Mandela, Nelson Rolihlahla (khōl-ēhā'hlä mändä'lä), 1918–2013, South African statesman. He earned a degree (B.A., 1943) after being expelled from the University College of Fort Hare (for taking part in a student protest) and finishing his studies with the Univ. of South Africa, studied (1943–48) law at the Univ. of the Witwatersrand (but did not earn his LL.B. until 1989, from the Univ. of South Africa), and was prominent in Johannesburg's youth wing of the African National Congress (ANC). In 1952 he became ANC deputy national president, advocating nonviolent resistance to apartheid. After a group of peaceful demonstrators were massacred (1960) in Sharpeville, however, Mandela organized a paramilitary branch of the ANC to carry out guerrilla warfare against the white government. After being acquitted (1961) on charges of treason after a six-year trial, he was arrested (1962) and convicted first (1962) of inciting strikes and illegal travel and later (1964) of sabotage and conspiring to overthrow the government. At the latter trial he was sentenced to life in prison, where he subsequently became the leading symbol of South Africa's oppressed black majority but also began (late 1980s) secret negotiations with the government.

Released in 1990 as an expression of President de Klerk's commitment to change, Mandela was elected (July, 1991) ANC president after a triumphal global tour. He represented the ANC in the turbulent negotiations that led to establishment of majority rule. Mandela and de Klerk were jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1993. After South Africa's first multiracial elections (1994), in which the ANC won a majority, Mandela was elected president.

Mandela's presidency was marked by his efforts to reconcile many of the various opposing sides in the long antiapartheid struggle (which were sometimes criticized by more militant blacks) and his work to establish a multiracial democracy based on the rule of law. A new constitution was adopted (1996), and moderate progress made in improving the economic situation of South Africa's blacks. Mandela served a single term, stepping down in 1999; Thabo Mbeki succeeded him. In Dec., 1999, Mandela was appointed by a group of African nations to mediate the ethnic strife in Burundi; the Arusha accords, a Tutsi-Hutu power-sharing agreement, were finalized in 2001. He also campaigned to raise awareness concerning AIDS prevention and treatment, after stepping as president.

Mandela married his second wife, Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, 1936?–2018, b. Nomzamo Winnifred Madikizela, in 1958. A social worker, she joined the ANC and was her husband's champion while he was in prison, being herself imprisoned and “banned” several times. In 1991 she was convicted in the 1988 kidnapping and beating of four young men, one of whom died, but on appeal her prison sentence was reduced to a fine. Her brief tenure (1994–95) as a deputy minister in her husband's cabinet was turbulent. The Mandelas separated in 1992 and were divorced in 1996. Winnie Madikizela-Mandela remained head of the ANC Women's League and a member of parliament, but she resigned those positions in 2003 when she was convicted on charges of theft and fraud relating to her involvement in a scheme to obtain loans for nonexistent Women's League employees. Her theft conviction was overturned and her prison sentence suspended on appeal in 2004. She returned to active participation...
in the ANC hierarchy in 2007, when she was elected to the party's national executive committee; she was again elected to parliament in 2009.


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