

DRAFT : FREEDOM CHARTER.

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 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 monopoly industry shall be transferred to the ownership of the people as a whole;

All other industry and trade shall be controlled to assist the wellbeing 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 redivided 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 treasurers 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 colourbar 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."

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE BANTU EDUCATION ACT.

WRITING ON BANTU EDUCATION before its final introduction in 1955, Fr. Huddleston said: "Everything possible must be done and done with all possible speed to convince the public of S.A. that the Bantu Education Act is the most sinister, as it is the most far-reaching, piece of legislation so far produced. The purpose of the Act is plainly set out: it is the establishment of White Supremacy through the denial to the African people of the cultural heritage which is theirs by right. Here is racialism at its darkest and most damnable - that evil thing which seeks to direct and dominate even the minds of children."

DURING THE EARLY days of Bantu Education, Verwoerd and Eiselen were at pains to conceal the true aims of the Bantu Education Act.

NOW THAT THE VENEER has worn off and Bantu Education has turned out to be the Verwoerdian nightmare its critics prophesied, there has been a noticeable decline in the slick cliches which attempted to make Bantu Education a noble philosophy of education.

AFTER A YEAR of Bantu Education, references to it are blunt and to the point and there is no hesitation in calling a spade a spade.

FOR EXAMPLE, Mr W.A. Maree, a Nationalist M.P. and a member of the Native Affairs Committee - the body responsible for Bantu Education - bluntly told an audience at Vereeniging on September 8th:

* THE GREATEST MENACE to the European races in the Union was the eagerness of the Bantu child to learn and study.

* IT IS TIME we realised that what is being done for the Natives is in the interests of the European. Local Authorities for example, are providing houses for natives not out of love for them, but in the interests of European employers.

* TOO MANY BANTU teachers were willing to talk irresponsibly about politics. The Bantu Community had more things to think about than what would happen in

the future.

* TOO MANY YOUNG NATIVES were becoming tsotsis. Teachers would be better occupied in raising the moral standards of their pupils than in concerning themselves with politics. THEY SHOULD KEEP THE YOUNG NATIVE ON THE RIGHT ROAD.

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"Here is racialism at its darkest and most damnable", wrote Fr. Huddleston in his interpretation of the Bantu Education Act.

There are few right-thinking people today who will not agree with Fr. Huddleston and those that denounced the Bantu Education Act long before it became law.

From Mr Maree we learn that the eagerness of the African children to learn and study is a menace to white civilisation; that housing (and one might say Bantu Education) are provided not for humanitarian reasons or "out of love" but in the interests of European employers.

Such are the sentiments of the government "educationists" and yet this is only a small indication of the governments real attitude towards African education.

Here for instance is an account, written by a teacher in AFRICA SOUTH (Vol.1.No.1.) - a new magazine - of the Bantu Education Act in practice.

The Bantu Education Act has been used in different ways in different situations, but always against the African people. For instance, in December, 1953, the Native Affairs Dept., closed down a school near East London, presumably because the inhabitants of that village had resisted the Government's agricultural measures. This was the beginning of the reign of terror with the Act used as a guillotine. Whenever terror has to be struck in people there is always the inevitable witch-hunting and inquisition. This is the part played by the Special (Political) Branch of the C.I.D.....

IN AUGUST, 1954, armed police entered a number of schools and produced warrants to search the classrooms and homes of teachers. I was one of those subjected to this outrageous treatment in the presence of my pupils. In one instance a certain teacher had his person searched in front of his class.....

THEN FOLLOWED the dismissal of five or six office bearers of the C.A.T.A.* together with four other prominent members. There was not even the semblance of a trial, nor were there any reasons advanced for their expulsion from teaching. This was in September, 1955, and since then a batch of school teachers is DISMISSED each school term. Among those dismissed have been leading members of the profession. The N.A.D. just declares them "unsuitable" and they are immediately dismissed.....

IT HAS BEEN suggested earlier that Bantu Education is regarded by the rulers as a means of retribalising the Africans, with the express purpose of solving, even if temporarily, the problems that flow from the conflicts of capital and labour. It is in the light of this understanding that the persecution of the dismissed teachers makes sense....The connection between the persecution of Messrs. Mda, Honono, Mkentane, Maja and Sihlali (men victimised under the Act) and their opposition to the Bantu Education Act, is far too obvious.....

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* IT IS PAINFUL to an educator to see how even inspectors of Schools live in fear of the Special Branch. One is reminded of a certain inspector who with fear peeping through his eyes and a trembling in his voice related how he had been questioned by the Special Branch as to why he had recommended for permanent appointment a teacher who had just returned from a C.A.T.A. conference last year.....

* BUT IT IS more painful to see the work of a lifetime disrupted in one fell stroke as happened at the beginning of this year, when all the old teachers in one school and some in many others in the Willowvale district in the Transkei, were transferred from their schools simply because it was suspected that they were sympathetically inclined to C.A.T.A. One of them had been principal of his school for thirty years, during which period he had raised his school from Standard 11 to Standard VIII. But then this is the Bantu Education Act in practice.

* CONSIDERATIONS of space do not permit us to make even a passing comment on the debasement of education as illustrated by the new syllabuses..... We would like to tell the world of how determined attempts are made to change the nature and quality of such world-famed places of learning as Lovedale and Healdtown and how it is intended to obliterate even the memory of these shrines of African education. And now the octopus stretches out its tentacles to strangle even university education. But enough has surely been said to show the drift of things and the rest may safely be left to the imagination of the reader.

*Cape African Teachers Association.

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FEDERATION OF SOUTH AFRICAN WOMEN 1954-1963

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