black ghetto—it is called a "location" in South Africa—near the village of Brandfort, 200 miles south of Johannesburg.

Until then, Mandela had lived in Soweto, the ghetto for about 1.5 million blacks outside Johannesburg, it wasn't the greatest, but it was paradise compared with the



Brandfort location where she was summarily dumped in house number 802—a semidetached house of two rooms and a kitchen. The rooms are so small that a proverbial cat could not be swung in them. There is no bathroom, no electricity, no running water except for a few communal taps in the street (until she had a tap piped into her kitchen) and no water-borne sewerage.

The other half of the semidetached house is occupied by a black security policeman; another policeman lives in the adjoining house.

The bannings continue: By administrative decree she is ordered to remain in Brandfort and not to leave without permission; she cannot attend any meetings—which means a gathering with more than one person—whether for political or social purposes: She cannot be quoted in South Africa.

She's also half-arrested: She must remain at home from 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. daily and from 3 p.m. on Saturdays to 6 a.m. on Mondays.

The first five years of the banning ended five months ago. On Dec. 29, the banning and banishment were renewed for another five years; as before, there was no trial and no reasons stated.

When she wants to visit her husband, she has to go through the same sort of official thicket that has applied for years. Until April, he was in Robben Island maximum-security prison in Cape Town's Table Bay; then he was suddenly moved to Pollsmoor prison, near Cape Town. No reason has been given.

To get to see him, she needs permission from a magistrate to leave Brandfort. She must advise the police when she leaves; she must fly to Cape Town on a designated flight, and not take a cheaper train trip; she must check in with the police when she gets there and stay at a designated place. She must repeat the whole process in reverse when she returns.

Failure to comply with any one of the stipulations can lead to criminal prosecution and jail.

Mandela has no illusions. Consigning her to Brandfort was done with the intention of killing her soul, destroying her spiritually. Damned to a back water of people steeped in poverty and bereft of culture, she was meant to suffer intellectual and social malnutrition, to wither. But she has proven the contrary. She has been resourceful and courageous, fueled perhaps by hatred of the system that maintains the poverty and barrenness of existence of 9000 blacks in the Brandfort location and of the many others who work on the rich, white-owned, corn farms in the district.

When she reached Brandfort, the ground around her house was bare and scrubby. It is now a garden with a lawn and fruit trees. The grass is there because Mandela used to pull out tufts growing at the tap down the street and transplant them.

Slowly, others in the location have followed her example, using seeds sent to Mandela by friends.

Over the years, her house has also become a combined community center-library-clinic-refuge.

In one of the tiny rooms there is a bookcase, four-feet-wide with five shelves. It can be a "library" because the books are neatly divided by small pieces of paper marked from A to Z.

#### IMPROMPTU CLINIC HAS GROWN

Scattered on the shelves are bandages and gauze. An impromptu clinic has grown to help treat stab wounds—all too many as the men take refuge in liquor sold at the official beer hall—the diseases of malnutrition among the children, and the coughs and aches that are part of deprived existence.

Mandela's friends, in South Africa and abroad, help with money to buy bandages and cough mixtures. Friends send her packets of enriched soup powder to give to people.

Her house is also home for the strays of the location—the glue-sniffing children, the orphans, the homeless ones. Up to 20 of them sleep on her floor on a night.

She has, in addition, set a special example through her own behavior in the "white" village a mile away. She will not use the little niches provided in shop walls for blacks—who have little choice but to buy there. Instead, she walks into regular shops as her right—and watches the local whites leave hastily as she enters. Her behavior has given local blacks a sense of new dignity.

That the imposing churches in the white village are barred to blacks does not concern her. Only one family among the village's whites are counted among her friends.

The police are constantly with her. On the day that I visited her, three carloads of policemen had apparently been there all morning; during the afternoon, two whites drove past.

Mandela is now engaged on her most ambitious project, one arising from the inadequate medical treatment available to the location's people. At present there is a clinic open during the day, where free attention is given, but there is no doctor. If anyone is very ill he must go to the white village where there are two doctors in private practice. Only patients suffering with tuberculosis and syphilis do not pay.

Mandela has arranged for the black doctor in the nearest large town, 45 miles away, to come every second day for three hours to offer treatment. But where to house him? A local black man has lent her a van. Parked in her garden, it will be used as a consulting room and storeroom for medicine and can also be driven to visit the district farms.

But it is obviously inadequate. Mandela's solution lies in two-by-four planks carefully placed on the lawn. They enclose a space 22 feet by 12 feet. That's where she wants to erect a prefab for a clinic building.

The cost? About \$25,000.

She has faith that, somehow, the money will come.

Meanwhile, each day, amid the business of tending to the needs of the local people, she regularly goes to the white village, to a pair of pay telephones. There are no phones in the Brandfort location.

Each weekday, at 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. local time, and at 11 a.m. on Saturday, she is there to receive calls and to make what small human contact she can with friends elsewhere.