



An Chartlann Náisiúnta
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If we accept that proposal it means that right from the beginning of the negotiations we will be in the minority. We are saying we can never accept that position, because all the so called elected leaders wer'nt elected in inverted commas, when the ANC was banned, when such a substantial section of our membership was forced into exile and another thrown into prison and those who remained were gagged - could not speak. Therefore we had no say whatsoever in those elections. What we are saying now is that the people who are going to be entrusted with the important work of drawing a non-racial constitution for the country must be elected democratically. That is the democratic principal observed throughout the world: this must be observed in our country. The government, of course, is afraid of this because they are aware of our influence and they know that will sweep the boards in elections. But this is a matter that can not be avoided because if we wanted decisions which enjoy legitimacy and credibility as far as the masses of the people, those decisions must be taken by people who have been authorised in democratic elections. That is our stand point.

Question :

Mr. Mandela, Simon Cumbers from Capital Radio News here in Dublin. There have been allegations during the week that you and the ANC have had meetings with members of the IRA or have contacts with the members IRA. I wonder if I could just ask you do you find yourself having any empathy with either the actions or the cause of the IRA in the North of this country?

Mandela : We certainly have had no meetings with the IRA. Secondly we are an organisation committed to peace and if we resorted to violence it's because of the reasons which I have outlined. What we would like to see is that the British Government and the IRA should adopt precisely the line that we've taken in regard to our own internal situation. There is nothing better than openness - sitting down to resolve the problems in a peaceful manner. That is what our desire is, that is what we would like to see.

Question : You would also like to see the retention of the right to take up arms if that is necessary if you see no other option available as you see it?

Mandela : Pardon?

Question : You would also like to see the retention of the right to use violence if there is no other option available as you see it?

Mandela : I am not expressing an opinion as to the methods of political action which must be adopted by any particular group in any country. What I am concentrating upon is that peaceful methods are the best way of resolving problems.

Question : Donal White, RTE News. At the EEC Summit here quite recently the leaders of the Twelve Heads of Government and State decided to maintain sanctions against South Africa at least for the present.

They will be reviewing the situation again at the Rome Summit next December. Are you concerned that perhaps the line is beginning to give, that we are going to see sanctions against South Africa crumble?

Mandela : I am optimistic that the European nations are prepared to consider our representation. In fact that has already been demonstrated in the Dublin Summit. Some of the Governments that we saw in Europe started from different positions from us. They believed that the time had come to review sanctions. We explained the position to them that we are the organisation that asked the international community to apply sanctions. We are the organisation for the purpose of dismantling apartheid. We are the organisation that has taken the initiative for peace in our country and that those countries who want to make a contribution towards a solution to our problems are obliged to consult us first and what we want is that nothing should be done by the international community to derail the peace process that is going on now. This matter as to what the international community should do must be left entirely to ourselves, - that is the ANC. We are prepared to have joint discussions with the Government as to what should happen to sanctions - we are prepared for that. The Frontline States, the organisation of African Unity, the Non-Align Movement, as well as the General Assemble of the United Nations, have all emphasised that sanctions should be maintained until fundamental and irreversible changes take place in the political set-up in the country. That must be respected and we will decide at what point can we say

fundamental and irreversible changes in the policy of the country have taken place and we will have no hesitation whatsoever in calling for the review of sanctions once we feel that that position has been reached. You must understand that we are even more concerned than the Government about sanctions because they are destroying our economy. We don't want that because we are the people who suffer. It is blacks who are thrown out of jobs. Unemployment has reached unacceptable proportions and other problems also require to be addressed. And these can only be addressed by a healthy and vigorous and growing economy which grows faster than the increase in the country's population. This is not what is happening today and we're concerned. But this is the price which we are prepared to pay in order to dismantle apartheid and to have the principle of one person one vote introduced in our country.

Question : Sky TV. You will be seeing Mrs Thatcher this week, in view of her line on sanctions, what message will you be taking to her?

Mandela : Well, as I have pointed out on previous occasions I don't propose to discuss with the mass media what I am going to say to the British Prime Minister. I don't think that is proper. After I meet the Prime Minister I will be able to exchange views with you.

Question :What is your reaction to the present state... (inaudible).

Mandela : Well I don't know what your referring to because at the Summit she agreed with the rest of the Head of States, she never put any line which is contrary to the other Head of States and the question arises what you are referring to when you say we know her line.

Question : Might I ask you about her view?

Mandela : Have you asked a question already, lets have others?

Question : No have' nt actually asked a question already.

Mandela : I'm very sorry.

Taoiseach : They look alike - (laughter).

Question : Paddy Smith from the Irish Times. I would like to ask Mr. Mandela, there has been talk recently that the ANC is prepared to ease the cultural and sporting boycott and I wonder if you would comment on that and I'd also like to ask the Taoiseach whether he is prepared to respond favourably to your request for funds?

Mandela : The question of the cultural boycott is part of the pressures which we have asked the international community to exert against apartheid. It is one of the most important forms

of pressure which can be brought against the government. The young people sportsmen in the country, both black and white, are very keen to take part in international sports. We have pressures coming from various bodies inside the country where our sportsmen would like very much to take part in international competitions and we are examining this question in the light of any progress that we might make in these negotiations. But for the time being we insist that the cultural boycott must be maintained because any review might give a wrong signal. I can assure you that the element of urgency is dominant both from the point of view of the approach of the ANC as well as the Government. I met Mr. de Klerk the day before I left the country and he urged that we should meet as soon as I return and the reason for that is because the sanctions are biting and they have spelled out the facts and figures to us to show them how sanctions have eaten deep into the economic life of the country and we have therefore this element of urgency. We should not be in a hurry by reviewing any form of sanction which is being applied by the International Community.

Question : Denis Murray, BBC. Mr. Mandela, I wonder if I could take you back to the subject we touched on earlier with reference to the IRA and your suggestion of talks between them and the British government. One of the arguments that is always been put against that from the British side is that the IRA have best represent the minority, - a very tiny number of people. What's your view on that?

Mandela : That is not the issue, the issue here is that people are slaughtering one another when they could sit down and address the problems in a peaceful manner. It is not for anyone of the involved bodies to argue that I talk so and so because this is a minority. The issue is that differences have arisen. As a result of these differences many people have died, have lost their lives. What is the sense of continuing with that mutual slaughter when they could sit down and discuss peace. I can't see the reason in that approach.

Taoiseach : We only have time for one more question.

Question :Mr. Mandela, sorry to question you on this but what you have just said will undoubtedly be interpreted if not misinterpreted by the IRA, as an endorsement of its position that it is not necessary for the arms struggle to be abroyated before entering into talks. The British government have said the IRA must put the guns away before talks can begin. Undoubtedly they will say rightly or wrongly that what you said this morning represents support for their view that the armed struggle can continue and talks still go ahead. Do you want to clarify what you've said?

Mandela : I am stating what I believe in; it is for you to give an interpretation to what I say. What I am concerned with is a peaceful solution and as you know the British Government has involved itself in negotiations before. There are precedents where

parties that were fighting each other during the continuation of the conflict, the British government, without insisting that any side should lay down arms, got involved and was able to induce in the involved parties to come to peace. This is the position. This was the position in Rhodesia. That is a precedent which should not be applied where just African political organisations are involved in fighting a white government. It is a principal that should be applied all over, in all situations of a similar nature. It seems to me that it is wrong for anybody to suggest that force will bring about a situation in conditions of this kind. The only way of resolving this conflict and of stopping this mutual slaughter and tensions that arise between various population groups is to sit down and talk.

Question : (Mary Carolan, Irish News). Mr. Mandela, I understand you exchanged cards with the Birmingham Six when you were in prison. Do you have any message for the prisoners?

Mandela : I am afraid you are talking like a lady, I cant hear you properly.

Question : I understand you exchanged messages of support with the Birmingham Six, the six Irishmen in prison in Britain.

Mandela : Well I can tell you before you proceed that I did' nt even know about the Birmingham Six and I cannot exchange views about people I was not aware of. You must remember that some of these events took place when I was in prison and I have not been able to acquaint myself with fellow prisoners in other parts of the world.

Question : (inaudible)

Mandela : Well before the Prime Minister comments on that I think it is absolutely unfair. I have asked for.....

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