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This great People's Congress is the culmination of long months of freedom campaigning by our people, united in purpose and in harmony.

The idea was born at the Queenstown annual conference of the African National Congress, in December 1953, for the resolution passed there initiated a meeting of the four Congresses - the A.N.C., the South African Indian Congress, the South African Coloured Peoples' Organisation and the South African Congress of Democrats - which launched the campaign for a freedom assembly of the people of South Africa.

These four bodies issued the Call "Let us Speak Together for Freedom". Read for the first time here in Kliptown, by Chief Luthuli, the words of the Call echoed throughout South Africa, and found an answering chord among the people on the land, in the factories, in the mines, among housewives, teachers and students.

The Congress of the People was launched after the heroic Defiance Campaign, at a time when the people had been roused to a new spirit of national pride and confidence. Every act of the Nationalists, every new repression, has aroused the people to ever greater anger, and the Congress of the People campaign took root and spread fast and furiously because it is an expression of the need of the people for change, for struggle against today's unjust order of things, and for freedom.

The National Action Council of the Congress of the People, which has directed the campaign, was set up by the four Congresses, and it issued an invitation to all national bodies to become co-sponsors. Though there was some response to this, 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 bodies there was the suggestion that the Congress 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 of the People. 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.

This Campaign was to show how the people saw their own future in freedom; and in these months, spreading the campaign, discussing demands, electing delegates, the people have forged themselves into a mightier force for the freedom fight.

Once the Freedom Call had been adopted, huge provincial Congress of the People Conferences were called, and provincial Action Councils set up to conduct the campaign in the provinces.

In this campaign between two and three thousand pounds have been collected by the people. Over a quarter million leaflets have been distributed, organisers sent out to the remotest corners of our land, and at countless meetings the Congress of the People has been brought close to the people.

The campaign was launched in several stages: popularising the Congress of the People, formulating and sending in freedom demands; and finally the election of delegates.

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 house wives, 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

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this campaign has thrown up.

No government intervention has succeeded in cowing us. No intimidation or terror will succeed! From here we will go on to even greater achievements in the campaign for our future in freedom, as inscribed in our Freedom Charter!

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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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