

FREEDOM CHARTER—FULL TEXT

WE, THE PEOPLE OF SOUTH AFRICA DECLARE FOR ALL OUR COUNTRY AND THE WORLD TO KNOW

THAT South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white, and that no government can justly claim authority unless it is based on the will of all the people; That our people have been robbed of their birthright to land, liberty and peace by a form of government founded on injustice and inequality; That our country will never be prosperous or free until all our people live in brotherhood, enjoying equal rights and opportunities; That only a democratic state, based on the will of all the people, can secure to all their birthright without distinction of colour, race, sex or belief; And therefore, we, the people of South Africa, black and white together — equals, countrymen and brothers — adopt this Freedom Charter. And we pledge ourselves to strive together, sparing nothing of our strength and courage, until the democratic changes here set out have been won.

THE PEOPLE SHALL GOVERN!

EVERY MAN AND WOMAN SHALL HAVE THE RIGHT TO VOTE FOR AND TO STAND AS A CANDIDATE FOR ALL BODIES WHICH MAKE LAWS; All people shall be entitled to take part in the administration of the country; The rights of the people shall be the same, regardless of race, colour or sex; All bodies of minority rule, advisory boards, councils and



"Compound labour shall be abolished."

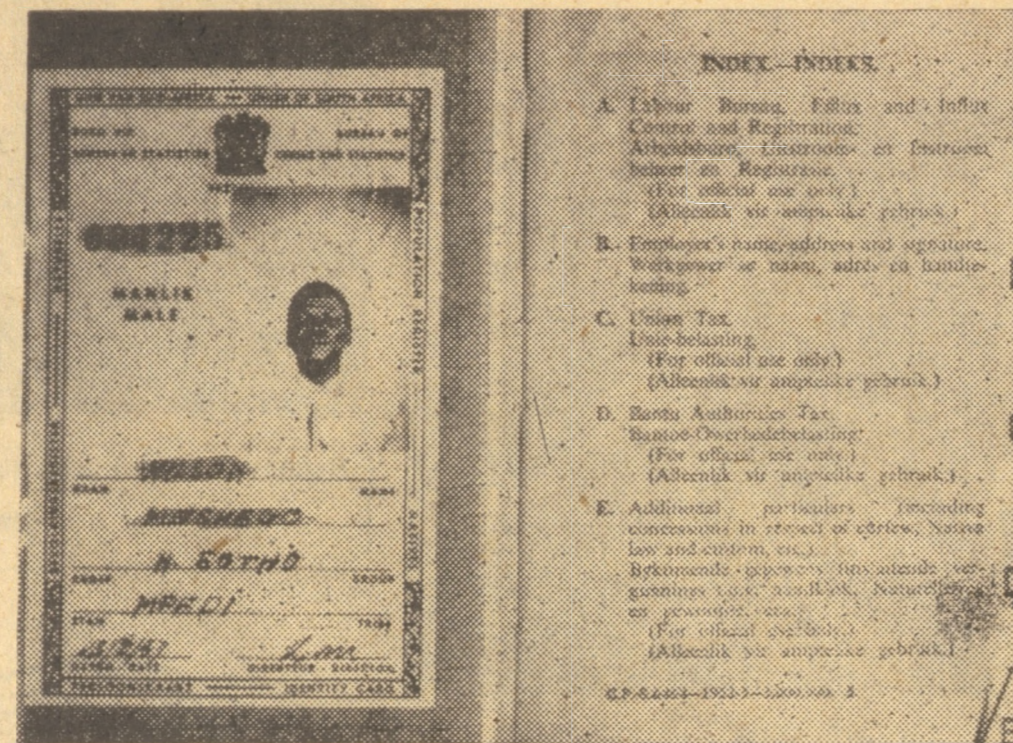
authorities shall be replaced by democratic organs of self-government.

ALL NATIONAL GROUPS SHALL HAVE EQUAL RIGHTS!

THERE SHALL BE EQUAL STATUS IN THE BODIES OF STATE, IN THE COURTS AND IN THE SCHOOLS FOR ALL NATIONAL GROUPS AND RACES; All people shall have equal right to use their own languages, and to develop their own folk culture and customs; All national groups shall be protected by law against insults to their race and national pride; The preaching and practice of national, race or colour discrimination and contempt shall be a punishable crime; All apartheid laws and practices shall be set aside.

THE PEOPLE SHALL SHARE IN THE COUNTRY'S WEALTH!

THE NATIONAL WEALTH OF OUR COUNTRY, THE HERITAGE OF ALL SOUTH AFRICANS, SHALL BE RESTORED TO THE PEOPLE; The mineral wealth beneath the soil, the Banks and monop-



"All apartheid laws shall be set aside."

oly industry shall be transferred to the ownership of the people as a whole; All other industry and trade shall be controlled to assist the well-being of the people; All people shall have equal rights to trade where they choose, to manufacture and to enter all trades, crafts and professions.

THE LAND SHALL BE SHARED AMONG THOSE WHO WORK IT!

RESTRICTION OF LAND OWNERSHIP ON A RACIAL BASIS SHALL BE ENDED, AND ALL THE LAND RE-DIVIDED AMONGST THOSE WHO WORK IT, TO BANISH FAMINE AND LAND HUNGER;

The State shall help the peasants with implements, seed, tractors and dams to save the soil and assist the tillers; Freedom of movement shall be guaranteed to all who work on the land;

All shall have the right to occupy land wherever they choose; People shall not be robbed of their cattle, and forced labour and farm prisons shall be abolished.

ALL SHALL BE EQUAL BEFORE THE LAW!

NO-ONE shall be imprisoned, deported or restricted without a fair trial; No-one shall be condemned by the order of any Government official;

The courts shall be representative of all the people; Imprisonment shall be only for serious crimes against the people, and shall aim at re-education, not vengeance; The police force and army shall be open to all on an equal basis and shall be the helpers and protectors of the people;

ALL LAWS WHICH DISCRIMINATE ON GROUNDS OF RACE, COLOUR OR BELIEF SHALL BE REPEALED.

ALL SHALL ENJOY EQUAL HUMAN RIGHTS!

THE law shall guarantee to all their right to speak, to organise, to meet together, to publish, to preach, to worship and to educate their children;

THE PRIVACY OF THE HOUSE FROM POLICE RAIDS SHALL BE PROTECTED BY LAW;

All shall be free to travel without restriction from countryside to town, from province to province, and from South Africa abroad;

Pass Laws, permits and all other laws restricting these freedoms shall be abolished.

THERE SHALL BE WORK AND SECURITY!

ALL who work shall be free to form trade unions, to elect their officers and to make wage agreements with their

employers;

The state shall recognise the right and duty of all to work, and to draw full unemployment benefits;

MEN AND WOMEN OF ALL RACES SHALL RECEIVE EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK;

There shall be a forty-hour working week, a national minimum wage, paid annual leave, and sick leave for all workers, and maternity leave on full pay for all working mothers;

Miners, domestic workers, farm workers and civil servants shall have the same rights as all others who work;

Child labour, compound labour, the tot system and contract labour shall be abolished.

THE DOORS OF LEARNING AND OF CULTURE SHALL BE OPENED!

THE Government shall discover, develop and encourage national talent for the enhancement of our cultural life; All the cultural treasures of mankind shall be open to all, by free exchange of books, ideas and contact with other lands;

THE AIM OF EDUCATION SHALL BE TO TEACH THE YOUTH TO LOVE THEIR PEOPLE AND THEIR CULTURE, TO HONOUR HUMAN BROTHERHOOD, LIBERTY AND PEACE;

Education shall be free, compulsory, universal and equal for all children;

Higher education and technical training shall be opened to all by means of State allowances and scholarships awarded on the basis of merit;

Adult illiteracy shall be ended by a mass State education plan;

Teachers shall have all the rights of other citizens;

The colour bar in cultural life, in sport and in education shall be abolished.

THERE SHALL BE HOUSES, SECURITY AND COMFORT!

ALL PEOPLE SHALL HAVE THE RIGHT TO LIVE WHERE THEY CHOOSE, TO BE DECENTLY HOUSED, AND TO BRING UP THEIR FAMILIES IN COMFORT AND SECURITY;

Unused housing space to be made available to the people; Rent and prices shall be lowered, food plentiful and no-one shall go hungry;

A preventive health scheme shall be run by the State; Free medical care and hospitalisation shall be provided for all, with special care for mothers and young children;

Slums shall be demolished, and new suburbs built where all have transport, roads, lighting, playing fields, creches and social centres;

The aged, the orphans, the disabled and the sick shall be cared for by the State;

Rest, leisure and recreation shall be the right of all; Fenced locations and ghettos shall be abolished, and laws which break up families shall be repealed.

THERE SHALL BE PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP!

SOUTH AFRICA shall be a fully independent state, which respects the rights and sovereignty of all nations;

SOUTH AFRICA SHALL STRIVE TO MAINTAIN WORLD PEACE AND THE SETTLEMENT OF ALL INTERNATIONAL DISPUTES BY NEGOTIATION — NOT WAR;

Peace and friendship amongst all our people shall be secured by upholding the equal rights, opportunities and status of all;

The people of the protectorates—Basutoland, Bechuanaland and Swaziland—shall be free to decide for themselves their own future;

The right of all the peoples of Africa to independence and self-government shall be recognised, and shall be the basis of close co-operation.

LET ALL WHO LOVE THEIR PEOPLE AND THEIR COUNTRY NOW SAY, AS WE SAY HERE: "THESE FREEDOMS WE WILL FIGHT FOR, SIDE BY SIDE, THROUGHOUT OUR LIVES, UNTIL WE HAVE WON OUR LIBERTY."

LET THE FREEDOM CHARTER LIGHT OUR WAY TO LIBERATION!

CONGRESS SNIPPETS

● The Congress of the People was an impressive feat of voluntary organisation. The Transvaal Region of the Federation of South African Women and A.N.C. women's branches found accommodation in Johannesburg homes for 2,500 delegates. Kliptown provided accommodation for 500 delegates. Mrs. Helen Joseph told New Age that a tribute should be paid to all those who responded so generously to the appeal for accommodation and to the hard work of those who organised this side of the Congress.

● Among those who watched the proceedings were Mr. A. Hepple, parliamentary leader of the Labour Party, and Mrs. Jessie MacPherson, the national chairman of the Labour Party.

● Representatives from the Basutoland African Congress were present at the Congress.



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"Slums shall be abolished and new suburbs built where all have transport . . ."



"No one shall go hungry."

Resolution Adopted by the Congress of the People

We who have come from every corner of our land, chosen by our people to meet together in this great assembly, believe that the Freedom Charter we have adopted contains in it the true and most just desires of the overwhelming majority of the South African people.

We proclaim that in this land, where the mass of the people own nothing and know only poverty and misery, this Charter will become the most treasured possession of all who are oppressed and of all who love liberty.

Wherever there are people living or working together, they must be told of this great Charter so that they may see and understand the sweeping changes that will come from their every-day struggles against indignity, inequality and injustice.

We declare that all true sons and daughters of South Africa will work, from this day on, to win the changes which are set out in the Freedom Charter. Those who are in the forefront of this struggle will for ever hold an honoured place in our history. Those who work against it will be isolated and scorned.

We pledge that when we return from here to our homes we will at once make known to all our neighbours and workmates what we have done here, and we will win support for the Freedom Charter.

We pay tribute to the ANC, SAIC, SACOD and SACPO for the service they have rendered to South Africa in starting and organising the campaign for the Congress of the People and the Freedom Charter. We mandate these bodies to continue to work together and campaign for the achievement of the demands of the Charter and to get the Freedom Charter endorsed and accepted by all democratic organisations and people.

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POLICE THROUGHOUT UNION ALERTED TO HINDER CONGRESS

Interference on Unprecedented Scale

A PART from its extremely provocative police swoop on the conference proceedings, the Government used the full might of the Political Branch of the police force to try to smash the Congress of the People. These attempts all failed.

For days beforehand Minister of Justice Swart had a large section of the force throughout the country on special duty to waylay delegates on their way to Kliptown.

At the conference itself there were scores of detectives clustered in groups, some taking notes of the speeches, scanning the faces of delegates and others.

They moved in with flashlight and micro-film cameras, binoculars and recording equipment. They photographed hundreds of delegates as they presented themselves at the credentials table. Non-White detectives, exceeding the White detectives in number, according to some reports, mingled with the crowd.

The whole police campaign was on a scale hitherto unknown in South Africa. The police said openly they were out to "get information."

FIFTY ORGANISATIONS

Shortly after the Congress began, the detectives, who had been hanging around outside, marched in with a warrant authorising them to "investigate" the Congress of the People and to search for documents. The warrant also stated that they were investigating more than 50 various organisations.

These detectives lined up at the rear of the delegates and seated themselves on empty lemonade boxes, "breathing down the neck of the meeting," as one delegate put it.

They were in time to hear the Rev. Huddleston declare from the platform: "We are meeting openly, not behind closed doors, to plan a

charter which will be the basis of our action in future years."

HUNDREDS STOPPED

Hundreds of delegates travelling to Johannesburg from all the provinces were stopped by the police and their names and addresses taken.

The police were particularly active at Standerton, where they stopped lorry-loads of delegates and demanded transportation permits and tax receipts from Africans. Indians were told to show their Transvaal entry permits.

One lorry was delayed at Standerton by the police for three hours and a car carrying delegates from the Ventersburg A.N.C. was held up for 24 hours. The minute books were seized.

Of the Cape Western's 90-odd delegates, 60 travelling on two lorries were detained at Beaufort West and only about half a dozen of them managed to get through to Johannesburg. The drivers of the lorries were charged under the Motor Transportation Act. The delegates were told they would have to appear as witnesses the following Monday.

On many national roads police road blocks were established to stop all cars. The main road between Bloemfontein and Johannesburg was blocked at most of the main towns.

INVITED TO HOMES

When the two lorries were stopped at Beaufort West, the

police said: "We were told to keep a look-out for you." There were about 15 policemen in the police station when the names and addresses of delegates were taken.

The morale of the Cape Town delegates remained magnificent throughout the three-day-long delay. After spending the first night sleeping shivering on the lorries they were approached by many of the people in the town who invited them into their houses, provided food and hospitality and listened with great interest to talks on the Congress of the People.

Durban delegates travelled in two lorries and a van. One lorry was involved in an accident, and the other lorry and the van were stopped at Volksrust, on the Transvaal border, where the occupants were instructed to show their entry permits.

A lorry that left from Clarewood was stopped at Perdekop and again at Heidelberg. The occupants were checked at both towns for their entry permits. At Heidelberg they were told that they would be "stopped and charged" at every town they entered.

DETAINED

Another lorry was stopped at Ladysmith at 3 a.m. on Saturday. Police in a pick-up overtook it and forced it to stop. The Indian delegates had to show their inter-provincial permits, and the Africans were asked to show their outward passes. They were detained for two hours at Ladysmith, where all their names and addresses were taken, and were later also delayed at Standerton for another few hours, where they had to produce the same documents.

According to Mr. Robert Resha, one of the A.N.C. organisers of the Congress, African delegates from the Northern Transvaal were refused rail tickets. Other Africans, particularly in Port Elizabeth, had the same trouble. The Johan-

nesburg Non-European Affairs Department put no difficulties in the way of issuing permits to African delegates to enter Johannesburg.

Forty-five delegates who hired a bus at Ermelo could not obtain the necessary transportation permit and were stranded.

MADE NOTES

For two or three days before the Congress opened on Saturday, police were seen hanging about the Transvaal Indian Congress office and also the A.N.C. office. Police photographers took pictures of delegates calling at the offices and detectives made notes of names and car registration numbers.

Detectives from several of the large centres, including Durban, Cape Town and Port Elizabeth, were seen in Johannesburg and at Kliptown. Several European delegates from Cape Town were trailed in the city by detectives. Some of these detectives were from Cape Town themselves.

SOVIET-IRANIAN trade agreement stipulates that the Soviet Union will supply Iran with cotton textiles, rolled metal, cement, machinery, motor vehicles, chemicals, timber and other goods in exchange for Iranian rice, cotton, wool, hides and skins, fish products, dried fruits, oilseed, ores and other commodities.

SPEECHES TO THE CONGRESS

CHIEF LUTHULI (His speech was read to the Conference): "For everyone working for freedom for all in South Africa this assembly will be a crowning climax to a long period of organisational work in a concentrated endeavour to rally the people of South Africa to participate in this historic and unique gathering.

"Why will this assembly be significant and unique? Its size, I hope, will make it unique. But above all its multi-racial nature and its noble objectives will make it unique, because it will be the first time in the history of our multi-racial nation that its people from all walks of life will meet as EQUALS, irrespective of race, colour and creed, to formulate a Freedom Charter for all people in the country.

"June 25 and 26 will go down in history as a significant landmark, a turning point for the better, in the struggle to make South Africa a paradise of freedom for all its people regardless of their geographical and racial origin. Generations to come, who I trust will then be enjoying freedom, will thank the Almighty for this occasion.

"The task of gaining freedom in our multi-racial society is of considerable magnitude and will tax severely the determination and courage of the best of us. If the movement of the people should fail, it will be you and I who will have shamelessly let down the cause and the people."

B. TUROK (Cape Western): "Often we are told that the African is lazy and doesn't work hard. If Strijdom thinks so, let him go down a mine and see for himself. Let the whole Cabinet go underground and sweat it out like the miners. And if they caught a few of the miners' diseases while they were down, I wouldn't mind either."

Mr. A. E. PATEL (presenting the report of National Council of Congress of the People): "The main political parties showed by their refusal to co-sponsor that they were afraid of the movement for real democracy among the people. From some people there was the suggestion that the Con-

gress of the People should take the form of a formal convention of political groups and their leaders. This has never been our idea of the Congress. The Non-European people have had enough of indirect representation. Our conception of the Freedom Charter is not an amalgam of the different programmes of different political groups, but a charter of the people, for the people, based on the demands sent in directly by the people themselves.

"Our delegates assembled here are not the spokesmen of only organisations and groups: they have been elected from the factories, from the streets and blocks in the locations and townships, by small groups of housewives, by farm squatters, by miners in their compounds, by people gathering in large numbers and small.

"Our delegates assembled here speak with the voice of the people everywhere who have taken part in real democratic direct elections and have spoken out their demands from their hearts.

"The authorities tried from the outset to crush this campaign. Leaders were banned, conferences invaded by the police, individuals intimidated. We were planning sedition! they said. But we have been planning freedom. And the campaign for the Freedom Charter gathered strength.

"As fast as leaders were banned, new ones came forward. This conference is a tribute to the spirit of determination in all of you in the face of intimidation and police terror; and a tribute to the young organisers for freedom which this campaign has thrown up."

Mr. P. BEYLEVELD (chairman, Congress of Democrats): "A people is never free unless it can express its aspirations and desires through its own government."

Mr. T. Moosi (Newclare): "If you say this or that Nationalist law is no good, you are then persecuted and called a Communist or a traitor. But even Jesus Christ was called a traitor."

Mrs. SONIA BUNTING (Cape Town): "The Cape Town delegation travelled 1,000 miles to be at

the Congress of the People. But we would have travelled 10,000 miles if necessary to speak of freedom.

"The Government are banning our tried and trusted leaders. But for every one banned, 100 more must rise to take his place. For every leader exiled, there must be 1,000 more from where he came."

DR. LETELE (speaking on "All National Groups Shall Have Equal Rights"): "Apartheid is not really anything new. It is a policy that has existed for the past 300 years, turning up under a variety of names, all meaning the same thing. Although we are told that apartheid means separate development, we find that in effect it means inferior status for non-Whites, for example, Bantu education.

"Attempts to suppress Press criticism of apartheid will not succeed, because the whole world knows what is happening here."

Mr. N. T. NAICKER (general secretary, Natal Indian Congress): "Those people who have political rights in South Africa and are now in a position of having those rights snatched away unjustly and surreptitiously by the Nationalist Government are constrained to choose between the narrow, dangerous, chaotic and suicidal road towards a perpetual tyranny and dictatorship on the one hand, and a broad enlightened path towards an enlightened democracy, based on the free and unfettered will of the peoples of South Africa irrespective of race, colour or creed."

Mr. E. MPHAHLELE (introducing the Charter on Culture and Education): "We are not interested in what Parliament calls Bantu education. I speak as a parson and as a teacher who has been banned from teaching for opposing Bantu education. I refuse to tell my classes that Moshesh was a cunning fox, and that Dingaan was a murderer. I refuse to tell my children that they are inferior."

A representative of the SOUTH AFRICAN WOMEN'S FEDERATION: "It is a pleasure to have police with us, for we know that they can take our documents away, but not our spirit."

A Glimpse at S.A. History

JUNE 26, which fell last week, will go down in South African history as the PEOPLE'S DAY OF UNITY AND STRUGGLE. It was no accident that the C.O.P. was called to take place on this date.

Monday, June 26, 1950, was observed throughout South Africa as a national day of protest against the Suppression of Communism Bill (then passing through its final stages in Parliament). The call to protest came from the African National Congress, S.A. Indian Congress, A.P.O. and the Communist Party of South Africa.

June 25, it was said at an emergency conference in Johannesburg, "marks the beginning of our all-out struggle for freedom and liberty..." And "never before did the country witness such a demonstration of fraternal solidarity and unity of purpose by all sections of the Non-European people in the struggle to secure economic and political emancipation."

In June, 1951, the African National Congress executive issued an invitation to the head committees of the national liberatory movements to discuss a campaign of civil disobedience and on

June 26, 1952, the Defiance Campaign for the Repeal of Unjust Laws was launched.

The opening shots in the campaign were fired by people's leaders Dr. Y. M. Dadoo, Moses Kotane, Johnson Ngwevela, David Bopape, J. B. Marks, Sam Kahn, Michael Harmel and others who defied the

Minister of Justice's orders banning them from attending meetings, with the slogan: "We can never give in to fascism and we shall never give up the struggle for freedom."

Altogether over 8,000 South Africans of all races and from all corners of the country defied the unjust laws during the Defiance Campaign, winning sympathy for their people's cause all over the world, and uniting freedom fighters into a stronger and more determined resistance than ever before.

June 26, 1953, following a call by Chief Albert Luthuli, president general of the African National Congress, was observed as a national day of commemoration and dedication to freedom.

IN 1954

"On June 26, all fighters for freedom must resolve to fight and die together and never turn back until freedom is won," was Chief Luthuli's inspiring message in 1954.

"The significance of June 26 is that it enshrines the determination of the oppressed people in the Union of South Africa to fight unitedly for their liberation from oppression; it enshrines their hope for the realisation of a Government of the people, by the people and for the people, and not for 'Europeans Only,'" he continued.

ON JUNE 26, 1955, THE EPOCH-MAKING FREEDOM CHARTER WAS ADOPTED AT THE CONGRESS OF THE PEOPLE IN KLIPTOWN, TRANSVAAL.

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