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LLM 75 <sup>LLM 75</sup> <sup>Read. Essay</sup> <sup>marked.</sup>

*An African  
Reviews*

**FREEDOM  
CHARTER**

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Gekry by *Hezekiel Ndaba*  
Deur *Hezekiel Ndaba*  
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ISSUED BY HEZEKIEL NDABA,  
5193 SECTION O, MOROKA CAMP,  
Johannesburg

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THINK CORRECTLY.

A brief constructive and critical review of the "Draft Freedom Charter," the most important political document of its kind, ever put forward for the acceptance of the national liberatory movements in South Africa as a perspective, brings one to the conclusion that it requires a very serious consideration of all organisations concerned, as well as all members of these organisations individually and collectively; for by implication it advocates a change of policy as well as a change of heart for every member. Its adoption will definitely mark a turning point in the History of South Africa. Therein lies the implication and the political significance of this Charter as it stands.

To those who have always been advocating the aims embraced in this Charter, the matter is a very simple one. But to those who have not given this question a serious thought, it is not so simple; for it demands new convictions on their part, and definite political reorientation. That is all there is to it.

The Charter says: "South Africa belongs to all who live in it, Black and White." Naturally South Africa belongs to the Africans. But now, it has been practically made safe for the whites alone, through conquest and trickery. It is exclusively preserved for them by force. As matters stand to-day, we have no share in its wealth, and play no part in its ownership. We have long been deprived of all that belonged to us.

THE FALACY OF THE CHARTER.

When the Charter says: "We, the people of South Africa, black and white together - equals countrymen and brothers adopt this Charter" it merely expresses an objective desire on the part of its drafters. Yes, we stand for equality and brotherhood of man, but we cannot be bluffed. We are certainly not equals in South Africa, and we must say so. Let the good Charter express the aims of which the few "Progressives" support, and not to put it as a reality because it is misleading.

It is a wellknown fact that every whiteman in South Africa who becomes of age, may vote or stand as a candidate for any of the Government institutions in the body politics of South Africa, but a blackman cannot. The whiteman may purchase land where ever he wishes as long as he can afford, but no blackman can. To be more precise, no whiteman is affected even indirectly by any of the oppressive laws discriminating against the blacks. We can safely say that even Freedom of movement is the sole private concern of the whites alone, to say nothing of their monopoly of all the skilled jobs.

When the Charter says: "Our people have been robbed of their birth-right to the land", it is perfectly correct only as far as the blacks are concerned. Therefore not until there will be the same laws for both black and white South Africans, and equal opportunities for all, will there be any right for anybody to claim that there is equality between the races of this country.

OUR IMMEDIATE ISSUE.

At this critical period in the History of our country, the most immediate issue facing our national organisation, the African National Congress in particular, and the right minded people of other races in general, is the liberation of the non-whites. It is on this question of liberation of the oppressed and discriminated non-whites where our ranks should be closed. It is also on this very issue where the sincerity of our other friends should be tested. Until the question of liberation is decided, all the talk and promises of heaven on earth are merely an academic and scholastic nonsense.

Without the liberation of the non-whites, there can be no other form of freedom. Those white people who look forward to the emancipation of mankind, can do better by seriously throwing in their efforts to the liberation struggle, or alternatively give up hope: there are no short cuts to their destination.

For us, Africans, and other groups on this side of the South African colour line, at this difficult hour of our lives, the most important answer to oppression, exploitation and other forms of national humiliations, lies in proper organisation of our movements on a large scale, both in town and country; and in mass direct action, not in building castles in the air.

The achievement of one objective, the national liberation, will be a transition to another objective, the formation of a democratic people's government for all the South Africans, black and white. It is precisely for this reason, that all moving forces should be concentrated around the liberatory struggle.

Unity should be a rallying cry for all. But unity based on organisation of all the movements, and not imposed from the top; the masses should support it as something indispensable. We must all think and think correctly. If we put ourselves at the mercy of those who pretend to be thinking on our behalf, our future is dark indeed. We should be able to differentiate between ourselves, our enemies and our friends.

What are the motives behind the immediate adoption of the Charter? Every right thinking person should realize that a document of such magnitude needs sufficient time even years for the people to study, and deliberate on before the nation could be asked to accept.

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@ Issued by Hezekiel Ndaba, @  
@ 5193 Section O, @  
@ Moroka Camp, @  
@ JOHANNESBURG. @  
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**TREASON TRIAL, 1956 1961**

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