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History of the FREEDOM CHARTER

At the Cape provincial congress of the African National Congress (ANC) in August 1953, Cape ANC president Professor Z.K. Matthews called for a “national convention at which all groups might be represented to consider our national problems on an all-inclusive basis (to) draw up a Freedom Charter for the democratic South Africa of the future”. Little did he realise that in less than two years, on a dusty playing field on the edge of what is now Soweto, the Congress of the People (CoP) would occur. It was held in an open field owned by a sympathetic Indian congress supporter, in the heart of Kliptown; one of the few areas in the country where Black people could own property in an urban area. In June 1955 over three thousand delegates and observers met to co-create and democratically adopt the Freedom Charter.

ANC president Chief Albert Luthuli urged people to get involved in organising the CoP. He underlined its importance by saying “why will this assembly be significant and unique? Its size, I hope, will make it unique. But above all its multi-racial nature and its noble objectives will make it unique because it will be the first time in the history of our multi-racial nation that its people from all walks of life will meet as equals, irrespective of race, colour and creed, to formulate a Freedom Charter for all people in the country.”

While the ANC president and thousands of Congress supporters recognised the historic significance of the adoption of the



Freedom Charter, they could not know of its future. After inspiring activists through four decades of bitter struggle, the key clauses of the Charter came to guide the delegates of a Constituent Assembly in the drawing up a new Constitution for a newly democratic, non-racial, non-sexist, free South Africa.

The Congress of the People — 25 June 1955

The CoP was scheduled to begin shortly after lunch on Saturday 25 June 1955. Some of the delegates, like Ellen Lambert, the Transvaal Secretary of the South African Coloured People’s Organisation (SACPO), remembers getting up at 4 o’clock in the morning to attend the event.

Many people had already arrived by 11 o’clock and by 3 o’clock in the afternoon thousands of people of different races had arrived by bus, truck, car and even by foot. Some believe that on the first day 3000 people gathered in the crudely constructed hessian and wire enclosure, and another 2000 people stood outside. There were 1500 African delegates, 320 Indian, 230 Coloured and 112 White accredited delegates from across the land, as well as many observers. Recounting events later, some delegates described the atmosphere as

festive. The organisation of the event had been meticulous and there was even food provided for the vegetarians in the crowd. This largest and most representative political gathering in the country’s history to that date was well reported by the mainstream English and Afrikaans press. The police, who were present throughout the two days, took copious notes, but most of the surviving photographs of the COP were taken secretly by the banned trade unionist, photographer and long-standing member of the outlawed communist party, Eli Weinberg. Before the beginning of the presentations the crowd sang songs, ate lunch and read and discussed the pamphlets handed out by volunteers. A Johannesburg band opened the proceedings with music and the

7 July 1950	The Population Registration Act is passed. Blacks are forced to carry passbooks as a means of ‘influx control’.	17 July 1950
	The Group Areas Act is passed, curbing movement of Blacks into cities and Whites-only areas. Semi-urban Black, Indian and Coloured townships are created.	7 July 1950
		The Suppression of Communism Act is passed.

Prof Z. K. Matthews
1901 – 1968

Bridging the gap between the old guard and the more militant younger members of the African National Congress in the late 1940s and 1950s, ZK Matthews exercised a major guiding and moderating influence on African political history in its most crucial period. He was at the same time South Africa’s, and perhaps the continent’s, most distinguished African intellectual. He was instrumental in initiating the Congress of the People with his call for a “national convention at which all groups might be represented to consider our national problems on an all-inclusive basis (to) draw up a Freedom Charter for the democratic South Africa of the future”.



delegates then presented their various points which were then opened for discussion. If anyone had any suggestions or amendments they were afforded the opportunity to step up to the podium and make their remarks. The point was then put to a vote, determining which demands should be included in the Charter.

The CoP National Consultative Committee had already drafted a proposed document, which was tabled for discussion.

afternoon largely due to the organisers waiting for countrywide delegates to arrive. The proceedings opened with a prayer and the reading of messages from the Indian, Chinese and other progressive governments and organisations. A recorded speech by Chief Albert Luthuli was played to the conference and the Congress then conferred the newly created *Isitwalandwe/Seaparakoe* award on Luthuli, Dadoo and Father Trevor Huddleston. The first day ended with the public reading of the Draft Freedom Charter. This had to be done largely in the dark, as the conference lights did not function. The second day the delegates had the opportunity to discuss and vote on

clauses of the draft Charter by a simple show of hands.

Some people, like “Lion of the East” Gert Sibande, attended the congress in disguise because of banning orders. When Sibande’s turn came to address the crowd he walked up to the podium and removed his disguise. Officers of the South African Police Special Branch at the meeting immediately surrounded him, but they were ordered to step down in order to maintain the peace. The proceedings on the first day of the CoP continued until the evening. Present that day was ANC President General Chief Albert Luthuli, Dr. Dadoo,

Map of Kliptown...

“This ground on which we are standing here today is holy, friends. This shall be the monument of the people of South Africa ”

- Robert Resha

26 March 1950	A general strike against all discriminatory laws and for full franchise rights is held. Police kill 18 and wound 30 in Alexandra Township and Reef areas.	26 June 1950
The Defend Free Speech Convention in Jhb proclaims May 1st as “Freedom Day” and calls on all organisations to demonstrate.	1 May 1950	A Day of National Protest & Mourning is held. June 26 is observed as SA Freedom Day until 1994, when 27 April becomes Freedom Day.

"The police have seized thousands of the copies of draft charter but they could not touch the charter itself. Its ideas and message were now enshrined in the hearts and minds of the delegates, who would carry it far and wide to the people of South Africa for them to make it their own."

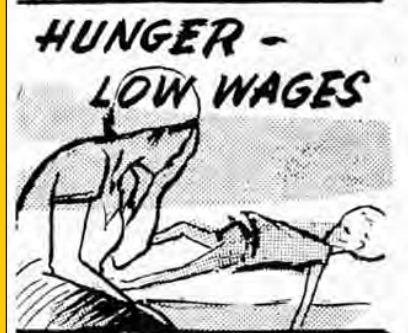
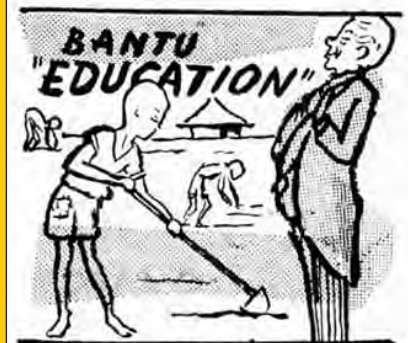
Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Moses Kotane, and Rusty Bernstein and more than two hundred other key leaders and activists who were banned from attending gatherings or participating in liberation organisation and trade union movement activities. Notwithstanding their bannings, these leaders played an active but underground role in the planning of the CoP. Some like Mandela, Sisulu, Kathrada and Bernstein stood at vantage points around the conference venue and observed and directed operations. There were also a few hundred delegates, many from the Cape, who were stopped at police roadblocks where anyone suspected of going to Kliptown was detained.

As the late afternoon winter sun began fading on Sunday 26 June 1955, and the CoP delegates deliberated on the last clause of the draft Freedom Charter - "there shall be peace and friendship", the police began moving menacingly in on the gathering and searched the delegates. The organisers sensed growing anger at this provocation and sought to avoid confrontation. Hurriedly the Congress discussed the draft of the last clause and declared the Charter adopted. Then, as one, the delegates stood to close the conference by singing of the Congress anthem *Nkosi Sikelele iAfrica*.

As the police blocked all the exits, 3000 people waited silently and allowed themselves



50 YEARS OF UNION
HAS BROUGHT
THIS —



**DON'T TAKE PART IN
THE FESTIVAL
CELEBRATIONS!**

26 June 1952

The ANC officially launches the Defiance Campaign with the support from SAIC and the Franchise Action Council.

Mandela drafts the M-Plan to organise Black people on a street/block basis.

April 1953

1953

The Bantu Education Act is passed.

Moses M. Kotane (1905 – 1978)

Unionist, SA Communist Party and ANC leader, Kotane combined his Marxist convictions and commitment to the goals of African nationalism toward promoting the struggle for equal rights. In 1943 he served on the Atlantic Charter committee to advance African Claims, and in 1946 he was elected to the ANC national executive committee, a position he held until bans forced his nominal resignation in 1952. Following the 1946 mine strike he spoke out in support of the 1952 Defiance Campaign. He was a Treason Trialist and was banned and imprisoned many times. He had an underground leadership role in the adoption of the Freedom Charter.



**Yusuf Dadoo
(1909 – 1983)**

Dadoo lived through the 1922 miners' revolt and passive resistance, and was inspired by Indian nationalism and Gandhi. He became a doctor in London, where he became a Marxist activist. In 1936 Dadoo returned to South Africa to find the national liberation and working class movements in disarray. He then joined the SACP and became a leader within its structures.



In June 1955 an announcement was made at the historic Congress of the People that Dadoo, Luthuli and Father Huddleston had been awarded the traditional African decoration of Isitwalandwe-Seaparankoe. Dadoo was banned and imprisoned many times before escaping to Britain in 1960, where he continued his anti-apartheid activities.

"a volunteer is an organiser and a leader of the people... must organise the people to formulate their demands... call the people together, explain to them the Freedom Charter, encourage them to speak out, listen to their demands, and record their demands and send them in to the Congress of the People Committee..."

- To all volunteers 1955



to be searched, photographed and to have their names and addresses taken. As it grew dark this continued in the light of police hurricane lamps and torches. The last of the delegates was released around 9 o'clock that night. After an impressive display of organisation and discipline, the delegates and observers that they had achieved what they set out to do. Delegate and women Congress leader Helen Joseph wrote, "The police have seized thousands of copies of draft charter but they could not touch the charter itself. Its ideas and message were now enshrined in the hearts and minds of the delegates, who would carry it far and wide to the people of South Africa for them to make it their own."

It was Robert Resha who highlighted the significance of the moment when, at the adoption of the Charter he said to the assembled Congress: "This ground on which we are standing here today is holy, friends. This shall be the monument of the people of South Africa".

The adoption of the Freedom Charter by the CoP, and subsequently by each component of the Congress Alliance, signified a major

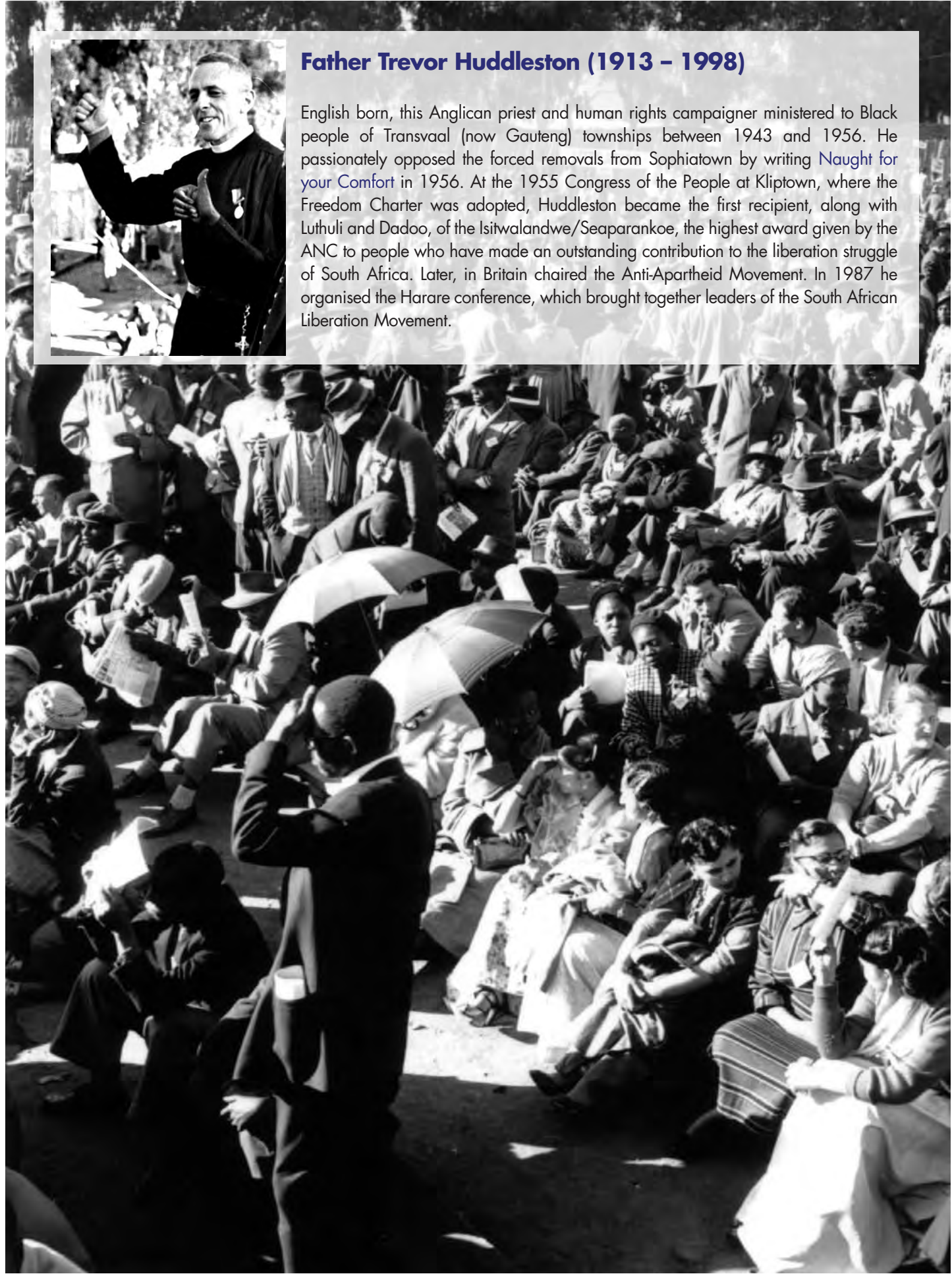
June 1951

The Abolition of Passes and Co-ordination of Documents Act includes Black women.

6 April 1952

The Separate Representation of Voters Bill, disenfranchising Coloureds is enacted. 1952

1000s of African, Indian and Coloured people participate in the Defiance Campaign in major cities and towns.



Father Trevor Huddleston (1913 – 1998)

English born, this Anglican priest and human rights campaigner ministered to Black people of Transvaal (now Gauteng) townships between 1943 and 1956. He passionately opposed the forced removals from Sophiatown by writing *Naught for your Comfort* in 1956. At the 1955 Congress of the People at Kliptown, where the Freedom Charter was adopted, Huddleston became the first recipient, along with Luthuli and Dadoo, of the Isitwalandwe/Seaparankoe, the highest award given by the ANC to people who have made an outstanding contribution to the liberation struggle of South Africa. Later, in Britain chaired the Anti-Apartheid Movement. In 1987 he organised the Harare conference, which brought together leaders of the South African Liberation Movement.

25-26 June 1955	The Freedom Charter is adopted at the Congress of the People in Kliptown	27 October 1955
About 8000 delegates meet in Kliptown near Soweto in a Congress of the People.	26 June 1955	2000 Women co-ordinated by FEDSAW stages a women's anti-pass march to the Union Building in Pretoria.

9 August 1956	5 December 1956	Immorality Amendment Act, Act No 21 of 1950; Amended in 1957(Act 23) is passed
South African Women march to the Union Buildings in Pretoria to protest against the pass law, led by Lillian Ngoyi.	156 leaders of the Congress movement are arrested on treason charges. After a 4 year trial they are found not guilty and discharged in March 1961.	1957



Congress of Delegates speakers, Kliptown

break with the past traditions of the South African struggle. This was no longer a civil rights movement seeking to be accommodated in the existing socio-economic and political structures of society. It called for a *fundamental restructuring* of all aspects of South African society. The CoP had placed the question of social transformation squarely on the agenda of the liberation movement in South Africa. The 1950s became witness to a dramatic change in the intensification of the struggle for freedom among 'non-White' South Africans. This was the adoption of militant, mass-based but peaceful campaigns against the Nationalist Party government's aggressive implementation of its apartheid policies.

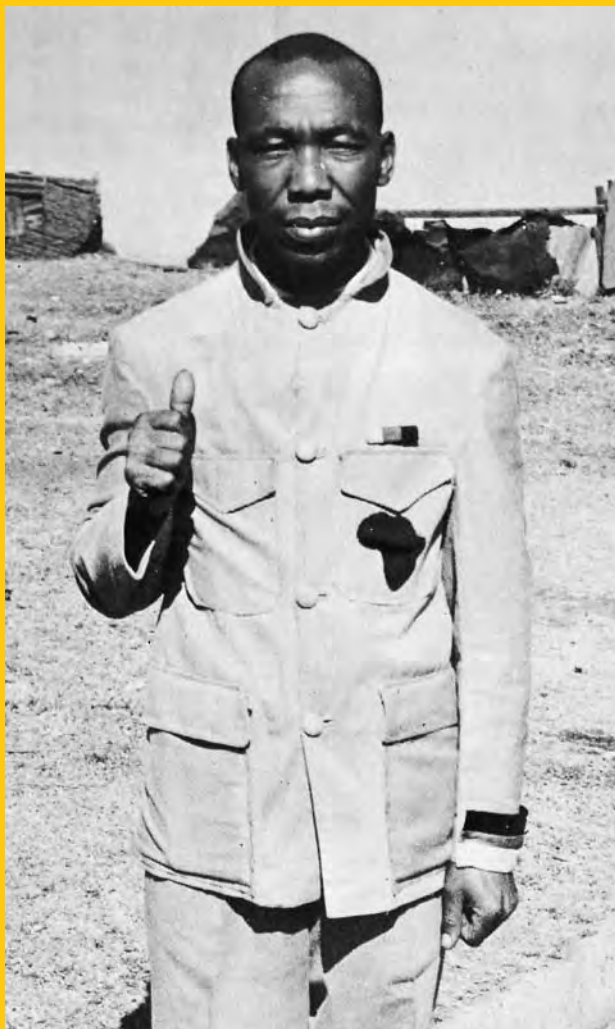
Both the CoP and the drawing up of the Freedom Charter were initiated by the ANC-led Congress Alliance. The alliance was established in 1949 when a pact between the ANC and South African Indian Congress (SAIC) was signed. On the eve of the Defiance Campaign in 1953, this was expanded to include the SACPO, the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU), the Federation of South African Women (FEDSAW) and the South African Congress of Democrats (SACOD).





Chief Albert Luthuli (1898 – 1967)

President-General of the ANC from December 1952 until his death in 1967, Christian and recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1960, Luthuli was the most widely known and respected African leader of his era. Over the course of his political career his attitudes grew progressively more militant. His public support for the 1952 Defiance Campaign cost him his chieftainship. In response, Luthuli issued *The Road to Freedom is via the Cross*, his famous statement of his principles a belief in non-violence, a conviction that apartheid degrades. He was tried for treason and because of his banning he was unable to attend the 1955 Congress of the People. A speech of his was however read out to an appreciative multitude. After the 1960 Sharpeville emergency Luthuli publicly burnt his pass in Pretoria as part of a defiance campaign.

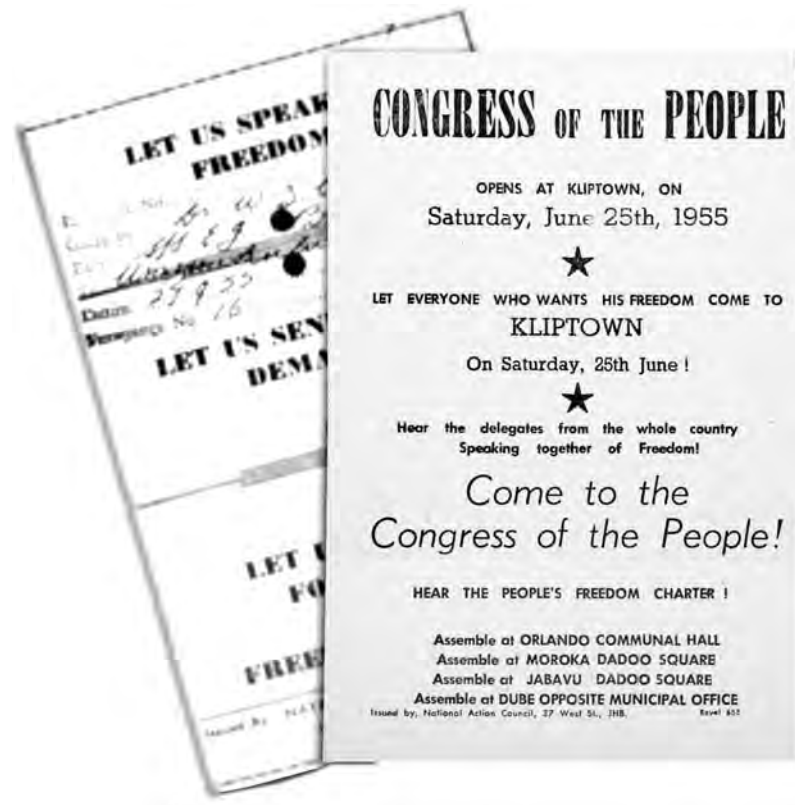


The campaign to convene the CoP was in part a response by the Congress alliance to revive mass political action. This was after the reversals suffered through harsh state actions against the alliance in the wake of the Defiance Campaign. The main aim of the CoP was to revive, strengthen and expand the social and geographical bases of the entire liberation movement. It did so by not directly confronting the state but by undertaking painstaking political work, by building non-racial unity and by creating amongst all South Africa an alternative social order to apartheid and racism.

Eighteen months later on 5 December 1956, government forces swooped down on 156 leading members of the Congress Alliance and charged them with treason. The state prosecutors claimed that the Freedom Charter was a revolutionary document requiring an overthrow of the state to achieve its aims. The Treason Trial lasted about six years and placed a great strain on the Congress Alliance. Most of its leaders were under banning orders, some were banished and were now being entangled in a lengthy court battle.

The formal adoption of the Freedom Charter by the ANC in the following year, and the sudden removal of its key leadership from branch activities provided an opportunity for its Africanist wing. It renewed its efforts to disengage the ANC from its non-racial alliance by embarking on a virulent anti-Communist, anti-White and anti-Indian campaign.

The biggest crisis facing the entire anti-apartheid movement was yet to come. Following the Sharpeville Massacre in April 1960, and the subsequent banning of many organisations, the liberation movement was forced underground and many organisations hurriedly launched what proved to be ill-prepared sabotage campaigns. This very nearly resulted in the destruction of the anti-apartheid movement.



Oliver Tambo (1917 – 1993)

Tambo was opposed to inequality from an early age. Together with Sisulu, Mandela and others, he revived the ANC in the 50s, beginning with the ANC Youth League. 1955 saw the drafting of the Freedom Charter by the National Action Committee, of which Tambo was a member, resulting in the arrest of 156 members of the group on a charge of treason. While most of the ANC's leaders were being detained Tambo and Luthuli led the ANC struggle. After the 1960 Sharpeville massacre Tambo began a 'Mission in Exile' to gain international support for the liberation movement. In the 1980's Tambo, as the president of the ANC, was increasingly recognised by the Organisation for African Unity as a head of state in exile. He also promoted the jailed Mandela as an icon of political freedom and resistance to racial intolerance.

1957	A Pound-a-Day national minimum wage campaign is launched following the Bus boycott.	1957 7 January
Immorality Amendment Act, Act No 21 of 1950; Amended in 1957(Act 23) is passed	1957	African bus boycott lasting ten weeks is initiated in Johannesburg and Pretoria.

1957-1960	All African men are required to possess reference books.	1958 May
South African Congress of Trade Union organises major workers' strikes and actions around the country.	1958 1 February	The Sekhukhune revolt against "Bantu" authorities takes place. Similar battles against the creation of Bantustans are fought in Tembuland, Pondoland and Zululand.

The Charter on Trail 1956 - 1961



On the night of the 5th of December 1956 hundreds of police conducted a countrywide crackdown on the Congress Alliance and its members. Leading anti-Apartheid activists were arrested, 156 of whom were placed on trial for treason. The Apartheid state viewed the Congress of the People's Freedom Charter campaign as an act of treason.

The treason trialists were accused of being part of a

"countrywide conspiracy", inspired by communism, to overthrow the state through violence. The Chief Prosecutor, Oswald Pirow, stated that "the essence of the crime of high treason was hostile intent", and said that such intent was evident in the Freedom Charter. He argued that because of the radical social change demanded by the Charter, the Congress alliance would have to violently overthrow the South African state to achieve its aims.

Although the Treason Trial provided international publicity for the liberation movement and an opportunity for leaders to confer, it absorbed political energies, disrupted the momentum of popular mobilisation and created a serious power vacuum. Over the next 5 years the Apartheid state tried to prove its case, but eventually it dropped charges against all 156 activists.

"The Freedom Charter is a humanitarian document that might well represent the natural reaction and aspirations of 'non-whites' to the harsh conditions in South Africa"

- The Crowns expert witness on Communism at the Treason Trial



Walter Sisulu (1912 – 2003)

Of Transkeian peasant roots, Sisulu was interested in labour action and joined the ANC Youth League in Johannesburg. He helped plan the 50s Defiance Campaign, led a group of passive resisters, was arrested and imprisoned frequently, and was banned. He became ANC Secretary-General and played a leading role in organising the 1955 Congress of the People at which the Freedom Charter was adopted. In 1956 he was unsuccessfully tried for High Treason with 156 others. In 1963 he joined the underground armed wing of the ANC and after his arrest and the Rivonia Treason Trial, was sent to Robben Island for life. Released in 1989, Sisulu assumed ANC leadership roles again until his death.

The Freedom Charter, National liberation and the new democracy



The decade-long struggle against the apartheid regime in the 1950's and the adoption of the Freedom Charter helped forged one of the most remarkable struggles of the 20th century. One which kept the vision of a free, non-racial South Africa alive and inspired generations of youth of all races to struggle for a South Africa that belonged to all.

The 2005 celebration by the country to mark the 50th anniversary of the CoP and the adoption of the Freedom Charter poses a new challenge. The generation of South Africans born after 1994 are charged with ensuring that the new democracy takes firm root and the dreams of a just, non-racial, non-sexist and democratic society is realised.

Lillian Ngoyi (1911 – 1980)

Lillian began as a nurse but became a clothing factory machinist, and got involved in labour action with the Garment Workers Union. She joined the ANC during the 1950 Defiance Campaign. A principled stand, courage and gift as a public speaker helped her advance quickly into leadership of the ANC Women's League. A founder member of FEDSAW in 1954, she then became the first woman on the ANC national executive committee. She was integral to the creation of the Freedom Charter in 1955. On the 9th of August 1956 she led the women's anti-pass march on the Union Buildings in Pretoria, one of the largest demonstrations staged in South African history. In 1956 Lillian was unsuccessfully tried for high treason along with 156 others. She was imprisoned, banned and detained in solitary confinement many times.



Delegates to the Congress of the People

Women on the march

Women in the Congress of the People

The 1940s saw a marked increase in women's involvement in trade union and national anti-apartheid organisations. Women activists ran some of the key trade unions. The passing of the Pegging Act and other discriminatory legislation directed at the Indian and Coloured community was the catalyst that saw hundreds of Indian and Coloured women participating in the mainstream organisations and campaigns. Hundreds of women participated in the 1946 Passive Resistance Campaign and many were imprisoned with hard labour for up to six months, some on more than one occasion.

1950-60 was the decade of mass campaigns on a national level, and it would be fair to say that it was the decade of the women. The 1950's saw the growth of the ANC as a national organization, which was made possible partly by African women being organised into the resuscitated ANC Women's League (ANCWL).

The 1952 Defiance Campaign concentrated against six unjust laws. Opposition to the extension of Pass Laws to Black women provided the focus for the growth of progressive women's organisations amongst all race groups, and for women to mount one of the most successful campaigns of the decade. The impetus for the creation of national women's organisations came from women trade union leaders like Ray Alexander and Annie Silinga. In October 1955 2000 women marched to the Union Buildings in Pretoria. A year was spent building the women's structures and on 9 August 1956 the Federation of South African Women (FEDSAW) organised thousands of women from across the country to March on Pretoria. 20 000 women led by Lillian Ngoyi, Helen Joseph, Sophie Williams and Rahima Moosa marched on the Union Buildings in Pretoria. The women's march became one of the most important events in the countries history and inspired generations of women to play leading role in the liberation movement and to ensure that women's issues were foregrounded in all their programmes.

It was the organising of the Congress of the People that brought thousands more women of all races into the liberation struggle, and it inspired women to draw up their own charter.

In the 1950's women were in the forefront of community struggles, the struggle against Bantu Education; and leaders in FEDSAW and the ANCWL were accused in the 1956 Treason Trial. Dorothy Nyembe who spent 15 years in prison for her underground activities as a member of MK (the ANC's armed wing) was one of many women oppressed by the apartheid state for their stand for freedom. Lillian Ngoyi, Albertina Sisulu, Winnie Mandela, Phyllis Naidoo, Helen Joseph, Mamphela Rampela and hundreds of others spend years banned, banished or otherwise restricted. Many women were killed at Sharpeville, Langa and Cato Manor, and thousands went into exile, continuing the struggle outside our borders.

Chronology of the Women's Struggle 1912 -1956

Date	Event
1913	Women in the Free State led by Charlotte Maxeke mount campaign against pass laws.
1913	127 women participate in Gandhi's Passive Resistance Campaign and many go to prison.
1918	The Bantu Women's League of the SA Native National Congress is formed.
1930	White women get the vote.
1933	Pixley Seme is reelected president of the ANC with the help of women's votes.
1936	Dr. Zainunnisa Cissie Gool founds the National Liberation League, and becomes the first President
1943	The ANC Women's League is formed.
1946	Passive resistance campaign hundreds of women participate and many go to jail.
1950	Florence Matomela leads an anti-pass demonstration resulting in the burning of passes in Port Elizabeth.
1952	Bibi Dawood recruits 800 volunteers for the Defiance Campaign in the Worster region of the Cape. Florence Matomela one of the first women volunteers is arrested and spends six weeks in prison. Fatima Meer is banned. Lillian Ngoyi joins ANC and is arrested for her involvement in the Defiance Campaign.
1954	The Federation of South African women is formed - uniting women from the ANC, South African Indian Congress, Trade unions and self-help groups.
1955	Francis Baard is involved with the drafting of the Freedom Charter. Sonia Bunting is the platform speaker at Congress of the People in Kliptown. The Women's Defence of the Constitution League (commonly known as the Black Sash) is formed.
1956	Leading women activists are part of the 156 accused in the Treason Trial. August 9 th – 20.000 women march to Union Buildings to protest against the carrying of passes.



Helen Joseph (1905 – 1992)

For forty years Helen Joseph dedicated herself single-mindedly to opposing apartheid. Her commitment earned her the ANC's highest award, the Isitwalandwe/Seaparankoe Medal. It also led to a relentless government campaign to silence her, a campaign which ultimately failed. Helen was a founder member of the Congress of Democrats, and in 1955 was one of the leaders who read out the clauses of the Freedom Charter at the Congress of the People in Kliptown. She was appalled by the double oppression of black women, and on 9 August 1956 was one of the FEDSAW leaders leading a march of 20,000 women to Pretoria's Union Buildings to protest against the pass laws.

The Freedom Charter

Adopted at the Congress of the People, Kliptown, on 26 June 1955

We, the People of South Africa, declare for all our country and the world to know:

that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white, and that no government can justly claim authority unless it is based on the will of all the people;

that our people have been robbed of their birthright to land, liberty and peace by a form of government founded on injustice and inequality;

that our country will never be prosperous or free until all our people live in brotherhood, enjoying equal rights and opportunities;

that only a democratic state, based on the will of all the people, can secure to all their birthright without distinction of colour, race, sex or belief;

And therefore, we, the people of South Africa, black and white together equals, countrymen and brothers adopt this Freedom Charter;

And we pledge ourselves to strive together, sparing neither strength nor courage, until the democratic changes here set out have been won.

The People Shall Govern!

Every man and woman shall have the right to vote for and to stand as a candidate for all bodies which make laws;

All people shall be entitled to take part in the administration of the country;

The rights of the people shall be the same, regardless of race, colour or sex;

All bodies of minority rule, advisory boards, councils and authorities shall be replaced by democratic organs of self-government .

All National Groups Shall have Equal Rights!

There shall be equal status in the bodies of state, in the courts and in the schools for all national groups and races;

All people shall have equal right to use their own languages, and to develop their own folk culture and customs;

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

The preaching and practice of national, race or colour discrimination and contempt shall be a punishable crime;

All apartheid laws and practices shall be set aside.

The People Shall Share in the Country's Wealth!

The national wealth of our country, the heritage of South Africans, shall be restored to the people;

The mineral wealth beneath the soil, the Banks and monopoly industry shall be transferred to the ownership of the people as a whole;

All other industry and trade shall be controlled to assist the wellbeing of the people;

All people shall have equal rights to trade where they choose, to manufacture and to enter all trades, crafts and professions.

The Land Shall be Shared Among Those Who Work It!

Restrictions of land ownership on a racial basis shall be ended, and all the land re-divided amongst those who work it to banish famine and land hunger;

The state shall help the peasants with implements, seed, tractors and dams to save the soil and assist the tillers;

Freedom of movement shall be guaranteed to all who work on the land;

All shall have the right to occupy land wherever they choose;

People shall not be robbed of their cattle, and forced labour and farm prisons shall be abolished.

All Shall be Equal Before the Law!

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

The courts shall be representative of all the people;

Imprisonment shall be only for serious crimes against the people, and shall aim at re-education, not vengeance;

1958 31 May	The trial of 91 defendants on charges of high treason is opened.	1959 16-19 June
A "Potato Boycott" is staged against the harsh treatment of farm labourers in Transvaal.	1958 1 August	Rioting and destruction of government property erupts in Cato Manor and Durban. Dorothy Nyembe leads the riots centred around increased beer hall raids and threat of relocation.

The police force and army shall be open to all on an equal basis and shall be the helpers and protectors of the people;

All laws which discriminate on grounds of race, colour or belief shall be repealed. All Shall Enjoy Equal Human Rights!

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

The privacy of the house from police raids shall be protected by law;

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

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

There Shall be Work and Security!

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

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

Men and women of all races shall receive equal pay for equal work;

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

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

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

The Doors of Learning and Culture Shall be Opened!

The government shall discover, develop and encourage national talent for the enhancement of our cultural life;

All the cultural treasures of mankind shall be open to all, by free exchange of books, ideas and contact with other lands;

The aim of education shall be to teach the youth to love their people and their culture, to honour human brotherhood, liberty and peace;

Education shall be free, compulsory, universal and equal for all children; Higher education and technical training shall be opened to all by means of state allowances and scholarships awarded on the basis of merit;

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

Teachers shall have all the rights of other citizens;

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

There Shall be Houses, Security and Comfort!

All people shall have the right to live where they choose, be decently housed, and to bring up their families in comfort and security;

Unused housing space to be made available to the people;

Rent and prices shall be lowered, food plentiful and no-one shall go hungry;

A preventive health scheme shall be run by the state;

Free medical care and hospitalisation shall be provided for all, with special care for mothers and young children;

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

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

Rest, leisure and recreation shall be the right of all:

Fenced locations and ghettos shall be abolished, and laws which break up families shall be repealed.

There Shall be Peace and Friendship!

South Africa shall be a fully independent state which respects the rights and sovereignty of all nations;

South Africa shall strive to maintain world peace and the settlement of all international disputes by negotiation - not war;

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

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

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

Let all people who love their people and their country no say, as we say here:



1959	The Pan Africanist Congress of Azania is founded in Orlando, Soweto under the leadership of.	he Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act of 1959 is passed
13 500 Natal workers join the South African Congress of Trade Unions in the wake of popular militancy around the Cato Manor riots.	1959 4-6 April	1959 20 June

Preamble to the 1996 South African Constitution

We, the people of South Africa,
Recognise the injustices of our past;
Honour those who suffered for justice and freedom in our land;
Respect those who have worked to build and develop our country; and
Believe that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, united in our diversity.

We therefore, through our freely elected representatives, adopt this
Constitution as the supreme law of the Republic so as to ú
Heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic
values, social justice and fundamental human rights;
Lay the foundations for a democratic and open society in which government
is based on the will of the people and every citizen is equally protected by law;
Improve the quality of life of all citizens and free the potential of each
person; and
Build a united and democratic South Africa able to take its rightful place as
a sovereign state in the family of nations.

May God protect our people.
Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika. Morena boloka setjhaba sa heso.
God seën Suid-Afrika. God bless South Africa.
Mudzimu fhatutshedza Afurika. Hosi katekisa Afrika.

