

NEWS



Geo. W. Crockett, Jr. CONGRESSMAN

13th District
Michigan

1531 Longworth H.O.B.
Washington, D.C. 20515
(202) 225-2261

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 1, 1985

Contact: Ted Jones
(202) 225-2261

CROCKETT URGES SOUTH AFRICA TO FREE NELSON MANDELA

Washington, D.C. -- Congressman George W. Crockett, Jr.

(D-Michigan) has urged the South African Government to grant unconditional freedom to Nelson Mandela, the imprisoned black South African leader and his wife, Winnie, as a necessary first step to begin a national dialogue of reconciliation between responsible black and white South Africans.

Mr. Crockett, who is a member of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, made the appeal on the basis of news reports that South African President Botha had informed his country's Parliament of the possibility of a conditional release for Mr. Mandela. But the Michigan Congressman also asserted that the conditions indicated by Botha made Mr. Mandela hostage to the good conduct of others and were, therefore, totally unacceptable.

Congressman Crockett authored the Mandela Freedom Resolution, which was passed overwhelmingly by both the House and Senate last year and forwarded to the South African Government by the Congress and the White House. The resolution called on the Pretoria regime to release Mandela and his wife Winnie from the imprisonment and detention resulting from their opposition to the brutal policies of apartheid in South Africa.

"And while South Africa denies vehemently that it does not respond to outside pressures," Congressman Crockett asserted, "there is no doubt that the House and Senate resolutions and the current Free South Africa demonstrations across our nation are having a powerful impact."

Mr. Crockett, who was among the first to be arrested and detained in those demonstrations, said it was imperative that the South African Government begin to communicate with all its people in the search for a just and rapid and non-violent end to its repressive apartheid system.

"The unconditional release of Nelson Mandela is a necessary and important first step to begin the national dialogue of reconciliation between black and white South Africans," Mr. Crockett said.