

Commonwealth Heads of Government, in Kuala Lumpur last year, agreed that Commonwealth pressure would remain unyielding until there was "evidence of clear and irreversible change." The Commonwealth Committee of Foreign Ministers, which I chair, will meet in Nigeria, in May, to assess the evidence of change. The African National Congress has agreed to work with us in that process.

The headquarters of the African National Congress will return to South Africa and the organization, unbanned, will lead the effort to secure a non-racial democracy in South Africa. Thousands of ANC members and followers will have to be re-located inside South Africa. Offices will have to be established. A new infrastructure must be built. And the ANC, at the same time it is negotiating, will also have to focus on equipping the black leadership in South Africa for the responsibilities of economic management and political governance.

The ANC asked me for Canada's direct assistance in meeting the costs of its re-integration into political life inside South Africa. I noted the firm policy of successive governments of Canada not to support political parties in other countries. We will, naturally, continue to support specific humanitarian, education and other programs which meet the needs of the ANC. A delegation from the African National Congress will come to Ottawa within a month to discuss specific areas of cooperation.

But I also made the point that there are thousands of private citizens in Canada who would want to support the return home of the ANC. This resource should be tapped, and I have initiated discussions with representatives of the three parties in Parliament to identify individuals and strategies which we can be offered to the ANC to help them secure substantial private Canadian support.

A great challenge facing the ANC is to level the playing field as it approaches negotiations with the government. The government will be able to draw on all the wealth, expertise and resources which apartheid has put at its disposal. The ANC is dispossessed and disadvantaged in these terms. Successful negotiations will require a greater equality of resources and expertise. That is an area where Canada can help.

Finally, the ultimate success of a non-racial South Africa will depend on the capacity of both blacks and whites to exercise both political and economic power. Economic exploitation lies at the heart of apartheid and, by and large, black South Africans have been shut out of the experience of running industries and businesses. Therefore, I told Mr. Mandela that we will look urgently at additional programs to provide potential black leaders of industry with practical experience in running large corporations in both the private and public sectors.

In their telephone conversation February 13, the Prime Minister invited Mr. Mandela to visit Canada. He has suggested that it might be appropriate for Nelson Mandela to address this free Parliament. Mr. Mandela looks forward to coming to Canada, to express directly his appreciation of the support of Canadians.