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CELEBRATING THE FREEDOM CHARTER

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Raymond Suttner and Jeremy Cronin - *30 YEARS OF THE FREEDOM CHARTER* (Ravan Press: Johannesburg) (1986)¹

30 Years of the Freedom Charter is a celebratory volume, published to commemorate the adoption of the Freedom Charter at the Congress of the People at Kliptown in 1955 and to stress its continuing relevance to the struggle against apartheid. It combines the texts of documents, interviews with participants in the Congress itself and contemporary leaders of the United Democratic Front (UDF) and commentary by the editors, with photographs of events and of activists. The volume draws links between the mobilisation around the Congress of the People and subsequent struggles. It shows how several of those active in the campaign for the Congress of the People subsequently served prison sentences on Robben Island and have re-emerged to play a part in the UDF. It also carries interviews with a more recent generation of activists who came out of the Black Consciousness Movements and then through 'charterist' politics into the UDF. Several clerics, Christian and Muslim, stress the compatibility of the Freedom Charter with the messages of Islam and Christianity.

The volume does what it sets out to do, and does it well. The interviews with participants in the 1955 Congress are of particular interest and, given the conditions of state repression under which they were collected, a singular achievement. Of those who were interviewed for, or contributed to, the volume, Wilson Fanti, Christmas Tinto and Popo Molefe are in detention at the time of writing, as well as Raymond Suttner. That others should follow up this initiative is important for our understanding of the history of the struggle against apartheid, of the meanings which it had for participants from different social, political, educational and racial backgrounds and of the diverse contributions they made to it.

The volume is less successful in situating the Freedom Charter and its influence in historical context and in its defence of the Freedom Charter against named and unnamed critics. An extensive historical exposition is beyond the aims of the book, though a fuller account would have enriched our appreciation of the Freedom Charter and of its historical significance. It is possibly not the task of a commemorative volume of this sort to engage in a polemic with the Charter's contemporary critics. The critics might better have been left to their own concerns and the debate to other publications² where it has continued to rage since the publication of *30 Years Of the Freedom Charter*. My comments in this review, then, are less criticisms of the book than a discussion of some of the issues that its publication raises.

The editors and the participants interviewed situate the Freedom Charter in

the Popular struggles of the 1950s, commencing with the Defiance Campaign. They do not discuss the significant developments within the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC) in the 1940s, nor previous formulations of a programme for the ANC. Consideration of these events and texts would help to understand some aspects of the Charter and the controversies surrounding it.

THE FORMATION OF THE CONGRESS ALLIANCE

The Congress Alliance emerged from the experience of the Campaign for the Defiance of Unjust Laws organised by a joint National Action Committee of the ANC and the South African Indian Congress (SAIC). It was consolidated by the formation of the National Action Council of the ANC, the SAIC, the newly-formed S A Congress of Democrats (SACOD) and the S A Coloured People's Organisation (SACPO) which set out to organise the Congress of the People. This process built on the shared involvement of their members in preparations for the Congress and in the event itself, by the Congress's adoption of the Freedom Charter, and by the common experience of the leaders of the Alliance in the Treason Trial.

The formation of the Alliance and the Adoption of the Freedom Charter (pp.262-66; also in Karis and Carter, 1977: 3,205-7)³ and particularly the claim 'that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white ...' as well as the clause 'All National Groups Shall have Equal Rights' forced open the breach between supporters of the Charter and its Africanist critics, who were to form the Pan Africanist Congress in 1959. The Africanists' objections were primarily to the alliance with non-African organisations which, they believed, diluted the voice of Africans and the Africanists' particular interpretation of African Nationalism. Their most bitter resentments, directed against the communists within the Congress Alliance, were shared with those influential members of the Liberal Party whose anti-communism led the party to decide not to participate in the Congress of the People (Everatt, 1987).

Suttner and Cronin (pp. 113-15) cite a cogent article in *Drum* of December 1955 which drew out the various strands of opinion within the Congress movement. There was some unease within the ANC, particularly in Natal, with some of its formulations, other than those which attracted the wrath of the Africanists. The clause which attracted most controversy was that 'The mineral wealth beneath the soil, the banks and monopoly industry shall be transferred to the ownership of the people as a whole'. Acceptance of the Charter in March 1956 was to commit the ANC for the first time to accepting the principle of nationalization. This formulation went as far as its drafters could reasonably have gone in a socialist direction.⁴ The hope that there 'will be a committee of workers to run the Gold Mines (and) ... that the workers will take over and run the factories'⁵ was left to Ben Turok to raise in introducing the clause at Kliptown.

What the liberal nationalist and socialist wings of the ANC were agreed on was their commitment to co-operation with non-African opponents of apartheid

and 'an all-inclusive' (Lutuli, 1955) non-racial nationalism. How the commitment to non-racialism would be implemented remained, and continued to remain, an issue within the ANC and the Congress Alliance (Simons, 1985: 104-6). The ANC's 1959 National Executive Committee (NEC) Report was to insist against critics of its, in effect, exclusively African membership that 'The ANC was formed to unite and voice the views of Africans. That remains its primary purpose' (ANC, 1959:485). The form of the Congress Alliance, of an alliance of four organisations each with a racially-defined constituency, allowed the ANC to reconcile its historical purpose as the voice of the African people with its commitment to a non-racial future for South Africa. Whereas the formulations of the Freedom Charter are ambiguous on the question of socialism, they are quite clear in their repudiation of any racially exclusive nationalism.

AFRICANS' CLAIMS IN SOUTH AFRICA

The ANC's policy statements in the 1940s emphasised the central grievances which arise from the specific instruments and forms of oppression to which African people were, and are, subject. The fullest statement is the Bill of Rights in the ANC's *Africans' Claims in South Africa* adopted by the ANC's Annual Conference on 16 December 1943 (ANC, 1943). Most of the same demands were made in the Ten Point Programme⁶ adopted on 17 December 1943 at a joint conference of the All-African Convention (AAC) and the Anti-CAD (Coloured Affairs Department) which became the programme of the rival Non-European Unity Movement. Common to all the ANC's statements⁷ is a claim for Africans to receive equality of treatment with Europeans in all aspects of life. And, as with the Freedom Charter, the first claim is to the vote for all adults⁸ and full participation and representation in all government bodies. Only through this could the other aims be realised. Second was the abolition of the pass laws and the right to freedom of movement. The 1943 Bill of Rights adds 'Recognition of the sanctity or inviolability of the home as a right of every family, and the prohibition of police raids on citizens in their home for tax or liquor or other purposes'. These demands, too, are taken up in the Freedom Charter.

The demand for an end to all forms of discrimination forms the economic demands of the various manifestos. Africans are to be free to enter any lawful occupations or professions. They should have the right to form trade unions, to equal pay for equal work and to equal opportunity for work. They should be protected by minimum wages and by insurance against sickness, unemployment, accidents, old age and disabilities. These rights are to be extended to farm workers, domestic workers and civil servants and, the 1946 ANC Conference added, miners. To these the Freedom Charter adds explicitly the abolition of 'forced labour and farm prisons' and of 'child labour, compound labour, the tot system and contract labour'. Like the Freedom Charter, the ANC documents (and the Ten Point Programme) make no reference to the right to strike, not even after the repression of the 1946 miners' strike.

The 1941 Policy and Platform (Xuma, 1941) and the 1943 Bill of Rights' demand for Africans 'freedom of trading'. This identifies another area where Africans (and Indians) faced discrimination and is recognised in the Freedom Charter. All the statements demand rights to property in urban and rural areas and claim for Africans the same assistance that the State offers to European farmers. The Bill of Rights demands a 'fair redistribution of the land'. The Ten Point Programme specified that the division be 'in conformity with the existing rural population, living on the land and working the land'. This point is taken up in the demand of the Freedom Charter that 'all the land (shall) be redivided among those who work it'. The demands for the redistribution of land go beyond the claim that Africans enjoy the same rights as Europeans and challenge existing rights to property. Suttner and Cronin's interviewees emphasise that in the rural areas 'the first question was the land ... which is STILL a problem today'.⁹

Suttner and Cronin (p. 175)¹⁰ seek to defend the Freedom Charter against socialist criticism by pointing out that

the Freedom Charter leaves open the question as to whether the bulk of the land will be shared out into small peasant plots, or whether it will be shared and worked *collectively* on a larger scale by an agrarian working class. Such matters will surely depend on the degree of organisation, mobilisation and consciousness in the countryside.

The Freedom Charter, however, appears to be responding simply to the demands of rural people for more land which they can cultivate themselves and on which they can graze their cattle. As Esakjee (cited at pp. 60-61) tells us from his experience of collecting demands in the Eastern Transvaal, farm labourers were demanding land of their own. The experience of state and of collective farming in Africa (Williams, 1986; Raikes, 1984), and in socialist countries generally (Saith, 1985), suggests that rural people are right to prefer to have land of their own, however far this aspiration may fall from a 'socialist' consciousness. And as experiences in Zimbabwe (Bush and Cliffe, 1984)¹¹ suggest, many people who work in cities want to maintain, or get access to, land as a source of security and, if possible, a place to invest some of their earnings. Among rural people those without land are worst placed in their access to the labour market. The Freedom Charter further responds to popular opposition to the State's policies of compulsory culling of African stock and 'rehabilitation'¹² of the land by insisting that 'People shall not be robbed of their cattle' and by calling on the state to provide peasants with the tools of modern agriculture - 'implements, seed, tractors and dams to save the soil and assist the tillers'.

The other central foci of the statements are the demands for free, uniform and compulsory education for all children and for free medical and health services and proper public health measures. Whereas the policy statements of 1947,

like the earlier Ten Point Programme, simply state the principle of free and compulsory education, the ANC's earlier statements concentrate on immediate problems of African education such as the need for adequate funding from general revenue, equal pay and conditions for African teachers and for Africans to have increased control over institutions for African education. The segregation of African schools is implicitly taken as given. The Freedom Charter not only explicitly rejects any 'colour bar'. It broadens the demands for education, emphasising the exchange of books, ideas and contacts with other lands and specifying the values which are to be promoted. The youth are to be taught 'to love their people and their culture, to honour human brotherhood, liberty and peace'.

The Bill of Rights devotes a lengthy section to 'Public Health and Medical Services', reflecting perhaps the broad concerns in this field of Dr Xuma. It identifies poverty, land shortage, slum conditions, inadequate water supplies and sanitation and 'neglect of the health and general education of the Africans' as the causes of the deterioration of health among Africans. To set this right it emphasises 'preventive medicine' and thus the establishment of a School Medical Service, the appointment of district surgeons in rural areas, proper vital statistics on the whole population, increased training facilities for Africans as well as the establishment of free medical and health services. It is still today a cogent statement of the problems and measures required and its basic principles are incorporated, but with less detail, especially regarding the needs of rural areas, in the Freedom Charter.

CONGRESS YOUTH LEAGUE AND THE NATIONAL QUESTION

The 1944 Manifesto of the Congress Youth League (ANC Youth League 1944)¹³ contrasts with the ANC's own statements in its emphasis on the promotion of Africanism and the consolidation of Congress as a 'national unity front', through which 'the national liberation of Africans will be achieved by Africans themselves'. The 'Basic Policy' of the ANC Youth League (1948)¹⁴, however, combines a statement of economic, educational and cultural policies with the principles of African nationalism.

The Youth League's nationalism is reflected in its economic policies. Apart from the demands for the redistribution of land, trade union rights and the elimination of discrimination, it calls for the 'full industrialisation of South Africa' and the 'application of modern scientific methods to, and the planned development of' agriculture. The Youth League is to 'encourage business, trading and commercial enterprises among Africans' and the development of cooperative saving and trading.

African nationalism aims to create 'a united nation out of heterogeneous tribes' (the historical concern of the ANC from its inception) and 'the freeing of Africa from foreign domination and foreign leadership'. Africans are the rightful owners of the land. Suttner and Cronin (p. 136) claim that the 'so-called four na-

tion theory' has never 'been adopted as a policy within the Congress movement'.¹⁵ The Basic Policy of Congress Youth League explicitly states 'that South Africa is a country of four chief nationalities, three of which are minorities and three of which suffer national oppression' and that 'The National Organisations of the Africans, Indians and Coloureds may co-operate on common interests'. And against 'Vendors of Foreign Method' it insists 'that we are oppressed not as a class, but as a people, as a Nation'.

The Freedom Charter does recognise the existence of distinct 'national groups and races' whose language rights and equal status are to be protected. But unlike the Basic Policy it declares at the outset 'that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white'. And it is put forward in the name of 'the people' and not of the nations of South Africa. But the 'four chief nationalities' survived in the organisational structure of the Congress Alliance which extended the ANC's co-operation to white democrats, as well as to Indians and Coloureds. This, as I have already argued, made it possible for the ANC to preserve its African identity while committing itself to non-racial policies. Further, the Freedom Charter's principle that 'All people shall have equal rights to use their own language ...' is vital, as experiences in numerous countries should warn us. It raises difficult questions of policy, not least because the adoption of a world language, English, as a country's official language advantages not only native English speakers, but those strata (and their children) of all language groups most familiar with the use of English.¹⁶

WOMEN'S DEMANDS

None of the ANC's statements of the 1940s make reference to rights explicitly for women. Only the Ten Point Programme claims equality of rights without distinction of sex. Many demands do reflect the grievances which women have in common with men and those, notably the prohibition on home brewing and police raids on the home, which fell heaviest on women. But it was only with the adoption of 'The Women's Charter' at the inaugural conference of the Federation of South African Women (FEDSAW) in 1954 and FEDSAW's subsequent listing of Women's Demands for the Freedom Charter, that women's demands were explicitly recognised within the Congress movement. It is a merit of *30 Years of the Freedom Charter* to have included the texts of both documents (pp.161-65,167-71).

The two women's documents articulate many of the claims regarding the vote, freedom of movement, a fair distribution of land, education and medical facilities advanced in the previous decade. The Women's Demands is marked by its emphasis on concrete issues. It begins with the claim for 'Four months maternity leave on full pay for working mothers' as well as maternity homes, ante-natal clinics, child welfare centres, day nurseries, nursery schools and birth control clinics. Its educational demands include school feeding and special schools for handicapped children. It demands 'proper houses at rents not more

than 10 percent of the earnings of the head of the household' - an even more pertinent and radical demand today - as well as food subsidies and controlled prices and provision of sanitation, water, lighting, roads, shopping and recreation facilities and public conveniences. It pays great attention to rural areas, emphasising the extension of facilities and services to them as well as 'mechanisation of methods of food production' and the 'scientific improvement of the land' - which may reflect urban conceptions of rural improvement rather than rural people's own immediate demands. It demands the abolition of convict and child labour, as well as the 'tot' system and migratory labour. It claims minimum cash wages for all men and women working on farms and paid holidays for all farm workers. It goes further than the Freedom Charter in demanding the banning of atomic and hydrogen bombs.

As Suttner and Cronin (p. 167) say 'Many of these demands found their way into the Freedom Charter in an abbreviated form'. Indeed, they account for many of the more concrete demands incorporated into the Charter. Some of them, such as the demand for birth control clinics, did not appear in the Charter. The key issue which is not addressed in the Charter is the legal position of women, which is a central concern of the Women's Charter formulated as 'Equal rights with men in relation to property, marriage and children, and for the removal of all laws and customs that deny women such rights' - the 'Women's Demands' specifies 'Equal rights ... in the guardianship of our children'.

THE PEOPLE'S CHARTER

Suttner and Cronin are coy as to who actually drafted the Freedom Charter¹⁷. Investigation of this question would undermine the myth of the immaculate popular conception of the Charter as a document which 'was created by the people' and not by any individual or organisation or groups of individuals or organisations, and is 'authoritative because of this birth' (Molefe, p. 207)¹⁸. People were widely consulted as to the demands which they wished to see included in the Freedom Charter. But only the drafting committee saw the Freedom Charter until just before it was presented to the Congress of the People where its clauses were adopted by acclaim.¹⁹ The drafting committee had to decide which of the demands put forward by different people from all over the country were to be included and which excluded. There was no occasion at the Congress of the People to debate or contest the drafting committee's choices and formulations. This enabled them to shape the Freedom Charter's remarkable rhetorical structure, summarising both specific and general demands in successive proclamations of the rights which people shall have in a free South Africa.

Most of the demands put forward in the Freedom Charter are found in previous statements by the ANC and other organisations. It would be most surprising if the drafting committee had not taken account of them. This similarity nevertheless confirms the Freedom Charter's claims to put forward the demands of the people themselves, demands which continued to emerge in successive

statements of different origins, and in those collected in the campaign for the Congress of the People.

The Charter differs from previous ANC policy statements in explicitly claiming South Africa for all its people, in its concern for the rights of all 'nationalities' among the people and in taking up demands of women. It does not make claims specifically for Africans and goes beyond demanding the redress of grievances to offering, as Suttner and Cronin put it, 'the positive vision of the alternative, apartheid-free South Africa' (p. x). And it puts this vision forward in a cogent series of declarations which resonate with a wide range of people's experiences and aspirations in a way that no previous documents ever did.

Ten years ago 'black consciousness' shaped the language and forms of political organisation of radical black opposition to apartheid within South Africa, outside the trade union movement. Today that tradition has been marginalised. This shift owes something to the influence of the so-called 'workerists' in the trade union movement but, outside the trade unions, the critique of black consciousness was put forward by 'charterists'. Arguably, the broad acceptance of 'non-racialism' in the anti-apartheid struggle required the authoritative statement of its principles provided by the Freedom Charter. This is suggested by the informative interviews in *30 Years of the Freedom Charter* with Cheryl Carolus and Terror Lekota in particular. The editors might have claimed more for the Freedom Charter's contemporary influence than they did.

SOCIALISM AND THE CHARTER

Whereas in the 1950s the Charter was criticised for being too socialist, today it is more often criticised for not being socialist enough.²⁰ *30 Years of the Freedom Charter* answers them by arguing that national liberation must precede socialism. The Freedom Charter is therefore not a socialist document and is not exclusively concerned with the demands of the working class. However, it does 'primarily' reflect the interests of the working class (p. 143).²¹ Further, in its concern for women's issues it particularly 'voices the demands of working women'. These claims rest on the nature of the demands made and on the contributions of activists of the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) in collecting demands. Further, 'it is false to counterpose national liberation and socialism, for they are part of a single process' (p. 145).²²

Clearly, the demands of the Freedom Charter are both nationalist and democratic. Its fundamental demands are for the abolition of all forms of racial discrimination and the structures of oppression built around them, and for the extension of democratic rights to all South Africans. The demands for nationalization of mineral wealth, banks and monopoly industry are consistent with nationalist demands for state control of the national economy. Nor are nationalist demands classless, or the prerogative of the bourgeoisie and that catch-all category, the 'petite-bourgeoisie'. Nationalist opposition to colonial rule by workers, peasants or market traders in Africa arose out of the way colonial

policies and colonial capitalism affected their class situations and generated particular grievances (Hodgkin, 1956). The demands of the Freedom Charter do reflect the experiences and grievances of people in South Africa, whose diverse forms are unified by the structures of racial discrimination and oppression. And central to these are the demands of working men and women. But then the 1943 Bill of Rights similarly reflected the experiences and grievances of African workers and others, albeit with different emphases.

In 1955, SACTU members were prominent among the activists of the Congress Alliance, though professionals were still most prominent among its leaders. But SACTU, founded in 1954 with a claimed membership of 42 000, could not claim to speak for an organised working class to the extent that COSATU, for example, can today. Workers were consulted and mobilized around the demands of the Freedom Charter. The workers could not debate and formulate the demands of the Freedom Charter through their own organisations.

Supporters of the Freedom Charter are right to recognise the immediate primacy of nationalist and democratic demands. The first concern of most South Africans is to end apartheid. But socialism is not a logical development from the struggle for national liberation. And as the Zimbabwean case shows, self-described Marxist-Leninist parties may preside over capitalist economies (Freund, 1986: 125-6). Segregation and apartheid created the conditions for the development of capitalism in South Africa. South African capital still lacks any clear vision of an apartheid-free capitalism, let alone how to bring it about. But that does not mean it won't be able to live profitably without apartheid when others finally end it. The extraordinary concentration of the ownership of private capital in South Africa could facilitate a rapprochement between financial, mining and industrial monopolies and a nationalist or a socialist government. Historically, nationalism and socialism have proved to share important affinities, notably a penchant for expanding state control of economic activity and a monopoly over legitimate political life in the hands of a single party (Dutkiewicz and Williams, 1987). Indeed, in Africa in recent years socialism has come to be the language of nationalism.

The debate about socialism and the Freedom Charter has tended to proceed on the assumption that socialism is a good thing, which is unambiguously in the interests of the working class and that we have a clear idea of what it is. The experiences of socialist countries, which are today facing more severe economic and political crises than their capitalist counterparts, suggests that we need to be more cautious and more critical before advancing socialism as a slogan and counterposing it to nationalist and democratic demands.²³ The view of socialism as state ownership of the means of production, central planning and a strategy of industrialisation under the direction of a vanguard party is an impoverished one which has led to political repression of workers and peasants and, increasingly, to unresolved economic crises.²⁴

Suttner and Cronin (p. 129) rightly point out that there is nothing inherently

'bourgeois' about the democratic demands of the Freedom Charter, not least universal adult franchise or the right to form trade unions. One might add the right to strike (Fine, 1986; Innes, 1986). In Europe, the organisations of the working class have historically been more committed to advancing and protecting democratic rights than have the parties of the bourgeoisie - and they have generally been more concerned to advance democracy than to bring about socialism. Both nationalism and socialism have often proved inimical to democracy as exclusive claims to represent the interests of the 'nation' or the 'working class' have overridden people's rights to choose for themselves, to form their own organisations, to hold their own representatives accountable and to dissent from the priorities of their masters.

Hence it is of critical importance, for socialists and for the working class, that national liberation does lead to the creation of democratic political institutions. Socialists should be concerned to articulate a conception of socialism which gives primacy to democratic procedures, choices and accountability rather than to state planning. South African trade unions have given a lead in their 'fierce assertion of independence and in the strong emphasis on workers' control (and) ... on rank and file participation'.²⁵ The Freedom Charter dramatically articulates the demands for democracy in South Africa. It lays the basis for a democratic programme which can both inform, and be informed by, the continuing struggles for human freedoms in South Africa.

FOOTNOTES

1. I am grateful for David Everatt for comments on my draft of this review and for generously making his research materials available to me. Many of the points made in this review are stated more succinctly by Tom Lodge in his (1986) review.
2. *Work in Progress (WIP)* 41, 42, 50; *South African Labour Bulletin (SALB)* 11 (1-4), (6-7); 12 (2-3), (5-7); *Transformation* 1,2,4 (all 1986-87).
3. Where no other source is stated references are to Suttner and Cronin (1986).
4. In answer to Jordan Ngubani's claim that the Freedom Charter was communist and that the ANC had been subordinated to the Congress of the People, Albert Luthuli pointed out that 'The most that can be said about the Freedom Charter is that it breathes in some of its clauses a socialistic and welfare state outlook, and certainly not a Moscow communistic outlook' (Luthuli, 1956b). On criticisms of the Freedom Charter from Natal and its adoption, with Luthuli's support, by the ANC in March 1956, see Luthuli (1956b) and Karis and Carter (1977: 3,65-6).
5. From the police record of the Congress, cited Karis and Carter, 1977: 3, 195. See also pp. 63, 72.
6. Included in AAC/Anti-CAD (1943:355-57). Similar demands to the Bill of Rights and the Ten-Point Programme are raised in ADP (1943) but it stresses economic problems and strike action over political representation. Demands

- for better wages, the vote, abolition of passes, more land for Africans and free speech had also been put forward in ICU (1928).
7. The Bill of Rights expanded on Xuma (1941). Its main demands are included in Resolution 8 of ANC (1946), in Xuma (1947) as well as in ANC/NIC/TIC (1947) which extends to demands for abolition of restrictions, such as barriers to movements between provinces, imposed on Indians. Similar demands are put forward in Matthews (1946).
 8. Africans' Claims is the first explicit claim by the ANC for universal adult suffrage. *The 1943 Natives Representative Council Recess Committee Report asked for one man, one vote but not votes for women* (Everatt, 1988).
 9. Wilson Fanti cited at p. 36 and again at 175. See also Esakjee at pp. 60-61, Nyembe at p. 175 and Lekota at pp. 198-200.
 10. Duncan Innes, a critic of the Charter, similarly identifies a socialist agrarian policy with 'collective or communal ownership' (Innes, 1986: 13).
 11. See also Williams (1982) on Zimbabwe, Murray (1981 part 4) on Lesotho and First (1983 parts 3 and 4) on Mocambique.
 12. See the demands cited by Suttner (1984). Cf Matthews (1946: 231).
 13. The Manifesto's concern to establish the philosophical premises of African nationalism recurs in PAC (Pan Africanist Congress) (1959).
 14. Its main themes are incorporated in the 'Programme of Action' (ANC, 1949).
 - 15 See also Tshwete at pp. 217-8.
 16. This question is discussed seriously by Neville Alexander (1983) the vociferous critic of the supposed 'four nations' theory (see his 1986).
 17. Among those who have been cited as contributing to the drafting of the Charter are Lionel Bernstein (Karis and Carter, 1977: 3,93) and Joe Slovo (cited Lodge, 1986: 114). The police record of Congress (Karis and Carter, 1977: 203) cites Mervyn 'Dennon' (Bennun) as speaking for 'students (who) helped to draw up the charter', probably by going through the demands which people have submitted in order to construct the draft charter.
 18. See also pp. 128-29 and 'Does the Freedom Charter Mean Socialism?' New Age 17 November 1957 in ANC (1985:28). Less ambitious claims are made by the editors at p. ix and by Lekota (p. 197) who rightly says 'that intensive and extensive consultation of the masses went into the drafting of the Freedom Charter'.
 19. 'Drawing up the Demands of the Freedom Charter', *Sechaba*, June 1976 in ANC (1955:21) says that only the drafting committee saw it before the Congress. According to Karis and Carter (1977: 3,60) it was discussed, but not amended, by the ANC's working committee on 22 June and by members of the National Executive Committee on the opening day of the Congress, 25 June 1955.
 20. On this irony, see Nair cited p. 147. For the debate see issues of *SALB*, *WIP* and *Transformation* cited in note 2.

21. On the ambiguities of claims for 'working class leadership and politics' see Jochelson, Moss and Obery (1986).
22. See also pp. 128-30, 143-46, also Tshwete at pp. 212-13.
23. The relevant issues are raised by Robert Davies (1987) which emphasises the Charter's demand that mineral rights, banks and monopolies should be transferred to the ownership of the 'people' and considers the experience of Mocambique since independence in this light.
24. Isizwe Collective (1987: 74) ask, referring to 'decades of concrete experience', 'Does the existence of a vanguard communist party necessarily undermine the mass democracy of trade unions and other mass organisations?' The simple answer, to judge from countries where communist parties have been in power, is 'Yes'.
25. The first condition for building socialism in South Africa is present in the trade unions 'in the fierce assertion of independence and in the strong emphasis on workers' control (and) on rank and file participation' Lewis (1986:36).

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