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UDF FOCUS ON THE FREEDOM CHARTER

FREEDOM CHARTER CAMPAIGN FROM 26 JUNE TO 20 AUGUST



The UDF has embarked on a campaign to adopt the Freedom Charter as a political programme by 20 August, the fourth anniversary of its formation. Affiliates will be discussing, explaining and popularising the Charter during the next weeks....

The Front campaign to adopt Charter

ONCE again the Freedom Charter must be talked about on each street corner and in every meeting of the people.

The UDF calls on all affiliates to discuss the UDF adopting the Freedom Charter. It has widespread support among the people.

The Charter will be taken up as a campaign by the UDF from 26 June to 20 August.

Its meaning and importance should be explained to all sections of our people.

Most UDF affiliates have already adopted the Freedom Charter.

The recent UDF National Working Committee (NWC) conference attended by delegates from every region decided the UDF should consider adopting the Freedom Charter.

POLITICAL PROGRAMME

The reason for adopting the Freedom Charter is that the Front now needs a full political programme.

"From being set up to oppose the Koornhof Bills and new constitution the UDF has developed into the largest

extra-parliamentary grouping providing political direction on all issues", said UDF spokesperson Murphy Morobe.

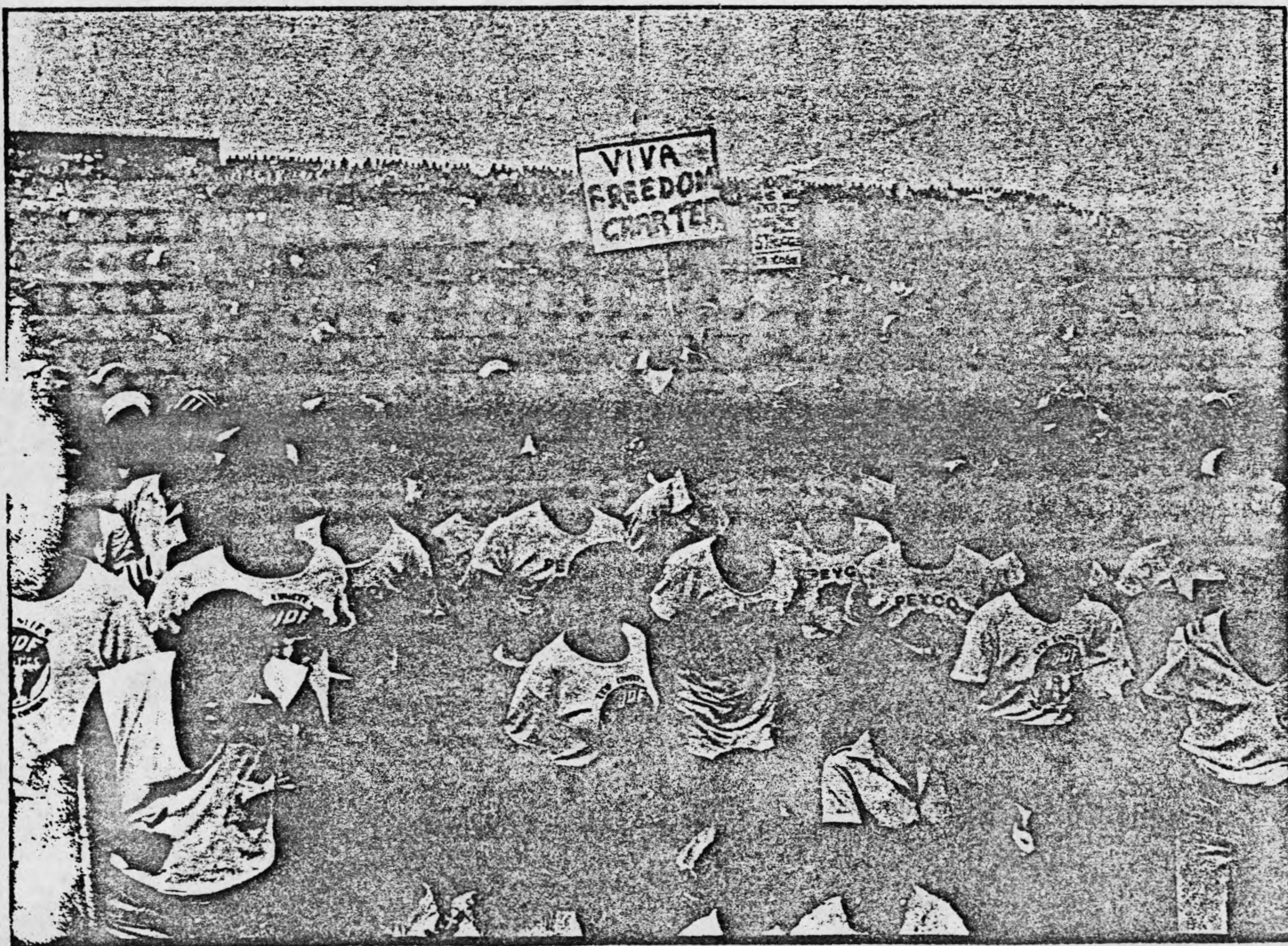
He said the Charter was democratically produced almost 32 years ago and still embodies the political aspirations and demands of the majority of South Africans.

"The Freedom Charter represents the interests of the people as a whole. It poses a clear vision of a future South Africa", said the NWC resolution.

"In recent times its strength as a unifying document has emerged."

"It is the people's alternative to various divisive and undemocratic schemes such as the KwaNatal Indaba."

"The Freedom Charter has widespread support amongst the people and has been adopted by the majority of the Front's affiliates."



All affiliates have been called on to talk about the Front adopting the Freedom Charter. The Freedom Charter represents the interests of the people as a whole.

These freedoms we will fight for side by side

The Freedom Charter sets out 56 demands of the people, covering every aspect of the South Africa we all yearn to see and are fighting for. We take a look at each of the main clauses, ten in all, to try and see what the Charter means for us, today and tomorrow

THE PREAMBLE:

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 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 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 or 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 stand as a candidate for all bodies which make laws.

All the 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.

At present the majority of people in our country do not govern: we do not have the right to vote, nor do we have any say over making the laws which control our lives.

Instead we are ruled by bodies of minority rule like the tricameral parliament, the black local authorities, bantustan and tribal authorities.

All these bodies were forced on us by the apartheid rulers of this country. These are the bodies which enforce all apartheid laws. The people do not regard the laws of these bodies as legitimate because they were imposed on us against our will.

The Charter says that all bodies of minority rule shall be scrapped and replaced by democratic organs of peoples power.

The democratic organs being built today by our people in the towns, villages and factories will lay the basis for the government of the people.

When we say the people shall govern, which people are we saying will rule our country? In the first place when we talk about the people, we mean all the people who live in the country irrespective of race, colour or creed.

We are talking about workers, students, mothers, traders, professionals, people living on the land, etc. No one will be excluded from taking part in the government on the basis of his or her colour, religion or ethnic grouping, provided that they support a just, democratic and non-racial society.

At the same time no one group or individual will have special rights or privileges. Democracy means that every citizen will be equal in the eyes of the state, and the rights of each individual will be protected by the state.

When we say that the people will govern our country, it does not mean that people who actively support and promote apartheid and oppose a non-racial democracy will be allowed to continue ruling.

All apartheid bodies like the tricameral parliament, the community councils, and bantustan governments will be totally dismantled, as will any other scheme to create new apartheid structures (National Statutory Council, Regional Services Councils, Indabas and so on.)

The "people shall govern" means that democratic bodies controlled by the people shall rule and share in the running of the country from the smallest village to the highest body in the land, the parliament of the people. These bodies will be democratic in the true sense in that they will be accountable and recallable by the people who elected them.

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 national groups shall be protected by law against insults to their race and national pride;

All people shall have equal rights to use their own language and to develop their own folk culture and customs;

The preaching and practise of national, race or colour discrimination and contempt shall be a punishable crime;
All apartheid laws and practises shall be set aside.

This clause of the Charter is aimed at ending the racial domination and division which apartheid has imposed on our people; while recognising the rights of all groups to develop their culture in a democratic South Africa.

Under apartheid the promotion of ethnicity and racial separation is used to divide the people and maintain white minority rule.



The Charter inspires

When the government says it wants people to identify with their own cultures, it does this in a way that is aimed at dividing the people and making them see themselves as inferior or different.

In the new South Africa envisaged by the Charter, people's culture will be stripped of the bonds of racism.

People will have an equal right to develop their language and customs. This will be strengthened by the fact that all groups will be equal before the law and will have equal rights to education.

Racism will be outlawed. The state will encourage people to express the progressive elements of their cultures so we can develop a new South African culture, as part of a united, non-racial South Africa.

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 industries 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.

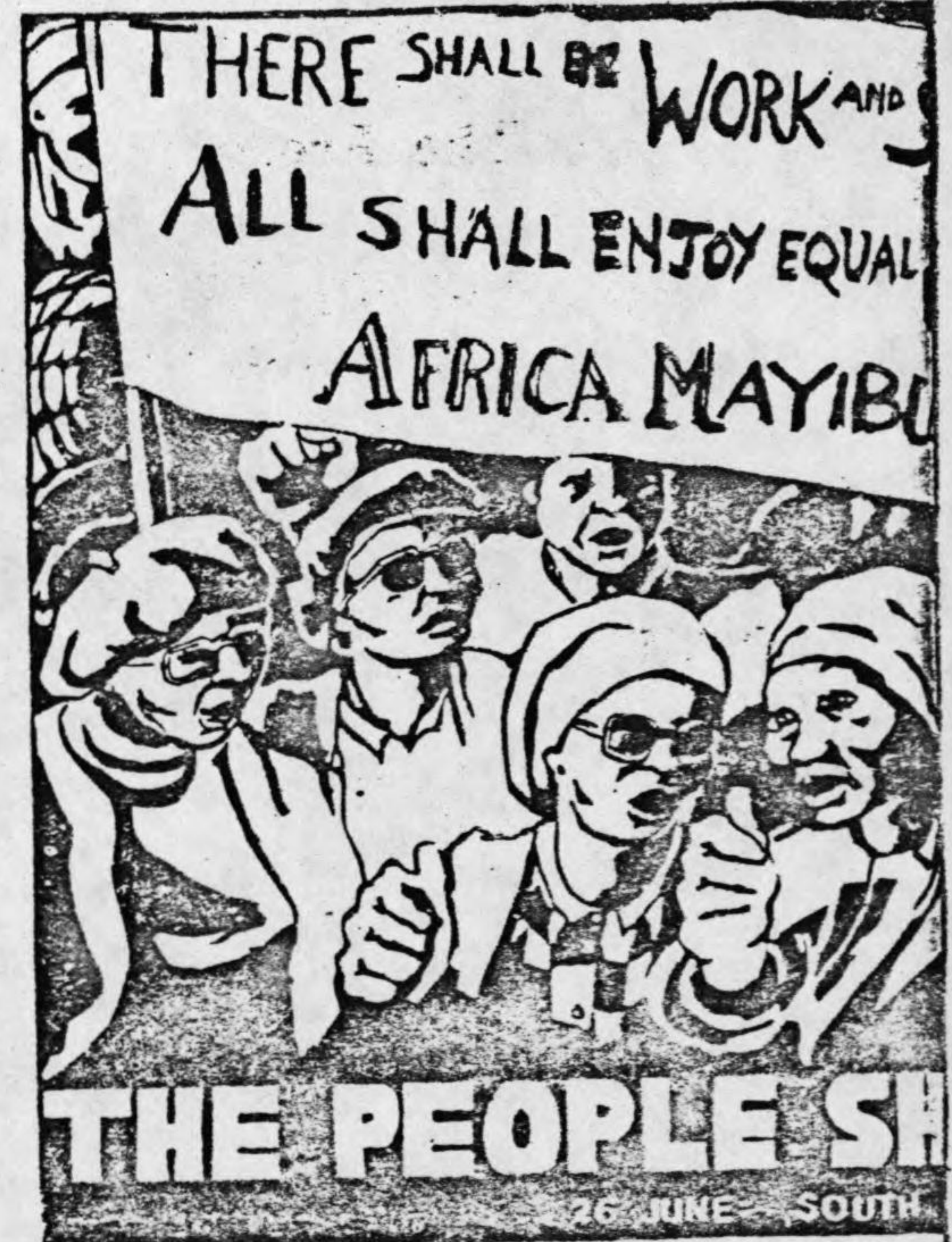
For the people to really govern, it is necessary that they share in the country's wealth. Meaningful liberation requires that the people as a whole have control over the country's economy.

At present the vast wealth of the country, the mines, land, fisheries and industries are controlled by a few monopoly companies. The profits from these industries produced by the sweat of our people go into the pockets of a few white bosses.

The majority do not benefit from the wealth of the country and live in poverty.

The Charter says it is wrong for a few massive companies to control the wealth of the country for their own benefit rather than all the people sharing in the wealth. In order to achieve this, the Charter says the banks, monopolies and mines will be nationalised by

CHARTER FREE



the people.

This will place control of the commanding heights of the country's economy in the hands of the people, particularly the working people.

The products and wealth will then be planned and shared so that the people as a whole benefit. It is this wealth that will provide the education, health services and housing our people need.

This does not mean that small businesses will not be allowed. The Charter says that all restrictions which apartheid places on the rights of non-monopoly traders and businesses will be removed. Business will be regulated to prevent the development of monopolies.

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

CHARTER OF FREEDOM



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.

The land is the natural heritage of the people of South Africa. But the majority have been robbed of their land by force.

The Land Act of 1913 forbids our people from owning land outside the bantustans. In the bantustans people are crowded onto the land which is unable to support them.

In the rest of the country the land is owned by a few farmers who control thousands of hectares. These farms employ workers who earn miserable wages and have few rights.

There are also vast tracts of land which are completely empty and unused. This land is owned by land barons and absentee landlords

who keep it to sell later at a profit. The peasants who once lived on this land have been forced to leave it through removals, cattle culling and anti-squatting laws. As a result there is a great land hunger amongst our people, especially those who live in the bantustans and on the "white" farms.

The Charter says that the land will be shared among those who work it: the large farming corporations will be put under the control of the people in the same way as the major industries, in order to provide for the benefit of all the people.

The land will be made available to rural families who wish to farm it either collectively or as individual peasants. The state will assist these farmers to develop their farms by providing seed, fertilizer and projects to conserve soil and water in order that scientific farming methods can be used.

ALL SHALL BE EQUAL BEFORE THE LAW!

No one shall be imprisoned, deported or restricted without 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 only be 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 the grounds of race, colour or belief shall be repealed.

At present the majority of South Africans live in fear of the law. They do not see it as something which protects them, but as something which threatens their daily lives.

Apartheid officials have the power to act as judge, jury and executioner.

In the magistrate courts, poverty stricken people are sentenced to years imprisonment for stealing food to feed their hungry children. Black and white receive different sentences for the same offence.

The Charter envisages a system of people's justice not apartheid justice where the laws and courts will act as the protectors of

the people, not as weapons of oppression. People regardless of race will be judged equally.

Everyone will have the right to a fair trial, unlike the kangaroo courts of the regime.

Imprisonment will only be for people who commit serious crimes.

Prison sentences will not aim to punish and to brutalise, but to try and rehabilitate offenders and turn them into constructive members of society.

The enforcers of the law shall be servants and protectors of the people. Unlike today, the police and army will be accountable to the people, and will defend the new democracy against the forces of reaction. No policeman or soldier will be above the law.

ALL SHALL ENJOY HUMAN RIGHTS!

The laws 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.

The apartheid system deprives the people of all their human rights.

Tens of thousands of people have been detained under security laws and emergency regulations. It has been made a crime to organise, speak or meet openly.

Today the townships are under a state of siege. House to house searches and raids are common. The security forces, kitskonstabels and vigilantes terrorise our people.

Trespass laws have now replaced the pass laws as a means of removing people from the cities. Laws controlling squatting and "illegal aliens" are used as a new form of influx control to stop people living and working where they choose.

All South Africans will have freedom of movement, to live and work where they choose.

People will have the right to speak and organise freely, and practise their religion. But does this mean that the AWB will be free to propagate its fascist views? No, the practise and preaching of racism will be a punishable offence.

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.

About six million people are without work in our country.

Hundreds of thousands of young people have no hope of getting work. And you can only receive unemployment insurance if you have worked.

For the people who have never worked, there is no security and no means of survival. Despite all the talk of abolishing racial discrimination at the workplace, the bosses still do not apply the principle of equal pay for white and black workers.

Thousands of people who work as domestics, farm workers, and in government departments do not have maximum working hours and minimum wages laid down for them by law.

The Charter provides for a forty-hour working week and a national minimum (living) wage for all workers.

All workers will be guaranteed a minimum wage, paid holidays, sick leave, a forty hour working week and maternity leave on full pay for all working mothers.

The viciousness with which the regime has responded to the Living Wage Campaign shows that a living wage will never be guaranteed under apartheid.

The history of our country has seen

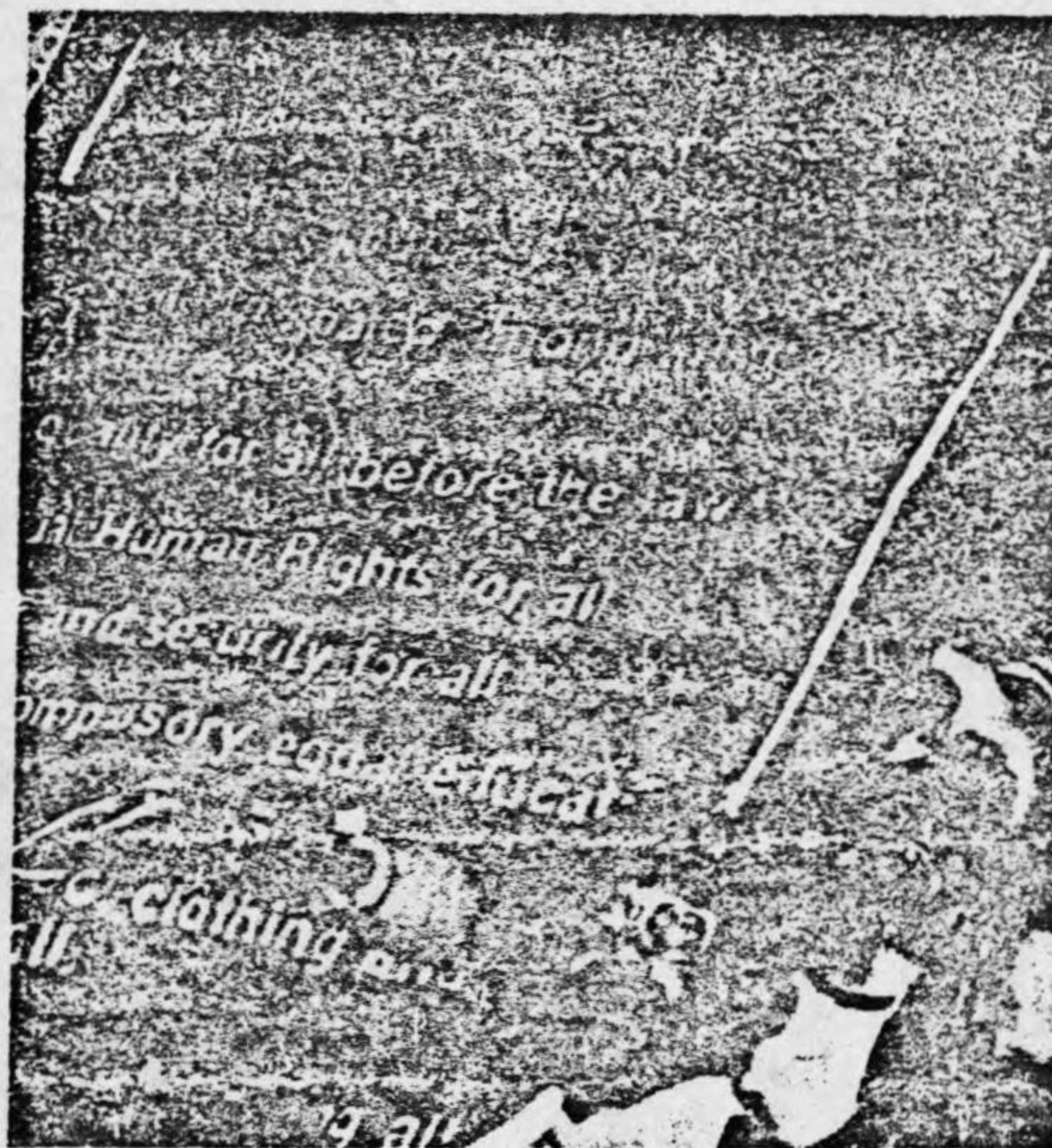
bosses working with the state to make every attempt to crush the trade-union movement.

Workers have been forced to join sweetheart unions and laws have been passed to prevent unions from representing the interests of the working class.

The charter says all workers shall be free to form democratic trade unions.

The Charter says that every citizen will have the right and duty to work. Through state control of the monopolies, banks and mines, the government will try to minimise unemployment. Those without jobs will be supported by the state so that their families do not starve.

In addition all workers will be guaranteed a minimum wage, paid holidays, sick leave, a forty hour working week and maternity leave on full pay for all working mothers.



UDF leader Ndlovu speaks on the majority demands

THE DOORS OF LEARNING AND 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.

The education crisis is one of the major issues facing our communities.

For over ten years, our courageous youth have fought gutter education. They have demanded the right to an equal, free and non-racial education.

They have demanded free textbooks, an end to corporal punishment and sexual harassment of female students and the right to elect SRCs.

The response of the DET has been to issue ID cards, to announce school curfews, to force students to register or face expulsion and to harass teachers who sympathise with student demands.

The Charter aims to solve the education crisis by abolishing bantu education and putting in its place a system of peoples education that will allow all to realise their potential.

It also plans mass education for adults who have suffered because of poor apartheid education. Each one teach one! Schools will be put under the control of the people through democratically elected SRCs and PTAs.

Knowledge and learning are the heritage of mankind. The aim of education in a democratic South Africa will be to make this heritage available to all our people.

The libraries, parks, universities, museums and theatres will be geared towards serving the people.

At present our people are fed a third rate culture through radio and TV. They are prevented from developing a rich people's culture of art, theatre and poetry.

Our poets and artists have few venues and facilities. The Charter envisages a society where these restrictions will no longer exist and a new South African culture will develop, taking the best from the existing cultures in our country and building on these.

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 preventative 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 shall have transport, roads, lighting, playing fields, creches and social centres;
The aged, orphans, the disabled and the sick shall be cared for by the state; Rent, 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.

In our country there is presently a housing shortage of over half a million units. Even people with houses have no security.

Over four million people have been forcibly removed from their homes, squatter camps have been destroyed, in the "white" areas homes have been demolished and

people evicted under the Group Areas Act, and in the townships many evicted for refusing to pay high rents.

Instead of building houses the government spends millions on the SADF and police, and on paying their puppets.

While many of our people are homeless, 37 000 housing units stand empty in white areas.

Unemployment has meant that many families are unable to feed themselves and thousands of children die every year from malnutrition. While this happens, food companies and farmers dump thousands of tons of food or feed it to animals in order to keep prices up.

There is no adequate care for the very young, the aged and those orphaned. Many children and old people live in the streets of our cities and beg for a living. White general hospitals stand half empty, while patients in black hospitals are forced to lie on the floor between beds because there is not enough space for them in wards.

The Charter says that everyone has the right to be decently housed at rents they can afford. The state will keep the prices of food and other essentials down.

Proper facilities, roads and services shall be provided in all areas. There will be sports facilities available for all. There will be free and proper health care.

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.

The apartheid government not only wages war on the majority of people in South Africa, but has also declared war against its Southern African neighbours.

The Pretoria regime has been accused of supporting the MNR in Mozambique, UNITA in Angola and dissidents in Zimbabwe. The regime has also been responsible for launching raids against its neighbours under the guise of hitting ANC bases.

The Freedom Charter wants to see a South Africa in which the country will live in peace with its neighbours and respect the rights and sovereignty of all nations. There shall be peace and friendship both inside and outside South Africa and towards other peoples of the world.

Apartheid and the aggression of the regime threatens world peace and increases the danger of nuclear war.

A democratic South Africa will be part of the Non Aligned Movement and will commit itself to nuclear disarmament and world peace.



"We call the people of South Africa black and white - let us speak together of freedom".

A vision born from struggle

THE Freedom Charter was born out of the daily struggles of the people of South Africa. That is why it offers a vision of a new South Africa free from poverty and injustice.

The people of our country were asked the question: "If you could make the laws of this country, what would you do?" Everywhere the response was the same.

The majority demanded political rights. They wanted houses and security, jobs with living wages and a decent education.

UDF affiliates, some of who have already adopted the Charter, can link its demands to every level of their organisational work.

Every campaign or issue can benefit from the inspiration of the Charter.

FIGHTING TOOL

The UDF and its affiliates can breathe life into the Charter. It is a fighting tool we can use to win our struggle.

The Charter is a tool for education, for mass mobilisation and for building organisation and unity.

We can compare the clause "the people shall govern" to the rule of the minority regime and their racist bodies like the black

The Freedom Charter is a vision of a new South Africa born out of the daily struggles of the people. The Charter is a building block for unity. Organisations working for freedom today can apply it as a fighting tool.

local authorities. And when we do compare the vision of the Charter to what the regime forces on us we know that we will settle for nothing less.

The demand "the people shall govern" must be repeated louder and louder on every street corner, on the factory floor and on the trains and buses. It is only when the people govern that the problems of low wages and lack of housing will be solved.

LOOK TO CLAUSES

When the regime bans our meetings and locks up thousands of people we must shout: "All shall be equal before the law". When the people complain about high rents and bad facilities we must look to the houses, security and comfort clause.

The demands of the majority outlined in the Freedom Charter ring as loud today as when it was first drawn up. The Charter is relevant to today's struggles.



We refer to demands in our daily struggles

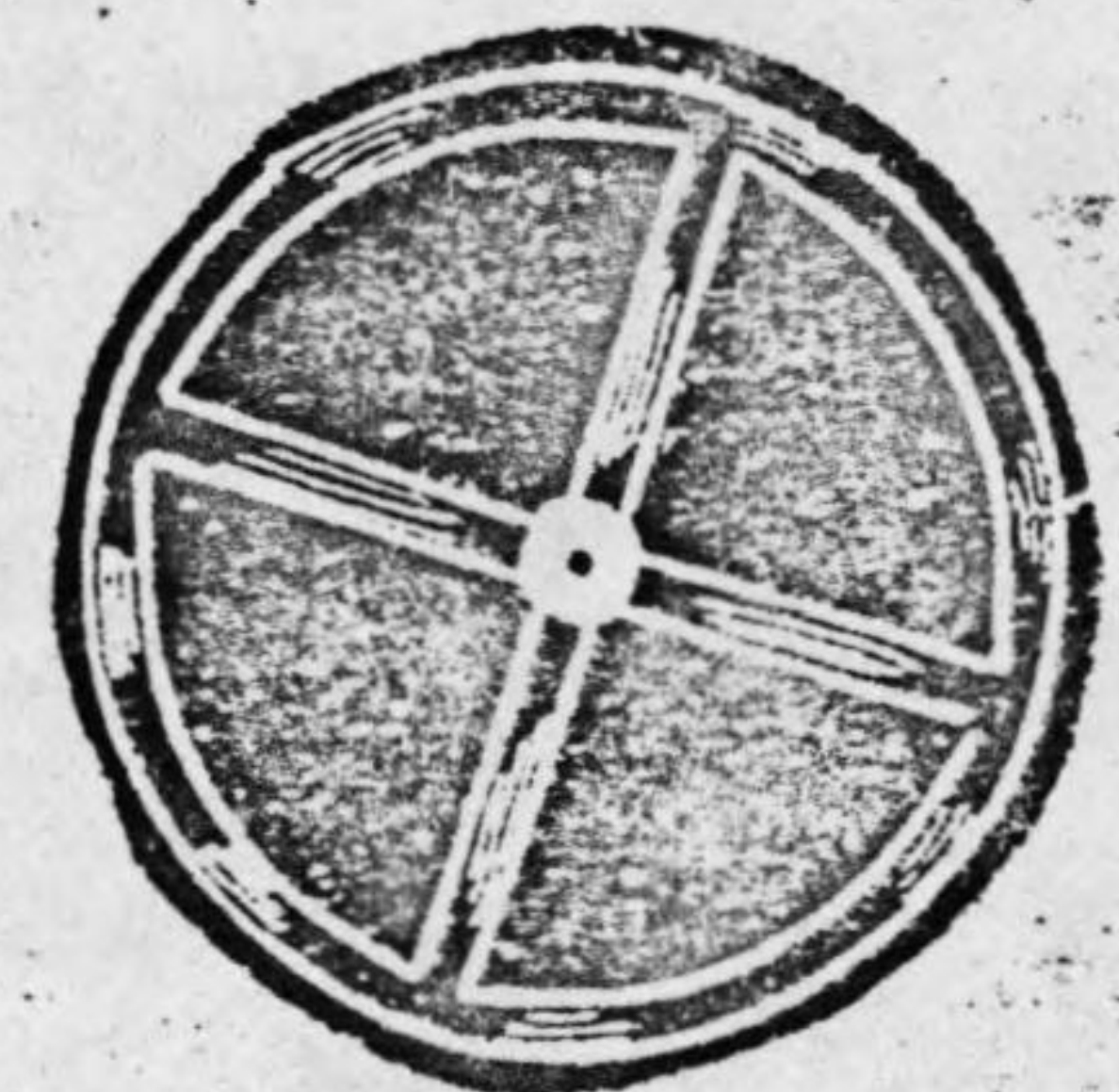
Charter based on majority demands

The Congress of the People held at Kliptown on 26 June, 1955, attended by 3000 delegates was the most representative gathering ever held. There the Charter which had been drawn up from thousands of grievances and suggestions for a new South Africa was discussed.

Shortly afterwards the African National Congress, the South African Indian Congress, the Coloured Peoples Organisation and the Congress of Democrats adopted the Freedom Charter as their official political programme.

In recent years large affiliates of the UDF have adopted the Charter. The Charter has also been adopted by the National Union of Mineworkers and other Cosatu affiliates in past months.

The people will not accept any political solution which falls short of the Charter demands.



The Congress Wheel symbolises unity

The views expressed in this publication are not the official views of the UDF, but rather intended for discussion and debate among affiliates and the people of South Africa. It was published by the UDF, Khotso House, 42 De Villiers St, Johannesburg.