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Bavid Everett
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The Freedom Charter has emerged ae the mee' important single
document in contemporary South Q\$rican politice. The Charter wee
eeerted at th: Cengreee 0% the People ECDPJ in June 1955, and was
the ree4lt 0% a lung campaign to gather the demands 0% ordiuary
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people and compile them into a 'People 5 pharter.' The repular
demante e\$ the Freedom Charter - fer human equality in the
cultural and educational life 04 the

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efrice in the 1?BGS. Largelv enbrated by the recent 9%rlcan
National Congreee EQNCS tCenetitutiDnal Guidelines fer a New
bmuth Q\$rica L3 the Freedom Charter leeks eet ta mliwtaim ite
aeminant position in the Struggle ta end ipertheid, and
thereeFter in ehaping peet-apartheid South Q\$Fica.

Qt tWe e:me tlme. h7NEvLFq the Charter hae h;0 lte crltlce.

Thu "9%ricaniete' NiLhLH the QHC iH Lie 1?5CE. Wh: QFE6Ch&d a
racially exclusive turm 0% Qtrican nationaliem, rejected the
atemtnt e% the Charter which declareu twat Seuth

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erica belongs to all who live in it, black and white." In 1959 the Africanists split from the ANC to form the Pan-Africanist Congress, explicitly citing opposition to the Charter as one of their reasons for launching a rival organisation. Egerhert 1779 p178:

The Charter has recently been criticised for not representing the contemporary demands of workers, and for being at odds with the socialist transformation of South Africa. As one commentator rather emphatically observed, however, the Charter was adopted at the most democratic gathering in the history of South Africa, and...it was adopted for a particular set of features in a particular historical context. To remove the contemporary analysis of the Charter from that context...is both ahistorical and undialectical.³ While arguing that the Charter should be defined and understood in terms of contemporary conditions and circumstances, the aim of this chapter is to sketch the wider historical context of the 1940s and 1950s from which the Charter emanated. It analyses the political and economic conditions in the late 1940s which affected the nature of the liberation struggle, the terms it adopted, and the formulation of its programme. It traces the development of the form of popular mobilisation and participation which was the hallmark of the COP as it emerged in the late 1940s. It also contrasts the aims and intentions of the 1944 AND statement with the principle of Africanism in South Africa and the other statements of principle which appeared in the 1940s, with the Freedom Charter. As such, it attempts to disaggregate some of

the varied influence which affected the nature of the Congress
of the People campaign, and the Charter itself.

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This chapter deals with two specific issues: the

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significance of the clause in the Freedom Charter demanding the
nationalisation of banks, mines and monopoly industries, and the
perennial question: who wrote the Freedom Charter? This Chapter
rejects the incessant recourse upon individual authorship of the
Freedom Charter and seeks to demonstrate the impossibility of
naming any individual author. Moreover, it is argued, the
question to be asked is not who wrote the Charter but to what
extent the Charter deviated from the demands sent in by
individuals throughout the country? This can be measured by the
degree of dissent over the final Charter within the ranks
of Congress members and supporters.⁴

INTERVIEW.

The UFW was the culmination of Congress and pharisaic activity over
the two previous decades. Its organisational form reflected two
particular strands of postwar "elitist" activity: the first was
the growth of Dr. Martin Luther King and interracial co-operation between
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the AND, the 8% Indian Congress (BQICJ) and the Communist Party of
South Africa (CPSA); the second was popular mobilisation in a
campaign to draw up a 'People's Charter'. Both clearly found
expression in the Freedom Charter, the product of the Congress of
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Oraahieatienal ce-eperation flawed tram the reorgahi-ation 0% the AND in the 1?4\$e, the radicalieation Of the SAID, and the resurgence of the CPSA \$ellowihg its pelitical implosion 0% the .u 1928-1935 period. During the 19435 the A\$rican and Ihdian Cennreese, the Qtrican People 5 Organisation EAPOBE and the CPSA fl were confronted with varieue divisive 4erce.: excluzixe black k. L nationaliem(e), antie f'l ommuniem, the political caution 0% an elder generation e\$ leaders, disunity amanget the opponents o4 segregation, and the disruptive actiehe'0\$ political opponents. r Tor a united fr0ht in opposition te m m EL Nonetheleee the n eegregation (and, later apartheid) was widely Shared. The 19405 and early 19505 witnessed an Dn-geingt internal battle to radicaliee the QNC and SAID (in terms 5% both aims and methods 04 Dpwaeitien) and the gradual emergence 0% racial ce-Dperation in, T. pursuit of a minimum set 0% demands for democratic re\$erm. The endereement 0% a hatienal democratic struggle by the CPSA in the lveue, and 1:5 :eheequeht Statue as an ally, rather than cempetitor, 0% the Cohereeeee, was significant in achieving organisational ce-eperation. The 19405 else witneeesed the signing ef a fermal pact between the African and Indian Congresses, which resulted in an alliance in which the CPSA - with same EU members - was an thormal but intluential partner. CMunger 19563 TI-,.,,, iOAJ'yr: q1 r-,.-. t .. n ,_ .o _-_, nu. o - nun. M ELI .- d. rtn in black uni nieatieh :nd ih4ermel III m H! militahcy such hue beycette and squatter mevemewte; by the end 0% the decade, ?ellewing the radicalisatien of the AND and SAIC,

Several organisations were increasingly able to attempt to channel such militancy.

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Let by the organisational and ideological problems mentioned above, the leaders of the new alliance frequently called for the production of a popular statement of aims which would provide unity for purposes.

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would distribute their share

In the late 1940s attempts were made by the Transvaal branches of the AND, ERIC, APO and CPSQ to organise a campaign which would mobilise popular participation in the drawing up of a 'People's

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Charter. Their campaign provided the model for the 1954-55 Congress of the People. In such, the COP had its roots in the immediate prehistory of the Congress movement.

The Freedom Charter has recently been granted authority through what Gavin Williams described as claims of its "immaculate popular conception"; such claims are the uniqueness of the Congress of the People and the African National Congress stamp of popular participation. Williams 1988; see Butcher and Crehin 1985 p.2073 Rather, the COP represented the successful

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'national' organisation of a particularly South African form of popular mobilisation around the production of a statement of principle which was first attempted in the late 1940s.

The Freedom Charter was a ringing affirmation of human rights and dignity; it was also a political statement made by the newly-

termed Congress Alliance? a statement clearly marked by the particular conditions of the time. Q5 such, the Freedom Charter mixed both universal demands for human rights and South African-specific demands which grew out of apartheid. It brought together the two dominant themes of the period - the development of racial co-operation in the struggle against apartheid, and the broadening of that struggle. The Freedom Charter endorsed a nonracial future, and rejected exclusive nationalism. As such, it was a reflection of the nature of the anti-apartheid struggle waged by the Congress Alliance.⁶

The nonracialism of the Freedom Charter was the product of the first nationwide campaign jointly undertaken by Congresses representing all the different racial groups, joined moreover by the Federation of South African Women (FEDSAW) and, after March 1955, the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU). Such an alliance of forces did not exist in the decade preceding Dr Mzansi's 1950s, and only reappeared in the 1950s. In crude terms, the 1950s were the first time such a declaration of truly nonracial commitment to a democratic future could have been made.

The most important statement of aims and principles by the ANC is the Freedom Charter. The African Claims in South Africa, adapted in December 1943. Africans' Claims were divided into two main parts following a pattern written by ANC President-General

Alfred Xuma. The Tiredert restated the Atlantic Charter in terms of black oppression in South Africa; the second comprised a Bill of Rights. Both African Claims and the Freedom Charter were aimed at uniting support for the AME, while appealing for wider support for the principle of non-racial democratic participation in government. Unlike the Freedom Charter, Africans' Claims dealt specifically with the African population. Both documents were marked by moderation in the face of state repression of black political activity.

Africans' Claims in effect demanded equality of treatment

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with whites. The Bill of Rights was divided into seven parts, which dealt with political rights, land, industry and labour, commerce, education, health and medical provision, and discriminatory legislation. The Bill of Rights demanded equal political participation and universal suffrage, and marked a break with previous ANC demands for a qualified franchise.⁷ The Bill at once demanded "a fair redistribution of the land as a prerequisite for a just settlement of the land problem."⁸ The Bill of Rights thereafter demanded the removal of discriminatory laws and called for freedom of movement, residence and equality before the law. It also called for the extension to Africans of benefits enjoyed by white workers, including equal pay for equal work, employment benefits and unemployment

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The economic sections of the Bill of Rights demanded

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equality with whites, and the removal of laws which hampered black economic mobility.

The demands contained in Africans' Claims were repeated in the Ten Point Programme, adapted by the African National Congress a day after the ANC endorsed Africans' Claims. Following an introduction which spoke of the need for "the liquidation of the National Oppression on the Non-European in South Africa", the Ten Point Programme similarly demanded universal suffrage, abolition of the pass laws, and the "revision" of the land in accordance with the concept of full and equal citizenship. The economic proposals in both consisted of calls for the lifting of restrictions on black businesses. While both called for official recognition of black trade unions, neither called for the right to strike - similarly absent from the Freedom Charter. Neither document set forth a programme of action, nor proposed the means by which their demands should be met.¹⁰

Africans' Claims was a more moderate document than the later Freedom Charter both in the scope of its demands and the language it employed. This was the result of a number of different factors. Africans' Claims was drawn up by an all-male committee of professionals, dominated by doctors, lawyers, teachers and ministers of religion. It was aimed in part at attracting men of similar professional standing to the ANC.¹¹ Africans' Claims comprised a moderate, nonracial restatement of democratic goals

and a :prpratione in tune with international opinion, enshrined in the R'lantic Charter. It also Flawed tram ah eppa rt ht liberaliea tion 64 government policy which resulted 4ram the particular conditions 04 the Second Herld War.

The yeare 04 the Second World War were a remarkable phase in a

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Seuth Atrican history in the twentieth century, marked by t? partial relaxation a? discriminatory legislation, a 50 per cent rree in real average ear mg For black industrial workers, and the encouragement 04 black hopes for a more liberal government policy. ED'Meara 198-.) This flowed from both structural economic charges and expedient government manaeuvering. During the war, industrial capital became the largest sector 04 the econemy. Uninterrupted industrial production wae eeeential 4er the war

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ettort , and the labour requirements 0% heavy and manufacturing industry began to compete with these :4 the mining and agricultural setters. Repreentativee 0% organised industry Dppo ee ed the mlgrant Labour system and :alieu ?DF a permanent lck urban labour ?arce to meet its demand 40? Skilled and semiw

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Skilled labour. The privately Dwned commercial and manuTacturtir g eectwre joined the call #er an urbanieed labour farce, and saw

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called for the legalieation 0% black trade uniene. ED'M

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At the same time, black militancy increased. Black labour, driven from the Reserves by economic necessity and attracted by the growing demand for labour, poured into urban areas to seek waged employment. The 1948 Pagan Commission noted that African women accounted for one third of urban Africans, and concluded that black urbanisation was a permanent factor. The Pagan Commission paras 18-21. The massive urbanisation of the war years led to an acute housing shortage. This in turn led to the squatter movements of the 1940s, as thousands of homeless Africans formed community structures, built their own villages on deserted land, and provided their own services and infrastructure. E. Stadler 1979. The militancy of the squatters was matched in other urban struggles such as bus-boycotts. E. Stadler 1985, Ledge 1983.

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Alongside the growth of urban militancy was a massive increase in unionization and worker militancy. Although illegal, by 1945 over 40% of commerce and privately owned industry was unionised. L. U. Mearns 1983. According to D. Mearns, a total of 145,522 African workers went on strike during the 1940-1948 period, accounting for a total of 409,297 work-days. E. U. Mearns 1983, p. 228. Organised manufacturing industry (I

I exerted pressure on the government to recognise black trade unions as a necessary step to curbing militancy and normalising

The government was in a vulnerable position in the early years of the war, as the Axis powers seemed to be on the point of victory, the threat of an invasion grew as Japanese forces entered the Indian Ocean, and a general election loomed. In 1943 in response, the government made unprecedented moves to secure black worker loyalty, so as not to face a challenge on too .13

42 Deney Reitz, minister of

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many fronts at the

Native Affairs, relaxed the pass laws in the industrial centres of Natal and the Transvaal. At the same time, the government adopted a largely pragmatic approach to labour unrest. Black unions were allowed to develop unofficially; in 1942 Walter Madeley, the minister of Labour, promised black trade union recognition in return for worker loyalty, stating: "Don't be too explosive on the question ... R-Edgworth's 4 your union will 0

come about; but you must rely on me." (Simone 1985, p.556) More significantly, black strikes in areas of industry important to the war effort appear to have been not infrequently met in a manner favourable to the workers rather than employers. (Edwards, 1987; author's interview with Rewley Annet)

at the same time a series of government committees reported out during the war years in support of the central demands of -Z.-. 4 4m x.-

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min ieter Jan mlxeyrh, whe was looked te as the leading liberal
epekeepereeh, increased black pensions, dieablement pa mehte and
the funds For black educatien; these were charged to state
revenue. EPaton 1964; Leween 1988, p.383 The government however
concentrated on unatfficially relaxihq discriminatory legislatien.
Dptimiem ever the potential r in directien by the
government 'temmed te a larg 4Fem a speech made by Smute
in January 1942. Speaking in the 'dark daye' 04 the war, Smute
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The whole trend both in thie country and threughout Atrica
has been in the opposite direction Eta eegregation). The
whole movement 0% development here on this continent has
been \$er closer centacte to be eetahliehed between the
varieue racee and the various eectore 04 this community....
Isolation has gone and segregation has 4alleh an evil days
tee ... A revolutionary change is taking place among the
Native peoplee Of Atrica through the movement tram the
country to the tewne - twe movement 4rem the Old Reserves in
the Native areas to the big European centres 04 pepulatioh.
Segregation tried t0 etap it. It has, howev:r, net stopped
it in the least. You might
as well try to sweep the ecean back with a brTeem. EHahcock
1968, pp. 47o-7J

Taken wiLh hie cummitment
relaxation 0% discriminatory
indicating . Change 0? direction.
wee in this context that the ANC in
A\$ricane; Claims, " to capitalise
ethos e\$ the period and place an alternative
nonracial citizenship be4ere the me vernmer t.
we want the Government and the people of
knew the ?ull aepiratiehe 04 the African

their point of view will also be presented at the Peace Conference.¹²

The purpose of Africans' Claims was to articulate western liberal-democratic demands in a non-racial South African content. The political project behind Africans' Claims - to delineate the ideological path that should be followed by a government which appeared to be backing away from segregation - surely misjudged the clash of forces that was taking place.

Following the 1943 general election, which the United Party (UP) won with a landslide victory, the Smuts government

increasingly sloughed the reformed rhetoric which had marked it in the early years of the war. Smuts, through his secretary, rejected Africans' Claims as "propagandist" and stated that he was "not prepared to discuss proposals which are wildly impracticable." Easington 1986, p.1131. The flux control measures relaxed in 1942 were reinforced in 1943. In contrast with his ...- r 1.1...-1. . ;... ..:-L.'n n1 -7 ..

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Measure 145 which made black strikes illegal. In 1946, Hofmeyr

(Acting Prime Minister in Smuts's absence) presided over the vicious suppression of the strike of some 70 060 African miners.

The Central Executive of the C.S.A. were tried for sedition, in a trial which lasted for two years before being withdrawn. The Atlantic Charter, in which the South African government was a signatory, continued to inspire black political activity. The 1945 United Nations Charter, of which Smuts was a co-author,

increased black demands for the domestic application of liberal principles. In 1946 the Native Representative Council ENRCJ, an indirectly elected African body set up in 1934, adjourned over F L L.

government handling of the miners strike. NRC member James Mareka, a doctor from the Orange Free State who was later elected President-General of the QNC, accused the Government of a post-war continuation of the policy of Facism which is the antithesis and negation of the letter and the spirit of the Atlantic Charter and the United Nations Charter.¹³

In response Gordon Nears, the Secretary for Native Affairs, advised Acting Prime Minister Hofmeyr not to back down before NRC pressure. In so doing he revealed the ideological gap which lay between ANC and government opinion:

Political issues are raised and in my opinion they should be replied to and not evaded by the Government. Even at a straightforward statement of the Government's adherence to its segregationist policy is made clear it will let the Natives know where they stand and clear the air. They are pathetically pinning their hopes to the Atlantic Charter, to which the Union Government subscribed, as a pointer to the acceptance of a 'liberal' Native policy in the Union.¹⁴

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Hofmeyr followed his advice, and the PRC adjourned indefinitely. Africans' Claims clearly failed to fill the growing ideological vacuum created by a government unable to please the competing sectors of a rapidly industrialising economy and unable to generate a legitimate way to replace segregation (which it had assisted in undermining). Nonetheless, it committed the

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RNC to a more radical programme than it had previously allowed the

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ed, demanding full citizenship rights. I

beginning of the move towards a mass base by the RNC, a process that lasted from the 1930s to the 1960s and beyond.

BLACK UNITY.

The late 1940s were, for the African and Indian Congresses, a

period of growth and radicalisation in which they began to catch

up with the black militancy at the war years. See Lodge 1983, Naledi 1970. The same period witnessed the rise of the ANC Youth League, the QNCYL and the reformed

ANC of 1944. The ANCYL

was made up of a group of professional men, described as "an extraordinarily able group in their mid-thirties or early thirties, mainly teachers or students of medicine or law." E. H. Fie 1987, p. 983. One defining characteristic of the Freedom Charter was its endorsement of non-racialism, which was in contrast with a strand of racial exclusivism which informed some ANCYL literature. The 1948 Basic Policy of the QNCYL stated: "South Africa is a country of four chief nationalities, three of which are minorities, and three of which suffer national oppression." Basic Policy p. 3393. The ANCYL worked to radicalise the RNC "in order that the National movement should have inner strength and solidarity... and... should be led by Africa

themelves. Basic Policy p. 324) - Some Youth Leaguers exhibited considerable antipathy towards the CPSR and insisted that "we are oppressed not as a class, but as a people, as a Nation" Basic Policy, p. 3303 - a standpoint it is difficult to see. However, that racial exclusivism which defined some QNCYL

The 1948 Basic Policy explicitly rejected the Barveyite slogan 'Africa: %ar the R\$ricahs'. EBasic Policy p.328; Williams 1988 The 'ericaheim' 0% the ANCYL was more concerned with attcihing 9fricah unity than with the productiah 04 a coherent 'A\$ricahiet' programme. While the Basic Policy :tated that "political demacracy remains an empty ?DFm withmut eubstanre unless it is properly grounded on a base of economic, and especially industrial democracy", this did not generate an economic perspective emphasising either collectivieatioh OF 'Africaniet' eacialiem. EBasic Policy 5.324; and belowl It stressed instead the palitical necessity of A4rican 5el4-Feliahce and ca-Dperation. The economlc proposals D4 QNCYL Basic Policy (as with A\$ricans' Claims) concentrated on the remaval e\$ restrictions on black ecohemi: mobility. Q5 such, the RNCYL was I

more nationalist than the racially Mtlueive 'A4ricaniete' 04 th ivbus. (he EftECtS Ct H#r1:ahism' are discueeed below. 1?46 was a sighi\$icaht year for black eppeetion politics.

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le NRC adjourned, the miners strike was crushed, and at the ea e time a Congreee delegatien t0 the UN ensured that South A rice became the \$ocue 04 world attention. 1946 also witnessed the radimeliieetieh Q4 Indieh hnlitice. The tehling 04 the Asiati" LEHJ Tewure and Indian Representation Bill, which offered partial Indizh representatieh in return tor ECDHGmiC restrictiah, gave

rise to greater Indian unity and militancy. Under new leadership, the SQIC DFQCHiSEd a passive resistance campaign against what it described as the "diabolical attempt to strangulate Indians ecohemically and degrade them socially." ENalker iQ6E, p.7603 The campaign was highly significant in two respects. ?irectly, it was entirely nonracial; over EOQQ volunteers of all races (predominantly Indian) were imprisoned.¹⁵ The Joint Passive Resistance Cowhcil, which co-ordinated the campaign, stated: "We believe that the struggle of the th-whites in South A4rice against colour eppressimh is one and indivisible." EThe Guardian 5-12-1946, p.53 Secondly, the legislation was withdrawn by the government, indicating the power 04 non-violent extra-parliamentary action. According to Z.K.Hatthews, the 1946 campaign provided "the immediate inspiratien" 4UP the aNC'e adaption 0% an emtra-parliamentary programme e4 action in 194?. EKarie 1987, p.1033

The need \$er a common 4ront to oppose black oppression we

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constant theme 04 postwar Congress and CPSA propaganda. Iw\$ermal co-eperetieh between the QNC5 5912 and RFC began in 1946 and was \$ermalised with the signing 0% the 1?47 'Dectors Pact' (signed by doctors Dadee, Neither and Xuma) which bound the A4ricah and 'xnl'f

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IndzmH eneresres :h a \$;rm:1 multiracial alliance.^{1&} In 1947 the ANC, ERIC and RFD jmihtly organised what Xuma described :s an mistrtric unlty rally." EThe Guardian 8-5-1947, p.43 The

Guardian, a leftwing newspaper edited by CPSQ members Betty Redford and Subsequently Brian Bunting, gave prominence to Speeches and articles calling For a black united \$rent.¹⁷ CP\$A Een\$erence resolutions called for the creation 04 a "bread 4ighting alliance" to struggle for a programme lar ely I12!

indistinguishable from Africans' Claims, which stressed equal rights fer all, land redistribution, improved living standards, and peace and 4riendehip with the Soviet Union. EThe Guardian 9e 1_.,_?47: p. 13

Attaining unity at the graes-roots level, however, was hat a smooth proceeee. In early 1949 violence flared between the A%ricah and Indian population in Durban, leaving 123 dead, 1,303 injured and some 40,000 homeleeee. EThe Guardian 20-1-1949) The Durban riots were the meet violent demonstratien 0% the difficulties of achieving racial unity; however they also provided the :entemt er a reaffirmatieh 0% the 1?47 Fact. The ANC and BAIC issued a -h

.tatement whlch traceu tne route 0? raclal oppression and strif: m

not to 'raciem' but "the political, economic and social structure 9% this country, based on dif\$erential and discriminatory treatment of the varieuee groupe."¹⁸

Various factors continued te impede the emergence 04 a unified alliance. Durihg the late igdme, while many #NCVL membre were drawn into halhetream ANC Welitics, same prominent Ymuth Leaguere continued to eepeuee a racially exclusive ?DFm 0f

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 efrican nationalism as well as ceneiderable opposition to the
 CPSA. In the immediate postwar period, moreover, bath the AND and
 C were concerned with internal struggles, and with the e4fecte
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 04 more radical policy and strategy on a variegated membership.
 In brief, the transformatien 04 the ANC from a smallish, pettyw
 bourgeois Drganieation which used the methods 04 petition and
 constitutional action, into a mass-baeed extra-parliamentary
 organisation demanding 4ull and immediate equality fer all, was
 not a taek ewittly achieved. Although the process of internal
 radicalisatiun in the late 19405 largely precluded \$Drmal
 alliances, informal black organisational enity grew.
 As a reeult 0f variaue 4actore which impacted Dn postwar
 black politics, in particular the internal dynamics at each
 Cehgreee, the dissolution of the CPSA and the tihal spur 0% the
 Durban riete, the emergence 04 a multiracially structured
 Cangreee alliance was a natural and strategic development. The
 tet-Hrewderlet UESIFE Of the thH anlcen hem joint members in
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 bath the am: and SQIC, some in leading positions) to maintain
 organisational eeparatenee
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 met by ANC resistance to
 thDrpDratiDh in a single nonracial organisation. Finally, the
 heightened racial tension in Durban revealed the dl4ficultiee e4
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 nonracial etructure (ie. 'Une Cetheee:), eheuld be understood.

The CPEQ during the war years converted political respectability into minor electoral success in the Johannesburg and Cape Town Council election. The onset of the Cold War marked the end of white voter EJDPOft, while in 1948 the CPSA won the Cape Western (black-elected) 'Native Representative' elections, with Central and Fred Carney elected to

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Committee members Sam

parliament and the Provincial Council respectively. The Party also contested deieery Board and NRC elections. The CPSA clearly had a strong section of opinion which, while not necessarily Brmweriet, regarded legal parliamentary activity as the main field of Party work.¹⁹ As the official Party history noted in 1982: "Legalistic illuieie had penetrated into the ranks of the Party..." (CSACP 1957, p.403)

Black Party membership increased significantly during the war, as CPSQ. Organisations such as David Bopape and J.B. Harke centred on popular mobilisation: an area Detn trace UHLDH and 1987; author's interviews) The combination

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of massively increased black urbanisation and black militancy created conducive conditions for the organisational and union work which black CPSA members concentrated on. The ANS during the war years concentrated on drawing up and popularising African 'Class' 3: 2 tier: 5 attracting "dilettante University graduate" to the Congress.²⁰ Grass-roots "Federation with

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largely left to black CPSQ members, many of whom were also A

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members. In 1944 a report of the CPUSA Central Committee noted the growth of Qtrican industrial and economic action, but the dearth of Qtrican political organisation. The report concluded: The need for an industrial and strong political organisation will be increasingly felt by the workers...Let us therefore take upon ourselves our share of the responsibility in building up this movement. Our members working in the various national organisations have done much in an individual way. A central and active leadership in this direction has been lacking for a long time.²¹ The CPSQ was a heterogeneous organisation. Some (predominantly white) leading Party members played a high-profile political role in support of the war, and in fighting white elections. CPSQ member Hilde Watts won a seat on the Johannesburg City Council in an all-white constituency, and although CPSQ candidates in the 1943 general election polled an average of 11 per cent of votes cast, according to leading Party member Brian Bunting, the CPSQ "began to think in terms of a mass membership." Bunting 1986, pp.110-1113 At the same time, set out above, black Party members were involved in the 1944 Anti-Pass Campaign, trade union organisation, and similar work.

The postwar years were marked by Cengreese/CPSQ :e-eperetieh which grew despite opposition from some Youth Leaguers and the FIC, this was eased by the

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'Old guard' of the RNC leadership. In p QFEMI; number 44 of the Cengreese/CPSQ member: Ehedge 1983, chapter 13 In the postwar period, the CPSQ was an internal partner in the RNC/SAIC alliance. The effect of this was a

growing etreee on economic issues alongside the eetabliehed ANC
concern with Civil righte. at the same time, the CPBA hegah t0
develop its national democratic programme, calling 4Dr' the
immediate transfer of power to the majority population and in
e44ect leaving socialist reconstruction to a later, poet-
revelutiehary, stage. CD-operationien increased as a result 0% the
1948 election victory 04 the Herehigde Naeiehalee Party - the
pace and ?erocity of Nationalist attacks 0% the Cehgreeses and
CPSQ thereafter made antieNatiennialiet unity an imperative. When
the CPSA dieeolved in the face 0? the Suppression D\$ Communiem
8111 becoming law in June 1950, a formal multiracial alliance
exiested between the SAID and QNC, in whit: the CPSA was an
in\$ermal but influential partner.

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T
:e decieioh of the Communist Party to enter alliance
politics - rather than adopt a programme calling \$Dr the
immediate revolutionary transfer 04 pewer t0 the working class
and the creetlon D? a socialist euuiety, and the :hgping 0% it:
activities accordingly - had a ceneiderable e\$4ect eh opposition
pelitics. The postwar Party programme was set out in the 1945
"amphlet ghgt_gg532, and called 4er democratic rights \$er all,
the nationalisation 0% the land and the banks, 4Dr a national
health service, tar 4ree and compulsory education for all, and
supprtee ihrree

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In view of the heterogeneous nature of the CPSA, it is perhaps unsurprising that the adoption of a national democratic programme met with considerable internal opposition. Jack Simone, a leading

Central Committee member, defending what VEHT? at the 1945 CUSQ
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Annual Conference, noted: "Some of our comrades describe this pamphlet as 'wishy-washy'...they do not consider it revolutionary in content." He continued:

Comrades, there are times when to be extreme ultra-revolutionary is to betray the cause for which we are working. which is the more revolutionary today _ to say you want the vote and equality of rights for the European? Isn't it more revolutionary to take up the struggle for housing for the people, for fair distribution of supplies and a Ministry of Food? we must find a policy which give expression to the innermost needs of the people of our country. What we lack too much is the spirit of sacrifice, the determination to get among the people and to take up the issues which must nearly affect them. (The Guardian 4-1" 1945, p.1.; Bunting 1986, p.117)

The CPSA programme was clearly more radical than African Claims in its talk of nationalisation, an influence which found increasing sympathy within the ANC and ultimately found expression in the Freedom Charter. Moreover, the Party's adoption of a national democratic programme and consequent status as an ally rather than a competitor of Congress, made alliance politics a possibility. At the same time, the presence of CPSA members and particularly the high profile of white members, was not unproblematic. Many leading ANC members remained hostile to the CPSA, as did some leading ABC members. Lodge however argues that the 1944 election of ANC members Tambo, Mandela and Sisulu to the NEC, where they co-operated closely with CPB members such as

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 Tleeme, Marks and Hetahe, led to a marked moderation of former
 hostility. Eledge 1983, p.28; Bunting 1986, p.1693
 EQEQEELEEBILELEEEIHE-61114.2JEEEEEQEEELieeeeEEEEEX-
 The pwetwar rele of the CPSA in the creation Of a 'broad fighting
 wee 0% coneiderable importance. 0% equal significance
 \$er the work in hand was its role in working al0ngeJde th
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 Congresses t0 develop a particular Term 04 gra oat
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 Organisation which found its Fulleet expression in the Cengreee
 0% the People. In 1944 the CPSQ recommended the formation of a
 single Congress For each racial group, to be co-erdihated by a
 joint committee. The CPSA Turther recommended that: "The idea 0%
 a People's Charter 0% Rights should be taken up jointly by the
 three sectiene." ECPSA 1944, p.4.3
 The CPSQ and ANC beth expressed the deeire to 'get among the
 le: and thus reunite formal organisations with the widespread
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 black milltancy at the perled. In order to ettect thle, the CPSH
 in 1945 recommended the summoning of "a Peoples Canvehtien." EThe
 Guardian 4-1-1945, p.1.3 The aim 04 such a Convention - which
 became a commeh goal 0% the CPSA and the Congresses in the
 postwar period - wee to produce a coherent, popular statement
 combining black militahcy with national demecratic gaaie, the
 .4 r;.... _____. -5, .1. -. hEQr ,4 4- A PF. . . ,
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 would symboliee and concretiee the emerging Drgehieatiehal unity.

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The drawing up of such a charter could not and did not precede the emergence of a formal alliance. However, the method of drafting what finally emerged as the Freedom Charter in 1955 was envisaged in the late 1940s. In 1947 Dr. Yusuf Dadoo, a leading CPUSA member and president of the SAID, began implementation at a joint committee resolution of the Transvaal branches of the ANC, the SAIC and ACD:

to convene a countrywide conference of all progressive organisations to draw up a charter for democracy for all in South Africa. It may be a prelude to a national convention truly representative of the South African people irrespective of race or colour. (The Guardian 28-8-1947, p.53)

In early 1948, Transvaal and Free State delegates were invited "from factories and workshops, townships, hostels, advisory boards and vigilance committees, farm settlements and country towns in all corners of the provinces" to assist the drawing up and endorsement of a charter for (Votes For All). Their goal was "to launch a campaign for the democratic principles of the United

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Pcwiumm ulnar Le'r , LQHLEHLI :tLlng UH Ht: Lklilvt:rr:r_1.1. Tr :x n.:u.:v: a
the right of nonracial political participation. (Manifesto,
The Assembly, which was restricted to the Transvaal and Orange Free State, cut short the disputes which marked both QNCXCPSR and intra-Congress relations. The QM YL and 'Old guard' QNC leadership jointly attacked what was seen as CHSA denial of 5% of the Transvaal QNE and its activities.?? These increased with
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the nomination of CPUSA member and Assembly patron S.E.Marks for

AND Transvaal President. MeFe importantly, the Assembly organisers were accused of attempting to by-pass the existing multiracial alliance in order to form a new, nonracial organisation.²³

Nevertheless, the Assembly met, with 322 delegates representing some 700 000 people, and endorsed the People's Charter for Votes for All. (Harrie 1987, pp.399-400; Bunting 1986, pp.146-147) It also anticipated the COP in calling for a future national assembly where elected delegates from the whole country could endorse a 'People's Charter.' The Assembly was significant in highlighting the way in which popular participation was emerging as a hallmark of Congress activities. The People's

U: assembly called for elected delegates from a wide range of organisations, and attempted to penetrate the rural areas; in this, it clearly set a precedent for the COP. The Assembly was also important for the racial cooperation which marked its organisation, including the compound that in the 1940s became a five resistance campaign. (Author's interview with Yusuf Eachalia)

The PEDDLE'S Assembly marked a shift away from the Xuma style of activity. Propaganda issued by the Assembly organisers stressed the illegitimacy of the 1948 general election, and called for the election of delegates "who will represent the people rather than these vendors in the General Elections." (Mahifet)

1948 Where Africans' Claims had somewhat tentatively proposed an alternative legitimating ideology 4GP the state, based on nonracial citizenship, the Qeeembly aimed '4at directly "challethith the election of the new Parliament by a minority of the people." EManifesto 19483

In this, the People's Assembly was directly copied by the organisers of the Congress of the People. The object of the COP, as set out in a 1954 memorandum by Z.H. Matthews, President of the ANC in the Cape and the originator of the CDP, was to function as a truly representative (and thus legitimate) national convention in contrast with that of 1909. EMatthewe, 19543 To this end, representatives from a wide range of organisations - including the United and Nationalist parties - were invited to attend. Matthews further proposed that the COP organisers compile a common voters roll, divide the country into electoral districts, and held a 'general election' of delegates to the COP. This clear Challenge to the legitimacy of the State was dropped both because of the potential dangers (realised when 156 Congress leaders were arrested for treason in 1956, despite the change) and the difficulty of undertaking such a mammoth task.

The People's Assembly was established in marking a move away from the old order

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until the centenary of the Union of South Africa; The

Freedom Charter

People's Charter, anticipating the Freedom Charter, concluded:

leere there 15 no Freedom the people perish. Raising high
the banner of Freedom, the banner of the liberation of our
people

WE PLEDGE that we shall not rest until all adult men and
women have the right to stand for, vote for and be elected
to all the representative bodies which rule over our people
WE CHALLENGE the existence of a Parliament where
elections the majority of its citizens are excluded, in a
country which upholds in words the principles and practices
of democracy. EPeople's Charter, 1983

The People's assembly has been criticised for not producing a
programme of action by which it would achieve the political and
legal equality of all citizens which it proclaimed. EHarrie 1987,
p.1173 In view of the conflicts which surrounded the Assembly, it
is perhaps more explicable. More to the point, the ANC were at
the time debating what finally emerged as the 1990 Programme of
Action, largely inspired by the ANCYL.

The Programme of Action endorsed the 1943 Bill of Rights,
repeating demands for universal suffrage and black political
participation. Its prime concern lay with the question of methods
of opposition, to which end it called for more effective

recreation of the creation of a United-racial committee. The

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changing nature at the struggle, suggested by the People's
Assembly, was made clear in the Programme of Action which

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referred to WDFri Tor

the abolition of all differential political institutions the
boycotting of which we accept and to undertake a campaign to
educate the people at this issue end, jointly, to employ
the following weapons: immediate and active boycott, strike,
civil disobedience, non-cooperation and such other means as
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may bring about the accomplishment and realisation of our aspirations.²⁴

The constitutionalism of earlier ANC activity was joined by extra-parliamentary action. The failure of constitutional means of opposition had been increasingly raised within the QNC, and the adoption as more radical methods met with widespread support. As early as 1945 an ANC member had written to Xuma

I complaining that 'constitutional means were "answered by guns and prison cells"; he continued,

We continually ask for bread in a constitutional manner, and every time as reply, we get it thick on our neck.²⁵

The early 1950s witnessed the emergence of a multiracial alliance, supporting an increasingly cohesive set of demands. The Alliance as a whole moved into an increasingly constitutional stance in opposition to the Nationalist government. As has been argued, the development of organisational co-operation was by no means a linear process. Nevertheless, the basic lines of development of the alliance, its methods and a minimum set of demands, were clear. The alliance was strengthened by the success of the Defiance Campaign, which saw over 8,500 passive resisters of all races imprisoned for breaking apartheid regulations. The Defiance Campaign both highlighted the potential for racial co-operation and the further position of the African National Congress in the alliance.

However, political conditions in the 1950s were very different from those of the 1940s. The period after 1948 was dominated by the Nationalist Party government and the onslaught of apartheid legislation. For the black population, the period was one of unremitting repression, falling real wages, and personal and employment insecurity. As Michael Dingake put it, KaTir substituted for Native as a semi-official term for African; Baas substituted for white male in the same way, and Communism substituted for liberalism. New common nouns for old common nouns and new abstract nouns for old abstract nouns. The new nouns took on a new function, an adjectival function. They were descriptive. Derogatorily descriptive. EDingake 1987, p.403

The 1948 election was followed by a balance of payments crisis which peaked in 1949; by 1950 the economy exhibited real growth, which the opening of new gold and uranium mines promised to sustain. CHoll 19873 With a strengthening economy and a 'strong' government promising an end to black protest, the extended crisis of the 1940s moved into a new phase of confrontation between Afrikaner and Afrikaner nationalism. The 1940s were marked by the exigencies of wartime pro-Apartheid and the growth of extra-parliamentary oppositional forces. The post-1948 period was marked by the HNP and its twin aims - to make a visible impact on immediate problems such as competition for black labour, and to entrench itself in power while extending that power. EPeel 19883 In other words, the government aimed at wresting back the political initiative from J-

The various agencies which had competed for it in the 1940s.

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qua
The legislative bedrock of apartheid was laid in the 1949-
1953 period, with the Bantu Areas Act enforcing residential and
segregation; the Population Registration Act
business
embedded racist classification of the whole population; the
Separate Representation of Voters Act which ultimately
waters; and the Suppression of
Coloured
Education Act
the CPSA and gave
led to the dissolution of
Communism Act which
the government an armory of repressive powers. Many of the
demands which found expression in the Freedom Charter emanated
from this repressive battery.
array of repressive powers, and intent
Armed with a growing
strengthening the influx central regulations which underpinned
On
the cheap labour system, the state took the initiative in
attacking organisations intent on black political mobilisation.
As Trevor Huddleston noted in 1953
...the thrust and speed of these measures is getting beyond
anything and seems to have the effect of mesmerising
'Dissociation of the mind': may lie.
whatever
It was in this context that Professor Z.H. Matthews
Claims and
chaired the committee which drew up Africans'
On that which wrote the Programme of Action - made his now famous
speech outlining the Congress of the People. As Matthews saw it,
the aim of the CDP was to reverse the defensive posture and
the legislative drive
has shifted in the face of
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Nationalists, and the

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galvanize the people 04 South Africa into the action and make them go ever onto the OTTehive against the reactionary

'Tersee. Cherie and Earhart 1987, p.581

The emergence of the Congress Alliance, representative of all the racial groups, and their co-operation in campaigns against Bantu Education and the removal of Sophiatown, suggested that a truly representative and popularly supported campaign could be

undertaken. SACPD was formed in early 1956, joined later in the year by SRCOD, an organisation which drew white ex-communists, ex-communists and some who described themselves as "almost anti-communist" into its ranks.²⁸ Joined by FEDSAN and SACTU, the Congress Alliance threw itself into organising the COP as a unifying national campaign. As outlined above, it was also aimed at challenging the legitimacy of the state by presenting non-racial participatory democracy as a clear alternative to apartheid.

The EDP campaign drew together the dominant strands of QNC

5H. Ci vi Ly 'Fr L_Hn 34hr: pr' tavi uue tjuLLdtiu. ILis' ?&ch 1 mam i-z: was the collection of demands from the widest possible range of people

from all walks of life, which would find expression in the final Charter. This form of popular mobilisation drew on the experience of the People's Assembly, and reflected both increased militancy and the broad popular base

of the Congress Alliance. The COP was

the culmination of the popular movement which had emerged in the late 1940s, and of racial and organisational co-operation. Militancy co-existed with the older strand of legalistic thinking

within the QNC. Z.H. Matthew5 propaeed the BOP as an alternative national convention; the potentially 'eubvereive' nature of the -r

COP had apparently not occurred to him in 195e, and once it was pelhted cut the proposed 'geheral elections: and talk of the COP as a 'Peeple'e Parliameht' were dropped. EHafIS and Gerhart 1987, e

pp.5 -583

The development of racial co-Dperation continued to attract heetilitv. The AND euf\$ered agitatieh from the 'Africahiste',

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NCYL members who espoused an increasingly exclusive form 04 4rlcan nationalism. Their call for a rejection of multiracialiem

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resonated with people outside their own small group, as CUP

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r anieer Thembekile Tehunungwa reported: when A4Ficahe #:und SQCDD speakers "taking a lead in A.N.C. meetings" it resulted in emtreme...coh;usion ... A politically raw A4ricah who hae been 5 much eppreeeed, xploited, and victimized by the Eurapeah sees red whenever a white \$ace appears. EHarie and Gerhart 1987, p.583

Jenetuelezz, lt wee tne CCU campalen whlch drew the Alliance together and gave it shape. The endersement of a nonracial democrati: South Africa, \$lowing from a campaign by Congreseee repreeehting all the racial groups, was the distinctive mark 04 the Freedom Charter and its

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The collectimn 0% demands continued threugheut 1954 and early

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1955, and oraahieere attempte t0 lihk the COP with Dh-goihg Chnp:igis against Bantu Educatien and other issues. Butther and

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Crehih 1?SSJ Activiete of the peried stress the 'epentaneity' 04 the Charter, which emanated 4r0h demands bath predictable and entirely untereeeen. Eeutherte interviews with various Congress membereJ Despite police harassment, bath urban and rural areas participated in sending in demands and electing uelenatee to the \$inal Congress in June 1955.

Two 4ihai issues are discussed in this chapter. They are the question as to who' wrote the Freedom Charter, and the significance of the clauue calling for the nationalisation 0% the mines, banks and monopoly industries. Although very di4\$ereht

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peinte, they are \$requently linked together by epponente 04 th Charter. The nationalisation clause has been taken tn denote th-hidden hand of the CPSA in directing the QNC and its allies away 4r0h a more traditionally liberal-democratic or nationalist programme. ENgubahe 1963, p.154) According to one tendehtieue commentator, Hooee Hotahe'e publiehed prediction in 1954 that the Charter would contalh uemanue TD? the abolition 0% paeeee, ?reedem e4 movement, the redivieian 0% the land, the previeion 04 housing, the hatiehalieatieh of monopoly industries and the right to trade uniehe, meant that"...the \$iret draft of the Charter was in fact drawn up by Mmeeee Kotahe whe was general secretary 04 the CPSQ..." EMUft 1987129

Hetahe was in 4act reetatihg postwar CPEA policy nwd

repeating the demande which had emerged by the e:d e? the 19405

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the baei' programme e4 the Congreee movement. As has been
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the call for a demecratic redietributioh 04 the land was m
leng-etandihg demand of organisatiohe 4rem the QNC to the NEUM.
While the demand For the nationalisation of monopoly induetrie
was a central plank 04 the peetwar CF59 fragrahhe, its adoption
b3 the Cehqreee Alliance did ua.e a chanhe in em heeie \$rem the
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programmes 0% the 1?405.
In order to centextualiee the-natiehalieation clause, a more
sensitive analysis is required than attempting to ascertain which
\$ermer CP5A members participated in the drawing up of the
Charter. Such an analysis here ie of necessity brie4. During the
late 1?40e and early 19505, two complementary developments teak
place within the QNC. Oh the one hand, leading young QNC members
Such as Neleon Mandela and Jae Matthews evinced a grhwihg
disillusionment with western capitalist hetiehe, constantly
pilloried in the #DFeigh news coverage a? the Cengreee newspaper
New Age (and its predecessors The Guardian, The Clarlon, Peopxe 5
world and Advance).
gide the growth 0% anti-imperialiem was increasing
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Alehg
tjeert for theeastern bloc, as a letter frem ANCYL member Jae
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Matthewe to his 4ather Z.H.Matthewe makee clear:
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I mnet say I am pretty ?ed up wi n t H .
have beaten the West on
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is ratten and the Eastern nations
the colour ieeue...1...thihk aheri": nae lest A\$rican
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discrimination is so taboo that it i: made e
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Support 40? socialist countries because 04 their clear opposition
ta raciem, and their support 4Dr decalohieation, resulted in
increased support \$or domestic eecialiem across a wide Spectrum.
Sympathy with the Eastern bloc grew within the ANC (compounded by
a growing number 0% Congreese \$igures visiting the Eastern elcc),
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notably amongst rermerly ahtl_cemmunist Youth Leaguere such as
Nelson Mahdera and Walter Sieulu. Q- the eame time, the
'94ricahiete' within the AND began to describe themselves as
'A\$ricah eocialiste.' EHarie and Gerhart 1987, p.653
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In 1?52, moreover, NdLal AND president Chiet Albert Lutuli
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was elec ed as Preeident-Beheral e? the QNC. His election
compounded the change in style and directimn 0% the postwar QNC.
AND under Xuma as having used "a method 0% eupplication."31
Lutuli, who later won the Nobel Pe:ce Prize, "empresed a
preterence For eosialiem 0f the type espoused by the British
Laeeur Party" tKarle x?ef, p.b;j, aha he later descrioed the
Freedom Charter ae "a practical document which leans towards
Sucialiem, having regard to the practical situation that
"7")

Obtains. at Lutuli argued that this wae made Clear through the
Charterter endersement 0% bath nationalisation and the

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continuatieh 0% private ownership. CLutuli 1?&1, pp.1a-14J
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Th- Freedom Charter was primarily a nationalist: and
democratic document. As Williams ebeerved, the demand For

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for state control of the national economy." (Williams 1988, p.80) The demand for the redistribution of the land was by 1955 a long-standing demand of the ANC. Finally, and most importantly, the call for nationalisation was included amongst demands collected for inclusion in the Charter (see below). As such, although the nationalisation clause in the Freedom Charter marked a change of emphasis from previous ANC formulations, and was presumably to some degree the result of close working links with the CPSA, it was also consistent with developments taking place within the ANC at the time.

To ask who wrote the Freedom Charter, which was ratified rather than debated at the Congress of the People, is to obscure the way in which such a document - the fruit of almost two years' campaigning - was produced. SACOD member 'Ruth' Bernstein wrote the 'Call' to the GDP, the study of which clearly influenced the final Charter.³³ Bernstein also chaired a committee which analysed what SACOD member Helen Joseph remembered as "a tin trunk full" of demands, in various styles and on scrap paper. Ruth's interview with Helen Joseph, 1983 The process was then diversified, as sub-committees were appointed to deal with different clusters. Furthermore, regional structures of the ANC held meetings in 1955 in Grahamstown to discuss the demands they had collected and to discuss what the final Charter should look like; resolutions from these meetings were sent to

the COP headquarters in Johannesburg. The demand 4Dr
nationalisation was included in tDemahde 04 the Peeple', a
summary 0? demands collected by SQCDD members acreee the
Country.³⁴ It was also submitted by the SQCPD Executive to the
NRC for inclusion in the Charter. Eauther's interview with Ben
Turok, 19883

Members 04 the National action Council ENACJ 04 the COP would
presumably have seen various drafte 04 the Charter; as the Cape
CUP organieer put it, "I'm sure they went through a million
drafts." Eauthor'e interview with Ben Turok, 19883 Moreover, the
banning orders which restricted a large number 0% NRC member
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ehoured a rotation at personnel. The ANC EHecutive Committee
reviewed the Freeddm Charter immediately heFDre the COP teak
place, although Lutuli and Z.H.Matthew5 were net present.

In centradistinctien with Claime that late objections could
net be incorporated as the Charter had already been printed
CWilliam 1988, p.7?, n.17 and 193, SQCOD National Secretary Ben
Turek has stated that significant amendments were made to the
Freedom Charter at a meeting 0% the NQC- the night be4ore the
Cehgreee took place. Eauthor'e interview with Ben Turek, 19883
various suggested liens 04 individuals whe saw the draft Charter
Eeee Nilliam 1990 and Eerie ahH Berhart 19871 ihhlude Oliver
Tambo, Nelson Mandela, Jae Matthews, Hebert Reeha and others from
the ANC National Executive Cemmitteees, as we L as 'Ruety'

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Bernstein, Joe Slave, and Ruth First (to which should he added Ben Turek and Billy Hannah, amongst others). After such a lengthy campaign and drafting process none is attributable with authorship, although the rhetorical unity of the Charter suggests a continuity throughout the drafting of the document. Joe Matthews concluded that the Charter was something of a "hodge-podge" precisely because it reflected the demands of such a wide variety of people.³⁶

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Beth Africans' Claims in South Africa and the Freedom Charter grew out of a developing international human rights discourse, expressed by the Atlantic Charter and UN Charter, and aimed at applying these principles to black oppression in South Africa. Both documents put forward a vision of a nonracial democratic South Africa in contrast with the dominant domestic ideology of

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their time. The documents are similar in demanding universal

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suffrage, equality before the law, Freedom of movement and the abolition of passes, the Fight to work and to free expression, and in calling for the redistribution of the land.

They differ in specific aspects. The explicit recognition of women's demands in the Freedom Charter (nonetheless phrased in the contemporary but sexist language of brotherhood), which stemmed from FEDSQU'S Women's Charter and its subsequent women's Demands for the Freedom Charter (Sutther and Cronin 1985,

pp. 1&?-1713, marks a clear advance over earlier ANC statements. Many of the demands in the Charter would clearly benefit both women and men; the Women's Charter, however, concentrated on concrete issues and as a result demands for equal pay, equal

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leave and similar issues raised elsewhere in the

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wart, maternity

Freedom Charter.

The democratisation of the process of drawing up the Freedom Charter marked its clearest break with Africans' Claims. It was as a result of this process that the Charter reflected basic demands for human rights within the specific context of South African oppression. Africans' Claims and the Freedom Charter, as has been argued, had different goals and different intended audiences. Africans' Claims aimed at attracting 'disfranchised University Graduate' to the ANC, while tentatively approaching white liberal opinion. Operating within the wider ideological framework of the period, which saw segregation undermined by

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government commission and the government people, the authors of Africans' Claims hoped to intervene in the debate over the future. By 1955, after eleven years of apartheid, political conditions

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had significantly altered. The continued oppression which, --;--: policy 1955 marked by the emergence which reappeared

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in Africans' Claims, the Ten Point Programme, the QNCVL Basic Policy, the 1948 People's Charter, and in the Freedom Charter.

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 Nonetheless, the prime aim of the Freedom Charter
 highlighted
 by its statement e4 demands in the positive language 0% what will
 be - was te unify the hewly-4ormed Congress elliahce behind a
 clear set 04 goals and prihc1plee. 1h thie, the democratisation
 ef the process of programme ?DqulatiDn was both a necessity, and
 a development e4 a particular 4erm of popular mobilisation which
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 had emerged in the late 19405.
 The Cengress 6% the People was a re\$ihement and extension 04
 the 1Q48 Peeple'e Assembly; it resulted in a document which
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 re\$lec ed a wide range of people's Xperiences, alengeide
 universal demands 4Dr human rights. It was written in dramatic
 and emotive language that set it apart from previous, legalistic
 documents. A
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 such, while Atricans' Claims, the Ten Point
 Programme and similar documents are today largely \$orgotteh, the
 Freedom Charter has taken a place at the \$ere\$rent 0% the
 liberation struggle. Its basic demand - tor a nenracial
 Qemacratlc bouth Africa - re%leuts and informs pulitieel activit
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 in the 19Bus as it did in the 19505. As a result, Nelson
 Mandela's 1956 description 04 the Freedoms Charter remains as
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 relevant to
 list of demands for
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 democratic re4urms. It ie a FeVULu
 becauee the changes it envisages cannot be won without
 breaking up the ecehemic and political setoup 0% present
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 The Charter ie more than a mer
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(p.92) that the campaign was "an exclusively Indian EttOfT."

16. 'Joint Declaratieh e4 Cooperatien' 9-3-1947: in Hgge_ggg Ehalleuge p-E 2-
17. See The Guardian inter alia: 15-9-1943; 23-9-1948; 11-11-1948; 16-2-1949; 14-4-1949; 9-6-1949. '
18. SRIRR Papers: AD1189/5/Fa/17: Statement Issued by the Joint Meeting 09 Q4rican and Indian leaders: Durban, 5-2-1949.
19. Author's interviews with leading C889 members. See also Harry Snitcher in The Guardian 17-7-1947, p.5.
20. Resolutions 0% the ennual AND Canference, December 1942: in
21. Carter. 8.M. and Eerie, T.: gggTQ_-9f5lggg__Eggltlgg1 meteggg1g: Ee-eperative A\$rican Micre\$ilm Project thereafter CAMP) Reel 3%: 2:821: 62/2: Central Committee Report to the 1944 Rnnual CPSA Con4erence, pp.2-4.
22. See The Guardian: 20-5-1948, p. p.5. See CQMP Reel 12A:2:XM65:94/2 especially pp.41-S4.
23. See Mandela in The Guardian 29-7-1948, p.5. Three months earlier the Assembly organisers had issued a statement which read, inter alia: "It is not our aim ta compete in any way with, or take over the \$unctione o? the great national organisations e4 the African. Coloured or Indian people. It is our aim to secure friendly co-Dperatieh and mutual assistance of the South africah people in championing the great democratic cause 04 the Franchise": The Guardian 29-4-1948, p.5.
24. Programme 0% Action. adopted at the AND Con4erehce, 17-12-1949: in Hege-eag_ghellemge pp-337-33 -
25. Xuma Papers: ABX.461003a: F.H.M.Zwide t0 9.8.Xuma, 3-10-1948.
26. The De9endFree Speech Convention e4 1950 eu4\$ered similar problems to those 04 the Peeple'e Assembly. see Huye and 5; 15-7-1948, p.6; 29-7-1948, : Interview with Joe Matthews,
27. Ballinger papers: A410/ 2.8.10: T.Huddleeetohe to M.Eallinger, 19-8-1953.
28. Helen Jeseeph described her p011 icel stance at the time ae "a.m05t anti-communist"; she was founder member 0% SHUUU (author's interview wit Helen Joseph, Johannesburg, 19 9). SADDD members included H-CPSQ members euch as Bram Fischer. Ruth First. 'Ruety' Bernstein and Joe Slave, and hon-cemuniets such as Padre du Manoir and Trevor Huddleston.
29. Katane'e "draft" teak the ?DFm 0% an article published in Advance, 13-5-1954, p.5.
30. CAMP: Reel 12A:2:XM65:47/15: Joe Matthews to Z.K. Matthews. 20-11-1952. Nelson Mandela in 1953 accused the state 04 impeeing mane en hlmeel9, Hetahe.J Tleome and Eopepe "...because we :hampiened the freedom 04 the oppreseed people. because we uncom-promieihgly resieted the efforts ef imperialist America and her IJI r&- ectellitee t; draw the world int: th: rule :9 Vielence 3nd brute 9erce, becauee we condemned the criminal attacks 04 the lmpertcliete against the people 0% Malaya, Vietnam. Indeheeia and lun151a." (Speech tn the Transvaal ANS Cnn\$erehce, Dcteber 1953: ln Bunting: mgegg_gggggg op cit: p.187).
31. Theaeun Trial Recorde QD1812: Volume 57: 11411.

32. AD1S1E: Volume 57:11598. .

33. Author's interview with Ben Turek (London 1988); see also
CAMP Reel 12% 2:XM65:94/2: Interview with Joe Matthews, p.71. The
'Call' 1% reprnduced in Quelleeae_eug__yigleeee op cit: pp.180-
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34. 'Demands e; the People': SACDD, hd.1955 (private poeeeesien
0% auther).

35.3ee EEELLEEEE_EBQ_ElQLEDEE p.&G; NEC members who saw the dra\$
t Charter included P.Q.thdla, Leelie Maeeihaj wileon Cenco
(Lutuli's representative), Arthur Letele, T.E.Tshunungwa and
E.P.Moretsele.

35.39MP Reel 129: 2:XM65:94/2: Interview with Joe Matthews, p.68;
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