

A Hero's Welcome

In each of the three Canadian cities visited during his June 1990 tour, jubilant crowds greeted Nelson Mandela with a veritable hero's welcome. In Toronto, a multi-ethnic crowd of more than 30 000 praised, cheered and chanted his name even before he spoke. Even seasoned politicians — who accorded him the “red-carpet treatment” typically reserved for heads of state — were visibly moved.

Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, who had invited Mandela and his wife, Winnie, to Canada last February, called him “an authentic hero.” And to show his support, the Canadian Prime Minister offered \$5 million to help repatriate South African exiles and to reintegrate political prisoners into their communities.

Canada's donation was the most recent demonstration of the country's long-standing opposition to apartheid in South Africa. At a gala dinner held in Toronto in his honour, Mandela said that it was “a source of wonder” that successive Canadian governments have spoken out against apartheid for so long despite the fact that his country was “so many thousands of miles away.” Over the past 10 years, Canada has been officially represented at major anti-apartheid events in South Africa.

In Ottawa — prior to moving on to Toronto and Montreal as part of his world fund-raising tour for the African National Congress (ANC) — Mandela received a rare invitation to address a joint session of Parliament, an honour normally reserved for a head of state. He gratefully acknowledged Canada's role in urging other countries, including the United States, the Commonwealth nations and Japan, to keep the pressure on the white-minority South African government by maintaining economic sanctions. For Mandela, sanctions and international criticism

have helped bring about changes to South African laws and indeed helped end his 27-year imprisonment earlier this year.

But Mandela warned that “apartheid is still in place” and that economic sanctions must continue until the system is totally dismantled — a call that the Canadian government fully endorses.

Nelson Mandela: praised, cheered and chanted in three Canadian cities.



Give Kids a Chance

Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney co-chaired a World Summit for Children whose aim was to put children high and firmly on the agenda of the 1990s — in good times or bad, war or peace. The Summit was held at the United Nations in New York on September 29-30.

Initiated jointly by Egypt, Mali, Mexico, Pakistan, Sweden and Canada, the World Summit for Children was the first ever gathering of heads of state or government from north, south, east and west, and the first summit ever to focus exclusively on children.

As society's most vulnerable group, children are especially affected by disease, war, famine, drought and other disasters. They are at risk from other threats as well — an estimated 52 million children work outside the home, and those living on the streets of major cities often face exploitation and violence.

Canada and other countries around the globe are committed to such goals as achieving universal immunization, providing clean water and sanitation, and promoting other life-saving techniques for ensuring the survival, protection and development of children the world over.