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Te 509, 1st St. Hillbonge  
Datum 24-7-56

LLM 102  
EDITORIAL

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EW 7.4.1.15  
SACTU

Verwysings No. te 62 Progress Gebaar

# The CAMPAIGN for the FREEDOM CHARTER

Shortly after the Congress of the People was held in Kliptown in June, the National Executive Committees of the liberatory movements met in Natal, to form a National Consultive Committee, which agreed to launch a nationwide campaign to collect One Million Signatures for the FREEDOM CHARTER.

The Campaign has already begun. Many Freedom Fighters have started collecting signatures. In this campaign SACTU has to throw in a great deal of support. The Freedom Charter which was unanimously adopted by the 3,000 delegates at Kliptown, expresses the wishes and hopes of tens of thousands of workers and peasants who were not present at the COP, and these represent the people who SACTU is committed in its constitution to organize.

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## SACTU must grow from STRENGTH & STRENGTH

The liberatory movements have made it clear that the campaign involves more than the important task of collecting signatures for Freedom. The campaign demands a high standard of leading, assisting and directing of the people in their day to day struggle against brutality and exploitation. Simultaneously with the tackling of the urgent problems of the people, the Freedom Charter must be explained and signatures obtained for it.

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For SACTU, the 1 Million Signature Campaign must be conducted on the same basis as that of the Congresses. It must be a campaign which includes the taking up of all problems concerning the workers, no matter how large or small. It must be a campaign to explain the Charter to the workers and to get them to endorse it. It must be a campaign to build SACTU.

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We are convinced that if all the Congresses, including our own, respond to the Campaign in the manner which they are expected to, we shall be practically implementing our pledge to work for and win the aims set out in the Freedom Charter.



# THE FOOD & CANNING WORKERS UNION HOLDS ITS 14<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CONFERENCE *by Leon Levy*

Under the inspiring leadership of Ray Alexander and Frank Marquard, the now banned leaders of the Food & Canning Workers' Union, the Union, in its 14th year, has taken its place beside the most militant and outstanding trade unions in the world - and to-day - stands out as a leading trade union in South Africa.

The 14th Annual Conference of the Union was somewhat different to previous conferences. With the banning of Comrade Ray and seven other leading officials, the task of conducting and organizing the conference fell to the workers. Not even the acting General Secretary, Becky Lan, was able to attend, due to her being banned from gatherings.

66 delegates, representing 17 branches of the Food & Canning Workers' Union met in Cape Town on August 27th and 28th, 1955, to hold the 14th Annual Conference.

The delegates assembled together clearly demonstrated to South Africa and the world - that despite the blows dealt by the Government in the removal of its leaders; despite the costly court cases in which it had been involved, the Union had increased in strength; the Union was a living, dynamic force, moving forward to greater heights.

With a pride so ingrained that no force could crush it, delegates listened to the written report of the Acting General Secretary being read. The report elaborated on the large number of wage agreements concluded since the previous conference, on the progress of the branches, on the I.C. Act, and the effects of the Native Settlement of Disputes Act.

The Conference turned its attention to the housing shortages, to Bantu Education, the Act system, and the slave conditions of the farm labourers, the Suppression of Communism Act, and a host of other issues affecting workers in all industries.

## Adoption of Freedom Charter

The Freedom Charter was read to the Conference, its message firing the imagination of all. Its freshness seemed to seep into the very marrow of delegates and rip the dark clouds away from the future. The spirit of the Charter captured the Conference and refused to leave it. Every delegate pledged himself to spread its gospel!

## Police Interrupt

In a shameful attempt to intimidate the delegates, three Special Branch detectives, under the pretext of looking for the banned leaders, interrupted the Conference.



2 J.M. 22.

## THE SYLLABUS

I

## Purpose :

The aim behind the course suggested here is to make our workers acquainted with the basic features of the South African Economy, which in turn will illuminate and explain the motive force behind the policies followed by the South African governments both past and present. This course is based on the view that the fundamental motive force driving the ruling classes in this country to adopt the policies they have, has been the need and desire for so-called cheap labour - docile acquiescent and available when, where and how wanted. The history of South Africa in modern times is the history indicating the methods followed to bring the African people within the orbit of modern economy that was part of the capitalist world. The method chosen in the course is the historical one. Firstly because the narrative form - or story form is the easiest to follow. Secondly, most of the workers already have a vague idea of the general facts of our history and what remains is to furnish the details and to explain the deeper significance of these events.

In the course the narrative follows the passing of the main legislative acts which form the juridical structure for the pillar of South African (Cheap Labour) Economy. Also the course deals with the response or conscious strivings of the people at each point in the narrative.

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A. Introductory Section :

1. a. The period prior to Union. Reasons why Europeans became settlers and went deeper inland.
- b. The Growth of the Labour problem. Beginnings. The Wine and Farm industry in the Western Cape (Malays and Hotentots). The Discovery of Diamonds (1867) with increased demands for labour; Discovery of Gold in the Transvaal (Importation of Chinese labour) Sugar Industry in Natal (Importation of Indian Labour); In each case lecturers must indicate the methods used to draw labour into the economy. Wars, seizure of land, legislative measures (e.g. Vagrancy Laws in the Early Cape and respect of the Coloured People), Importation of labour - to be dealt with in the relevant. etc.

- II. The strivings of the people against these onslaughts. This would cover the 19th century wars of dispossession. What the wars were for (described above). The results of the wars. Why the people failed to defeat the invaders. At the end of this part of the course lecturers must indicate the areas which the Africans largely retreated to as a result of the wars - Ciskei, Transkei, Zulu, Witsieshoek, Pediland, Vandaland, Tongaland, Protectorates.

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B. The Twentieth Century . ( the first 2 decades)

- (a) The Boer . The reasons for the war . - struggle over control of the tremendous resources of the Transvaal , between two groups of labour exploiters. The end of the war and the Peace of Vereeniging 1902.
- (b) Towards Union . Reasons for Union . Creation of centralised government over the Union would render government more effective and cheaper ( no duplication) would unite main European groups into strong force to ensure continued exploitation of country .
- (c) The South Africa Act , 1909 . Instrument for Union . Briefly explain provisions . Show how power is placed in the hands of a parliament . Refer to Notorious Section 44 - the so-called colour-bar clause . Union based on race from the word go.
- (d) The Native Labour Regulation Act. The purpose of the Act - the direction of Labour .
- (e) The 1913 Land Act . The aim to consolidate or peg the position as existing at the end of the wars. To create reservoirs of labour . The end of share-cropping .

II. The Strivings of the people . The end of the pre-modern era in the struggle of the Africans . . Previously the struggle was waged by tribal armies for the protection of the tribal economy and social structure . This system had failed to protect the people against the modern economic system . The Bambata Rebellion is final example of the old type warfare. (1906) Indian Passive Resistance under Ghandi . The period of modern political warfare begins . The use of the vote weapon and the founding of political organisations . Education as a means of gaining freedom . The Ethiopian Church Movement . The provincial congresses. The Deputation of 1908 led by Dube to protest against Union . The results thereof. Return to Union . The formation of the African National Congress , January 9 , 1912. Dube first President . The agitation against the Land Act . The second deputation to England 1913. The outbreak of the 1st world war. The October Revolution and significance to all oppressed peoples. The third deputation to Paris to urge the granting of self-determination to the African people's .

II

C. The next two decades 1920 - 1940.

I. The continuation of the slave labour policy . The attention paid to the creation of a slave mentality among Africans. The kind of education before 1918. Indicate how many famous South African Europeans - Chief Justice Innes , Chief Justice Solomon went to school with Africans at Lovedale. Education identical for those who could get it. After 1918 beginnings of Native Education . The Native Affairs Act (1920) . Purpose to close any loopholes left by previous legislation with respect to legislative rights for Africans. The first dummy institutions ( apart from the Bunga in the Transkei) created in terms of this Act .

The Native Taxation and Development Act.



The Wage Act . The Native Administration Act 1927.  
Masters and Servants Act . Apprenticeship Act .  
The Hertzog Act . The Riotous Assemblies Act.

II. The strivings of the people .

- a. The 1918 strikes on the Reef. Bucket strike, - Miner's strike . 1919 founding of I.C.U. 1920 founding of C.P. The workers struggle 1922 . Why it failed. The Israel Movement. (Mgijima's Movement) . I.C. U. and the battles it led. Weaknesses. The first Non-European Conference held as a result of the publication the Hertzog Bills in 1927 ( for the first time)
- b. The economic crisis . 1929 - 1933 . The coalition. The Hertzog Bills again . The All-African Convention 1936.
- c. The Second World War . Advances in Trade Union Organisation . Situation during war on political front.

D. The post war era.

- a. The tremendous industrial expansion. The Urban Areas Consolidation Act 1945. The Anti-Indian legislation .
- b. The Nationalist come into power. Freeing of fascists imprisoned during the war . Tightening up of all laws - in particular pass laws. Immorality Act ; Population Registration ; Suppression of Communism ; Group Areas Act ; Bantu Authorities etc.
- c. Aim behind these Acts .

II. The strivings of the People

- a. The struggle against War . The Indian Passive Resistance Struggle. The African Mine Worker's Strike ; Freedom Day May, 1950 ; National Day of Protest. May 7th 1951. DEFIANCE CAMPAIGN 1952. Recent Struggles. FREEDOM CHARTER .

LECTURERS MUST EMPHASIZE THROUGHOUT .

- a. That the structure rests on the single pillar of Cheap Labour.
- b. Use of Race as a weapon to make exploitation more efficient and prevent unity between White and Black and between Africans and others . (Tribalism also being resorted to now)
- c. Small group of exploiters benefitting from system.
- d. That only united and disciplined army of liberation can win struggle.
- e. Unity must be based on people shering same ideas and not on race.
- f. Unity must be based on struggle. Examples from recent struggles must be used wherever possible.
- g. Ideas must be preached by workers wherever they are.



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**RECORDS RELATING TO THE 'TREASON TRIAL' (REGINA vs F. ADAMS AND OTHERS ON CHARGE OF HIGH TREASON, ETC.), 1956 1961**

**TREASON TRIAL, 1956 1961**

***PUBLISHER:***

*Publisher:- Historical Papers, University of the Witwatersrand*

*Location:- Johannesburg*

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