**My country is South Africa and the year is 1994**

1990 is the year that Nelson Mandela was freed, the date that hope,

dreams and a new lease of life was on the horizon for black people in

South Africa, the year that Nelson Mandela became leader of the

African National Party and the year that negotiations began for an

end to apartheid**.** Apartheid is a policy of segregation & discrimination on the grounds of race. The year 1994 is the year that negotiations were over and black South Africans finally had equal rights, and the year Nelson Mandela became president. 1994 marks the end of apartheid, the end of black oppression, the end of white superiority that ruled South Africa for decades, the end of superior races.

For an insight to the origins of apartheid which began in 1948

the National Party an (all-white government) began strictly

enforcing racial segregation and punishing any coloured person who

broke these segregation rules. Legislation was formed that upheld

segregationist views and beliefs, basically putting a downfall on the

black race. Townships were built for black people to live in as if they

were animals, those who fought against protested or broke

apartheid laws were punished and in some cases imprisoned. Whilst in prison some were stripped naked and made to dance for guards and placed in tiny block rooms with no windows or fresh air. It was in a cell like this that Nelson Mandela found himself in, when he was incarcerated in 1962 for conspiring to overthrow the state following the famous Rivonia trials.

Even though apartheid started in 1948 racial segregation was in force as early as 1913. A land act was passed limiting black land ownership to 7% and limiting buying or occupation of land unless they

were employed by white masters. Laws were passed to make the

minority of 4 million whites have all the wealth, jobs and power.

Interracial marriages were illegal, and non whites were forced to live

and go to school where told. Everything was segregated between the

races, shops, toilets, taxis, benches, bus seats and many more. The

race classification act put people in 4 different categories with

whites first, Indians second, coloureds third and blacks last. Tests

were used to determine whether someone was European for example

the pencil test, if the pencil fell through your hair you were

European if it didn’t you weren’t.

Black South Africans were forced to carry identification called

passbooks. These laws were causing major unrest and peaceful

protests were used to try and stop the apartheid regime. In 1952

Freedom fighters like Nelson Mandela, Oliver Tombo, Walter Sisulu

and Ahmed Cuthrada began a campaign to make as many people

break apartheid laws, to try and overfill prisons and maybe force an

end to apartheid. Many people of colour sat on white buses, used

white toilets and entered white areas. Their plan did not work

thousands of coloureds were imprisoned. This made the situation

worse because in 1953 a public safety act was passed to further

oppress black people’s rights by enforcing tougher sentences for those who protested. In 1960 a protest against the use of passbooks turned violent in the township of Sharpeville,

police opened fire on unarmed protesters leaving 70 dead and 180

wounded even young children were shot. A state of emergency was

declared, and opposition political parties were banned meaning many

black voices were left unheard.

Following mounting scrutiny and judgement on the regime, in 1990 President F.W. de Klerk finally released Nelson Mandela from prison after 27 years, and announced plans to end years of suffering and hurt for non-white races in South Africa.

Negotiations between the African National Congress Party continued

until 1994 when elections were held and won by the African National

Congress Party Nelson Mandela became president of South

Africa. Therefore, I believe that 1994 was the most important year

because after many years of hurt and oppression for non-white people a black man was now in Power.

South Africa has grown over the years after apartheid with the

World Cup being held there in 2010 and a rugby team with a black

South African captain winning the World Cup in 2019. But this does

not mean South Africa does not have issues of inequality, but the

inequality now helps non-whites instead of disregarding them. Systems like affirmative action helping non-whites gain employment.

1994 can link to 1066 in English history because it was when the

majority of the population had their country back in there hands in England’s case with English rule and South Africa with unifying and uniting people of all races no matter the skin colour. However I

believe that South Africa and the World still has a way to go in finding lasting racial equality.