Nelson Mandela, “Glory and Hope”

Nelson Mandela delivered this speech after having been elected president in South Africa’s first multiracial election in 1994. Knowing that the injustices of apartheid would be hard to overcome, Mandela asked the people to work together for peace and justice.

In 1990, Nelson Mandela was released from a South African prison.

We have, at last, achieved our political emancipation. We pledge ourselves to liberate all our people from the continuing bondage of poverty, deprivation, suffering, gender and other discrimination. . . .

We have triumphed in the effort to implant hope in the breasts of the millions of our people. We enter into a covenant that we shall build the society in which all South Africans, both black and white, will be able to walk tall, without any fear in their hearts, assured of their inalienable right to human dignity—a rainbow nation at peace with itself and the world. . . . We understand it still that there is no easy road to freedom.

We know it well that none of us acting alone can achieve success.

We must therefore act together as a united people, for national reconciliation, for nation building, for the birth of a new world.

Let there be justice for all. Let there be peace for all. Let there be work, bread, water, and salt for all. . . . The sun shall never set on so glorious a human achievement!

Analyzing Primary Sources

Cite specific evidence from the source to support your answers.

1. Evaluate Arguments When apartheid ended, there was a danger of a backlash by blacks against whites who supported apartheid. How does Mandela’s speech respond to that danger?

2. Determine Author’s Point of View How would you describe the tone of Mandela’s speech? How does this tone reflect Mandela’s view of his country and its future?

3. Determine Author’s Purpose Why do you think Mandela talks about building a new world, not just a new South Africa?