



# Democracy and Independence

## Setting the Stage

Black South Africans will long remember 1994. That year they voted for their leaders for the first time. For decades, laws had stripped them of any political rights and freedoms and separated them from white South Africans. But years of oppression and protest were over. Now blacks and whites needed to work together to build harmony in their new government.

### PREVIEW THE ARTICLE

Begin to think about what you will read. Look at the title of the article, the headings (subtitles) within the article, and the political cartoon. Based on these clues, what do you think were the sources of conflict in South Africa's past?

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### RELATE TO THE TOPIC

This article is about South Africa's long-standing policy of separating whites and blacks. Hatred between groups exists in many parts of the world. In recent years in the United States, some states have passed laws that give stiffer punishments to criminals guilty of hate crimes. Do you think our court system should handle these types of crimes differently from other crimes? Explain your answer.

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### VOCABULARY

republic

suffrage

civil rights

parliament

apartheid

racist

sanctions

## Against Apartheid

For nearly six hundred years, native black Africans and descendants of white Europeans have lived in South Africa. During most of this time, the whites ruled and mistreated the blacks. However, in the 1990s, black South Africans gained political power in their homeland.

### The Fight over Land

Thousands of years ago, hunters and food-gatherers called the San made what is now South Africa their home. Their descendants, the Khoikhoi (KOY koy), raised sheep, goats, and cattle. Other black African groups who spoke the Bantu language migrated from the north to the area. They farmed the fertile soil and developed tools that helped improve their harvests. They fashioned some tools from iron.

In the 1400s and 1500s, Europeans searched for trade routes to Asia. One route went around the Cape of Good Hope at the southern tip of Africa. Portuguese sailors stopped on their way to Asia. They traded goods with the Khoikhoi. Later Dutch traders built a **colony** at the cape where sailors could rest on their long voyages. These Dutch were the first Europeans to settle in southern Africa.

During the 1600s, the mountains and rich valleys on the Cape of Good Hope attracted settlers from other European countries. All the Europeans called themselves Boers, the Dutch word for "farmers." The Boers stole Khoikhoi land and livestock to start farms of their own.

At first, the black Africans viewed the Europeans as mere visitors. The black Africans welcomed the trade, especially when they received iron in return for animal hides. But when they saw the Europeans planned to stay, some Khoikhoi rebelled. In 1659 they attacked the Boers, hoping to gain back herds they had lost. The attempt failed.

The Khoikhoi could not win against the Boers' firearms. In 1713 smallpox, a disease brought from Europe, killed many Boers and nearly all the Khoikhoi. The population decline brought a decline in the Khoikhoi's way of life and culture. Many Khoikhoi became servants of the Boers.

**Recognizing Values** A people's culture influences the values that they hold. Values are what people feel are important, right, and good. People may indicate their values by what they say. Yet people's actions often reveal more about their values than words do. Reread the third and fourth paragraphs under "The Fight Over Land." Then match each beginning and ending below to form statements about the values of the European settlers and the native Africans.

- 1 The Boers stole from the Khoikhoi because \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 The black Africans welcomed European trade because \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. they valued land.
  - b. they valued iron for tools.

## The White Minority and the Black Majority

European domination of South Africa only began with the Boers. During the 1800s, the British built an empire in Africa. They saw the riches of South Africa much as the Boers had. The Boers, however, refused to share the land that they considered theirs. By 1854 they had carved out two republics, the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. A **republic** is a self-governing territory. The British started colonies in a place called Natal and on the Cape of Good Hope.

British rule angered the Boers who lived on the cape. Some decided to leave. As Boer settlers moved north and east from the cape, they met Bantu-speaking groups, such as the Xhosa (KOH suh), Sotho, and Zulu. The Boers captured black Africans and enslaved them. The European Africans believed that owning slaves was their right even though blacks outnumbered the whites.

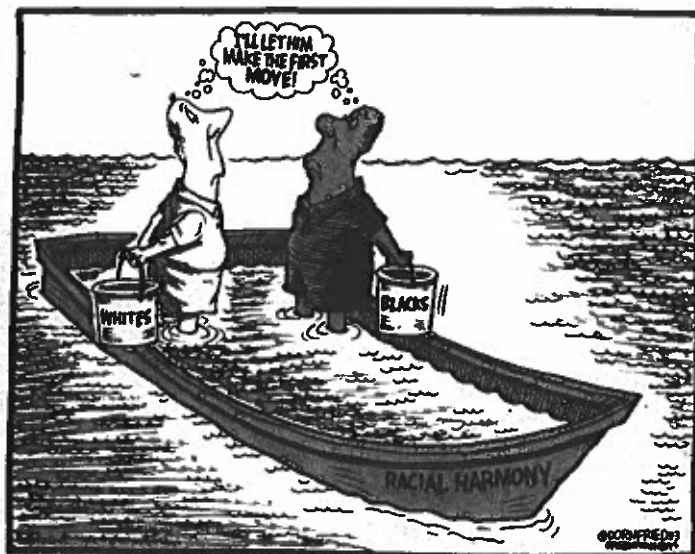
Discoveries of gold and diamonds in present-day South Africa led to war between the British and the Boers. The British eventually won the Boer War, which lasted from 1899 to 1902. As a result, the Boer republics became British colonies. In exchange, the British guaranteed positions of power to the white residents, who now called themselves *Afrikaners*. The British also refused to grant the black majority **suffrage**, or the right to vote.

In 1910 the four South African provinces united under one constitution. Black Africans still could not vote. So they organized a political group devoted to gaining their civil rights. **Civil rights** are peoples' freedoms, including the right to be treated equally with other people. This political group would later be known as the African National Congress (ANC).

Soon after the union, the South African **parliament**, or law-making body, passed laws that caused hardships for black Africans. For example, a law in 1911 reserved high-paying jobs for whites. The law forced even skilled blacks into the lowest-paying jobs. A 1913 land act set aside just ten percent of the country's land for blacks—although blacks made up nearly eighty percent of South Africa's population.

In 1948 the white government passed a formal policy that separated whites from blacks. Called **apartheid**, which means "apartness," the policy described who was "black," who was "white," and who was "colored"—a person of mixed race. Blacks and coloreds had to carry cards showing their race. In the 1950s, black Africans also had to carry small books with their fingerprints, racial background, and other details of their lives. Police demanded to see this book whenever a black African was in a city or in a whites-only area. If the person was not carrying the book, the police could put him or her in jail.

Apartheid caused much pain among black South African families. Most were very poor. Families broke apart when fathers went to jail. The government-run schools paid low salaries to the poorly trained teachers of black students. Officials decided what was taught, and they discouraged important subjects, such as mathematics. When the ANC decided to start its own schools, the government outlawed private schools.



## The Long Road to Democracy

The ANC knew it needed to take stronger action against apartheid policies. They joined with other groups to encourage protest among black Africans. During the early 1950s, the police arrested nearly nine thousand blacks for purposefully disobeying apartheid laws. By the 1960s, the ANC promoted even stronger opposition. New young leaders, such as Nelson Mandela, spoke of a government with equality for all Africans. ANC members also began training for an armed uprising. In 1962, when word of ANC plans reached the government, it arrested Mandela and seventeen other leaders.

Other nations became keenly aware that South Africa's government was **racist**, or favored one race over another. News stories began to cover the protests and riots between the police and black South Africans. The Olympic organizers even banned South Africa from the 1968 and 1972 games. In 1976 thousands of black children in Soweto, near Johannesburg, marched to protest their poor schooling. As they sang freedom songs, police used tear gas. When the children threw rocks, the police opened fire and killed 176 people. To show disapproval of South African policies, many nations started sanctions. **Sanctions** are economic or military measures that nations use to pressure another nation to stop violating some international law or human right.

During the 1980s, white South Africans began to feel the pressure from their own anti-apartheid political parties and the world community. Global economic sanctions had harmed the South African economy. Cries to release Nelson Mandela, who had been in prison for more than twenty years, grew louder. So the government freed Mandela in 1990, and the ANC dropped its plans for an armed uprising. The white government dropped its apartheid policy and began to work toward equal rights for blacks and coloreds.

However, distrust between whites and blacks made peace difficult. Violence continued as some groups refused to cooperate with their enemies. In April 1994, 22 million South Africans went to the polls. Seventeen million were blacks who were voting for the first time. They elected Mandela to be president of a government that would give power to all South Africans, regardless of color.

**Reading a Political Cartoon** A political cartoon expresses an opinion on an issue. The artist uses symbols and exaggerated drawings to express his or her views. Labels often provide important clues to what the cartoonist is trying to say. Study the cartoon above. What does the boat represent?

- the government of South Africa
- peace between the people of South Africa