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Nelson Mandela

15 Nelson Mandela was a great civil rights leader in the country of South
31 Africa. He was born in the year 1918, in poverty, in a country where the great
45 majority of the population was black, but had no civil rights. Whites made up
57 roughly ten percent of the population, but controlled all aspects of government.
69 The country was ruled by a white Apartheid government, meaning there was
84 racial segregation of whites and blacks in all manner of life in that country, much
97 like the American South in the late 1800's, after the US Civil War.

108 Nelson Mandela had some successful years of education, and others that
121 were not so productive. He ultimately completed his B.A. degree, along with a
134 two year law degree. Nelson became interested in helping end Apartheid in his
145 country and participated in this movement with an organization called the
149 African National Congress (ANC).

161 On October 9th, 1963 Nelson Mandela joined ten others on trial for
174 sabotage in what became known as the Rivonia Trial. While facing the death
190 penalty, his words to the court at the end of his famous 'Speech from the Dock'
196 on April 20, 1964 became immortalized:

206 *"I have fought against white domination, and I have fought*
216 *against black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a*
227 *democratic and free society in which all persons live together in*
239 *harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope*
256 *to live for and to achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I*
260 *am prepared to die."*

273 In 1964, Nelson and seven other protesters were sentenced to life in prison
286 for their actions. Nelson spent 27 years in prison before finally being released.
300 Much of the change in South Africa that led to Mandela's release could be
314 credited to other civil rights leaders in his country who never gave up. Pressure
326 from famous leaders around the world also contributed to reforms in South
337 Africa, including the establishment of free elections, which finally allowed black
341 South Africans to vote.

355 In 1993, he and the white President, FW de Klerk jointly won the Nobel
366 Peace Prize for having worked together to eliminate segregation and make
373 equality a goal for all South Africans.

386 Nelson Mandela then ran for the office of President of his country, a
401 country that had imprisoned him for much of his life. He was inaugurated as the
413 first democratically elected President of South Africa in 1994. His work helped
424 bring tremendous change to South Africa, including the integration of schools,
435 parks and beaches, hospitals, and other public institutions. His leadership also
448 led to the country's participation in the FIFA World Cup™ and the Olympic
465 Games. Nelson Mandela died in 1993, at the age of 95. He had become a hero in
473 his country and to people around the world.