

begged for, but something to be enforced through struggle to change the balance of forces.

The ANC has long worked on the basis of a realistic assessment of the balance of power and its own potentials at any given time. It has skillfully combined various methods of struggle; it has coordinated its work with a broad spectrum of other organizations, representing all sectors of the oppressed in South Africa, and maintained close relations with the South African Communist Party over the years. ANC has contributed greatly to the breadth of the anti-apartheid struggle by applying a truly non-racist policy that mobilized not only the Black majority, but other ethnic groups as well, including democratic whites. It has understood how to explore and widen the contradictions among the different sectors of the white minority, meanwhile eliciting support from a broad spectrum of forces on the international

level. It has tied together all its fields of work with a political line that exhibited firmness in strategy and flexibility in tactics.

These are the factors that created the conditions for Mandela's unconditional release, and that ensure that this marks the beginning of a new stage that can only end in apartheid's abolition.

The PLO can benefit from the experience of Mandela and the ANC, for it is the same conditions that must be created in the Palestinian arena to ensure that the intifada can be translated into political gains for the Palestinian cause.

Despite the great advance that Mandela's release means, we do not underestimate the great obstacles that remain before the majority of South Africans enjoy freedom, democracy and social justice. In the coming stage, which will most likely witness both militant struggle and peace negotia-

tions, the majority demand for «one man, one vote, based on a common voting roll» will be one of the pivotal issues. To this obvious principle of justice, President De Klerk has counterposed universal suffrage but with political power shared on the basis of racial groups, or «structural guarantees» for whites. Those who benefit from apartheid - both reformers and hard-liners - can be expected to fight back to retain their privileges. A poignant sign of this was the fact that a number of Black youth were shot and killed by the racist police while celebrating Mandela's release, while Mandela himself is under a death threat from the ultra-rightist Afrikaner organization. There should be no slacking off of international solidarity with the African masses' struggle, and no lessening of sanctions, as begun by Margaret Thatcher, until apartheid has been made a relic of the past in material as well as morale terms. ●

*Nelson and Winnie Mandela upon his release*

