

THE BLACK PEOPLES' CONVENTION (BPC)—SOUTH AFRICA



Steve Biko BPC Honorary President

**HISTORICAL BACKGROUND
AND BASIC DOCUMENTS.**

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**MESSAGE OF TRIBUTE TO STEPHEN BANTU BIKO—
HONOURARY PRESIDENT OF
THE BLACK PEOPLES' CONVENTION**

On behalf of the BLACK PEOPLES' CONVENTION (BPC) of South Africa, the broad masses of our people, of all the patriots of our country, and on behalf of all friendly and freedom-loving peoples, nations and communities—I wish to pay my special *tribute* to our great and heroic leader, Stephen Bantu Biko, who on September 12th, 1977, met his brutal death at the hands of the enemy!

STEVE BIKO DID NOT DIE IN VAIN! He died in the quest for freedom and liberation! Steve Biko died in the dynamic and revolutionary process of our great and heroic struggle of the Black oppressed in South Africa!

The death of our great leader, Steve Biko and all other fallen heroes, on our part, is a clear call to all our people who are fighting for freedom to re-dedicate themselves in the struggle, to intensify the struggle until victory is achieved!

The cruel death of our heroic and wise leader, Steve Biko, calls on all the patriots of our struggle for national liberation to resolutely follow his wise and revolutionary teachings in the present fight for liberation and the destruction of the reactionary and counter-revolutionary forces that presently oppress and exploit the broad masses of Black people in South Africa. **VICTORY IS CERTAIN!**

Our goal is clear—we are fighting, and will continue to fight to the bitter end until all the forces of oppression and exploitation have been completely crushed! It is therefore the sacred task of all our people to UNITE and launch a determined struggle in order to achieve the common goal of all our people—

**NATIONAL LIBERATION!
"BREAKING THE CHAINS!!!"
"POWER TO THE PEOPLE!!!"**

II HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE BLACK PEOPLES' CONVENTION (BPC)

The founding of the BLACK PEOPLES' CONVENTION (BPC) was a turning point in the history of the struggle for National Liberation in Azania. The BPC was formed as a national political movement of the Black oppressed in Azania at a time when the Black political struggle had suffered a stalemate for a whole decade.

When the African National Congress (ANC) and the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) were banned and outlawed by the racist and oppressive regime of South Africa in 1960, a conspicuous political vacuum was created in the Black community. That is to say, there was no organised resistance against the oppression of the Black masses on a national scale. The BPC was, therefore born out of this peculiar experience which the masses of our people shared collectively as the viciously oppressed nation-class; a people who are denied in the South African Apartheid system any relevant and effective political machinery through which their aims, aspirations, ideals and goals can be effected and realised.

Historically speaking, the birth of the BPC was preceded by a number of conferences and meetings attended by several black organisations which had a national outlook at the time. The first conference was held in Bloemfontein on 24th April, 1971. At this conference the dominant theme was 'co-operation between, and co-ordination' of the work of all progressive black organisations. The main organisations attendant at the Bloemfontein Conference were The Association for the Educational and Cultural Advancement of African People of South Africa (ASSECA), the South African Students Organisation (SASO), African Independent Churches Association (AICA), Inter-denominational African Ministers Association (IDAMASA) and the Young Women's Christian Association.

At the end of this conference it was decided that the delegates were to elect an ad-hoc committee whose task was to prepare for the assembly of yet a bigger number of peoples' organisations.

A two day conference of peoples' organisations met in Pitermaritzburg by mid-August (1971). The Maritzburg Conference was attended by over 100 representatives of peoples'

organisations, mainly welfare, educational, cultural, religious and student organisations.

The main decisions of the conference were:

- That all African peoples' organisations be asked to join in the formation of a national confederate organisation,
- That the attendant peoples' organisations work in close collaboration with other Black groups towards the realisation of the aspirations and goals of the Black oppressed in South Africa,
- That the proposed national confederate organisation operates *outside* the South African Government-created platforms (i.e., Bantustans),
- That the proposed organisation devotes itself to representing African *political opinion* (my own emphasis) and to promoting community development programmes on education, socio-economic and cultural aspects.

The conference further elected another ad-hoc committee which would draw a draft working document for the formal establishment of the proposed confederate peoples' organisation. The newly elected Ad-Hoc Committee came to be known as the **NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS CONFERENCE**.

The Ad-Hoc Committee was given a period of four months to draw a draft constitution, draw up blue-prints for and to call an assembly of peoples' organisations for the establishment of a national confederate organisation which would embrace all black organisations.

The proposed conference met in Orlando Communal Hall in Soweto, near Johannesburg on the 17th-19th December, 1971. Attendant at this conference were over 40 representatives of various peoples' organisations. It was at this conference that the proposed confederate organisation was founded and came to be known as the Black Peoples' Convention (BPC). It was agreed at this conference that the Black Peoples' Convention would be a confederate black political organisation embracing all peoples' mass organisations in the country.

On the 14th January, 1972, the BPC ad-hoc committee issued a press statement announcing the formation of a national black political movement under the banner of Black Consciousness. The press release stated, *inter alia*:

- It is an inalienable birthright of any community to have a political voice to articulate and realise the aspirations of its

members,

- In South Africa, the Africans, Coloureds and Indians comprise the black community which has been deprived of this inalienable right; and for too long there has been a *political vacuum* (my own emphasis) in the black community;
- False impressions have been created that it is illegal and unlawful for blacks to found political movements,
- The Ad-Hoc Committee is, therefore, working towards the consolidation of a black peoples' political movement whose *primary aim is to unite and solidify black people working towards their liberation and emancipate them from both psychological and physical oppression*; (my own emphasis)
- *Our interests therefore lie within the black community* (my own emphasis) and our sole aim will be directed towards its needs, which needs *will coincide with those of all oppressed peoples throughout the world*,
- It is therefore essential and imperative that all black people, individuals and organisations *should pool their resources together* in order to achieve their aspirations. Their future destiny *is in their hands* (own emphasis) (See, *Black Review*, BCP, 1972).

On the 8th-10th July, 1972, the BPC held its inaugural conference at the Edendale lay Ecumenical Centre, Pitermaritzburg. The inaugural conference formally adopted the new BPC constitution and launched the organisation.



THE FIRST ANNUAL NATIONAL CONGRESS OF BPC

The first BPC annual national congress was held on the 16th-17th December, 1972, in Hammanskraal, near Pretoria. At this national congress the BPC delegates representing the newly formed country-wide branches of the movement, adopted several important resolutions which have become the cornerstone of BPC policy and political guidelines.

At the end of the conference the first National Executive Committee (NEC) was elected: Those elected were Winniefred Kgware (President), Christopher Mokoditso (vice-President), Siphon Buthelezi (Secretary-General), Mosibudi Mangena (National Organiser) and Sathsivani Cooper (Public Relations Officer).

At the first National Congress of the BPC the constitution of

the organisation, as adopted at the Maritzburg conference was endorsed by a unanimous vote by the entire meeting. The preamble of the BPC Constitution read as follows:

“We, the Black People of South Africa, declare that having examined, analysed, assessed and defined our needs, aspirations, ideals and goals in this country; and noting that there is a dearth of a *political movement* to articulate and aggregate these needs, aspirations, ideals and goals, and having further unconditionally declared our faith in the effectiveness, relevance and capability of black political movements, as the only media (vehicle) through which our LIBERATION and EMANCIPATION could be effected and realized, and believing that:

- Black people in South Africa have unique needs, aspirations, ideals, difficulties and problems pertaining to them,
- It is an inalienable birthright of any community to organise itself into a political movement for effective translation of its needs, aspirations, ideals and goals into reality,
- It is necessary and essential for Blacks in South Africa to unite and consolidate themselves if their needs, aspirations, ideals and goals are to be realized and actualized,
- There is a crying need for Blacks in South Africa to re-assess their pride, human dignity, group identity and solidarity through a political movement, and, we therefore resolve to found a *political movement* which would:
- Articulate and aggregate the needs of black people in South Africa,
- Represent the black people nationally and internationally.

SOME PRINCIPLES AND AIMS OF BPC

- To unite and solidify the black people of South Africa with a view to mobilizing the masses towards their struggle for liberation and emancipation, both from psychological and physical oppression.
- To preach, popularize and implement the philosophy of black consciousness and black solidarity.
- To create and maintain an egalitarian society where (social) justice is meted equally to all.
- To create and maintain an equitable economic system based on the principles and philosophy of equal sharing of the

wealth of the country.

The above cited objectives are only but a few basic fundamentals of BPC policy and hence form the cornerstone of BPC political strategy.

It has been stated above that at the December 1972 Hammanskraal Conference several important resolutions were adopted as BPC policy. Only a few will be cited and these are of great significance since they serve to clarify some well-intended distortions about the political character of the Black Peoples' Convention.

ON BLACK ORGANIZATIONS:

At the December 1972 national congress meeting of the BPC, it was resolved as of utmost importance to maintain contacts and to collaborate with other black organizations that sought to further the interests of the black oppressed in South Africa. The organizations that were specifically mentioned (others were not, for obvious reasons!) were the Natal African Workshop (NWA), the South African Students' Organization (SASO), ASSECA, the Natal Indian Congress (NIC), and IDAMASA. Since the BPC's main aim was the total involvement of the entire and broad masses of the people in the struggle for national liberation, the national congress of the BPC decided, as a matter of principle to co-operate with other peoples' organizations for effective struggle towards national liberation.

It is, therefore, important to note that the BPC had no intention to 'swallow' any organization, but to enable other organisations to maintain their *initiative* and *independence*. It goes without saying, therefore, that it is not only misleading and politically naive to suggest that the BPC had any intention to be an alternative to any organization or movement!

ON MULTI-RACIAL ORGANIZATIONS

At the Hammansksaal Conference the BPC newly-elected National Executive Committee was charged with the important task of encouraging closer collaboration amongst all *authentic* workers' organisations, the ultimate goal being the formation of a broad-based, national Workers Council. The main workers' organisations at the time were the Black Allied Workers' Union (BAWU) and worker organizations founded at the initiative of the Black Workers' Project.

This decision came out of the recognition of the utmost significance of the Black working class as a social class that would develop historically as the vanguard of the struggle. This recognition of this historical fact (in the South African situation) made it imperative for the BPC to make it number one priority to mobilize the black working-class.

ON INTERNATIONAL AND FOREIGN ORGANIZATIONS AND INDEPENDENT COUNTRIES

The BPC, on this question, adopted the following resolution (BPC National Congress Minutes Resolution 17/72) "That this congress, realizing that it is of paramount importance that we (BPC) have healthy international relations, and, recognizing that there are some countries (and organizations) which have the interests of black people (of South Africa) at heart, but that through imperialist domination (and manipulation) are now forced to maintain links with South Africa; . . .

THEREFORE RESOLVES:

- To have contact only with those states and international organizations that are in sympathy with, and support our cause,
- Not** to have any liaison with colonial and imperialist powers that are actively engaged in aiding and abetting the white racist regime in South Africa,
- And further that the countries that consort and connive with the white racist regime, in a fraudulent attempt at speaking for black people (in South Africa) under the guise of dialogue be **REJECTED.**"

ON FOREIGN INVESTMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

The political position of the Black Peoples' Convention on this question is quite clear. The BPC has in the past (and still is) demanded total withdrawal of foreign investment from South Africa. The BPC has made its stand quite clear to the major foreign investments such as IBM, IT&T, Kodak, Polaroid, Ford, Chrysler, General Motors, Shell, Mobil, and many others. Letters were written to these corporations and even a press release was communicated to the press on the 31st of January, 1973 (by Sipho Buthelezi, then BPC Secretary-General).

into reality,

- It is necessary and essential for Blacks in South Africa to unite and consolidate themselves if their needs, aspirations, ideals and goals are to be realised and actualised,
- There is a crying need for Blacks in South Africa to re-assess their pride, human dignity, group identity and solidarity through a political movement, and we therefore resolve to found a **political movement** which will:
- Articulate and aggregate the needs of Black people in South Africa,
- Represent the Black people nationally and internationally.

SOME PRINCIPLES AND AIMS OF BPC

- To unite and solidify the Black people of South Africa with a view to mobilising the masses towards their struggle for liberation and emancipation, from both psychological and physical oppression,
- To preach, popularise and implement the philosophy of Black consciousness and Black solidarity,
- To create and maintain an egalitarian society where (social) justice is meted out equally to all,
- To create and maintain an equitable economic system based on the principles and philosophy of equal sharing of the wealth of the country.

The above-cited objectives are the basic fundamentals of BPC policy and hence form the cornerstone of BPC political strategy.

It has been stated above that at the December 1972 Hammanskraal Conference several important resolutions were adopted as BPC policy. Only a few will be cited and these are of great significance since they serve to clarify the political character of the Black Peoples' Convention.

ON BLACK ORGANISATIONS

At the December 1972 National Congress meeting of the BPC, it was resolved as of utmost importance to main-

recruit people for military training abroad.

The rest of 1973 saw more than 100 BPC, SASO and other prominent black militants being banned and house arrested under the Suppression of Communism Act.

On 25 September, 1974, the BPC and SASO launched a "VIVA FRELIMO" rally at Curries Fountain, Durban, which was attended by thousands of black workers and militants. The "Viva Frelimo" rallies had been held to celebrate and pledge solidarity with the Mozambican Revolution. On the day of the rally more than 40 BPC and SASO leaders were arrested throughout the country, and on the days that followed there was a wide swoop of Black Consciousness militants who were thrown into the jails of the racist regime of South Africa.

The aftermath of the "Viva Frelimo" rally resulted in the BPC/SASO "Terrorism Trial," a marathon trial that lasted for about two years and ranks as one of the longest political trials in racist South Africa. The 9 accused leaders were:

1. SATHASVAN COOPER, BPC Public Relations Officer
2. MAITSHWE NCHAUPE AUBREY MOKOAPE, Founder member of BPC and Chairman of BPC Durban Central.
3. ABSOLOM ZITHULELE CINDI, BPC, Secretary General
4. NKWENKWE NKOMO, BPC National Organizer
5. JUSTICE LINDANE MYEZA, SASO Secretary General and former BPC Organizer, Zululand Branch.
6. MOUSIUA LEKOTA, SASO National Organizer
7. PANDELANI NEVOLOVHODWE, SASO President
8. GABORONE SEDIBE, SASO member and Turfloop University SRC President.
9. STRINIVASA MOODLEY, SASO Administrative Assistant.

The BPC/SASO leaders were charged (under Terrorism Act), amongst other things, with conspiring to bring about *REVOLUTIONARY change in South Africa by unconstitutional or VIOLENT means or causing or encouraging racial hostility between blacks and whites.*

The conspiracy charge included allegations, by the South African fascist state, of the formation of a BLACK POWER bloc hostile to the State and the support and eulogising of people convicted on terrorism, subversion and controvention of the Suppression of Communism Act as heroes and the true leaders of the blacks.

The accused leaders also faced a charge of wrongfully, unlawfully and with intent to endanger the maintenance of law

and order, organizing the "VIVA FRELIMO" rallies in September 1974.

Another charge referred to the allegation of embarrassing the administration of the State (South Africa) and deterring people from assisting in the maintenance of "law and order."

Saths Cooper, BPC Public Relations Officer was also charged to have conspired with Siphon Buthelezi, BPC Secretary General (then in exile in Botswana at the time of the trial), for wrongfully, unlawfully and with intent to endanger the maintenance of law and order in the "Republic" by writing or causing to be written letters to companies (multi-national corporations) and thereby to "discourage, hamper, deter or prevent" FOREIGN INVESTMENT in the economy of the "Republic" (South Africa).

At the end of the trial, BPC and SASO leaders were each given imprisonment sentences varying from 5 to 6 years, and are now languishing in South Africa's jail, Robben Island.

Since the June 16th, 1976, Soweto uprisings, hundreds of Black Consciousness militants were thrown into the jails of the South African racist regime. Prominent BPC leaders were the first to be arrested at the outbreak of the June 16th, 1976, uprisings.

Bannings, harassment, imprisonment have continued in an attempt by the fascist South African regime to crush the Black Consciousness Movement.

On 12th September, 1977, the struggling masses in South Africa lost one of the greatest and most heroic leaders of the South African struggle for National Liberation—STEPHEN BANTU BIKO, honorary President of the Black Peoples' Convention, who died in detention at the hands of the fascist police of South Africa. On hearing about his death, the BPC told the nation and the world that "STEVE BIKO HAS NOT DIED IN VAIN!" The death of Steve Biko unleashed a national rage of anger, joined by the condemnations of the international community. The BPC leader was buried in King Williamstown, by more than 20,000 mourners. Thousands of other mourners were prevented from reaching King Williamstown.

The final crunch came when the BPC and 17 other black organizations were banned on October 19th, 1977, by the racist regime of South Africa.

The organizations banned were:

- Black Peoples' Convention (BPC)
- South African Students Organization (SASO)
- Black Community Programs
- Black Parents Association
- Black Women's Federation
- Border Youth Organization
- Eastern Province (or Cape) Youth Organization
- Medupe Writers Association
- Natal Youth Organization
- National Youth Organization (NAYO)
- South African Students Movement (SASM)
- Soweto Students Representative Council (SSRC)
- Soweto Teachers Action Committee (STAC)
- Transvaal Youth Organization (TRAYO)
- Union of Black Journalists (UBJ)
- Western Cape Youth Organization
- Zimele Trust Fund
- Association for the Education and Cultural Advancement of
of the African People of South Africa (ASSECA)

In the early hours of October 19th, 1977, prominent leaders of BPC and SASO were arrested and jailed. Prominent amongst the imprisoned leaders were BPC National President KENNETH RACHIDI; Thandisizwe Mazibuko, BPC National Secretary; Thomas Manthata, BPC Labour Secretary; George Wauchope, BPC Chairman Johannesburg Central; Aubrey Moksena, BPC National Organizer; Jainis Kgokong, BPC executive member; Thabo Sekume, BPC chairman, Attendgeville Pretoria; Kanekane Matsena, BPC chairman, Mamelodi, Pretoria; and Tami Zani. BPC militants were jailed, as well as other militants of other black organizations.





III
BPC CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE:

We, the Black People of South Africa, declare that having examined, analysed, assessed and defined our needs, aspirations, ideals and goals in this country; and noting that there is a dearth of a political movement to articulate and aggregate these needs, aspirations, ideals and goals, and having further unconditionally declared our faith in the effectiveness, relevance and capability of Black political movements as the only media through which our liberation and emancipation could be effected and realised, and believing that:

- (I) Black People in South Africa have unique needs, aspirations, ideals, difficulties and problems pertaining to them,
- (II) It is an inalienable birthright of any community to organise itself into a political movement for effective translation of its needs, aspirations, ideals and goals into reality,
- (III) It is necessary and essential for Blacks in South Africa to unite and consolidate themselves into a political movement if their needs, aspirations, ideals and goals are to be realised and actualised,
- (IV) There is a crying need in South Africa for Blacks to re-assert their pride, human dignity, group identity and solidarity through a political movement and,

We, therefore, resolve to found a political movement which would:

- (I) Articulate and aggregate the needs of Black People in South Africa,
- (II) Represent the Black People nationally and internationally.



SECTION ONE

NAME

The name of the Organisation shall be the BLACK PEOPLES' CONVENTION (BPC) hereinafter referred to as the CONVENTION.

SECTION TWO

PRINCIPLES AND AIMS:

1. To unite and solidify the Black People of South Africa with the view to liberating and emancipating them from both philosophical and physical oppression.
2. To preach, popularise and implement the philosophy of Black Consciousness and Black Solidarity.
3. To formulate and implement an educational system which shall be relevant to the needs of the nation.
4. To create and maintain an egalitarian society where justice is meted equally to all.
5. To formulate, apply and implement the principles and philosophy of Black Communalism, the philosophy of sharing.
6. To create and maintain an equitable economic system based on the principle and philosophy of Black Communalism.
7. To co-operate with the existing agencies to re-orientate the theological system with a view to making religion relevant to the needs, aspirations, ideals and goals of the Black People.

SECTION THREE

OBJECT:

The object of the Organisation is to unite the South African Blacks into a Black Political Movement which would seek to realise their liberation and emancipation from both psychological and physical oppression. The Convention shall operate outside the White Government created systems, structures, and/or institutions, and shall NOT seek election into these.

SECTION FOUR

LANGUAGE

The Convention shall use and conduct its business through English or the language understood by the majority of its members.

SECTION FIVE

MEMBERSHIP

- (a) Membership shall be open to Blacks only.
- (b) Every member shall subscribe to the principles, aims, policies, goals and philosophy of the Convention.
- (c) A member shall be over seventeen (17) years of age unless the National Executive should otherwise decide and shall be resident in South Africa.
- (d) Membership shall be by individual application, which application shall be considered on the basis of the principles, aims, objects and goals of the Convention.
- (e) Every member of the Convention shall pay a membership affiliation fee which shall be decided from time to time by the National Congress.
- (f) Every member of the Convention shall pay an annual subscription fee, which shall be decided from time to time by the National Congress.
- (g) The National Executive Committee of the Black People's Convention shall have the right, power and authority, at all times to grant or refuse application for membership and shall furnish reasons for such a grant or refusal.

SECTION SIX

COMPOSITION OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

The National Executive Council shall consist of:

- (I) The President
- (II) The Vice-President
- (III) The Secretary-General
- (IV) The Publicity Secretary
- (V) The Regional Directors
- (VI) The Branch Chairmen

COMPOSITION OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The National Executive Committee shall consist of:

- (I) The President
- (II) The Vice-President
- (III) The Secretary-General
- (IV) The Publicity Secretary
- (V) The Regional Directors

POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

1. THE PRESIDENT

- (a) The President shall be the Chief Official of the Convention.
- (b) He shall represent the Convention nationally and internationally.
- (c) He shall be responsible for the guidance and application of the principles, policies and goals of the convention.
- (d) He shall preside at all meetings of the National Executive Committee.

2. THE VICE-PRESIDENT

- (a) He shall perform those duties and functions which are otherwise performed by the President if the President is unable to do so.
- (b) He shall assist the President in the execution of his duties, functions and responsibilities.

3. THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

- (a) He shall act as the Administrative Officer of the Convention.
- (b) He shall do all secretarial work of the Convention.
- (c) He shall keep the records of the Convention.
- (d) He shall keep proper books of accounts, income and expenditure of the Convention.
- (e) He shall cause a balance sheet of income and expenditure to be prepared and certified by auditors annually.
- (f) He shall present an audited financial report to National Congress.

4. THE PUBLICITY SECRETARY

- (a) He shall be responsible for the depiction and preserva-

tion of the good name and image of the Convention.

(b) He shall be responsible for issuing of the Press statements on behalf of the Convention, in conjunction with at least one other member of the National Executive Committee.

(c) He shall be responsible for all the Convention's publications and other material pertaining to his office.

ELECTION OF THE REGIONAL DIRECTORS

(a) A month prior to the sitting of Congress the Branch Chairmen shall assemble to elect among themselves their Regional Director.

(b) All Branch Chairmen elected to the Regional Directory shall ipso facto cease to be Chairmen of their branches. The affected branch shall elect a new branch chairman at its subsequent meeting.

(c) The Regional Directors shall be recommended annually by the regions and the names submitted to the National Congress i.e. each region shall elect its Director, the Directors and/or their names shall be introduced and/or read to the National Congress for ratification.

ELECTION OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

(a) Congress shall elect the National Executive Committee from the list of the names of Regional Directors in terms of (c) above.

(b) All Regional Directors elected to the National Executive Committee shall ipso facto cease to represent their regions. The affected region shall thereafter elect a new regional director whose election shall be ratified by the National Executive Committee acting on the mandate of Congress.

(c) The Secretary General shall be elected every three years provided that this portfolio shall be ratified annually by Congress.

POWERS AND DUTIES OF REGIONAL DIRECTORS

The regional director shall be:

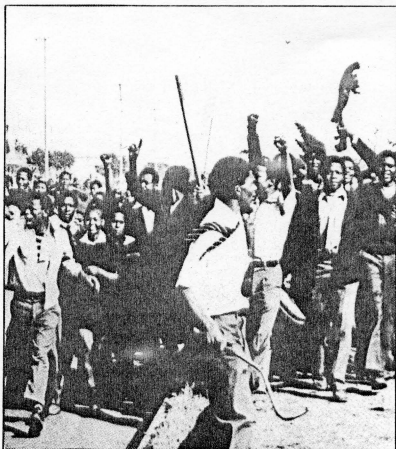
(a) Responsible for the organisation of the Convention.

(b) Responsible for fund-raising.

(c) The liaison between the National Executive Council, Regions and general membership of the Convention.

(d) Charged with the responsibility of visiting all Convention Branches, be available for advice and assistance to these Branches.

(e) Responsible for the cultural orientation and conscientization of the Black community.



(f) empowered to call two or more branches for a specific purpose.

MEETINGS OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

(a) The National Executive Council shall meet at least once in three months at a venue determined by the President.

(b) Failure by a member of the National Executive Council to attend two consecutive meetings without adequate reason, shall lead to automatic suspension from the Council.

(c) Vacancies in the National Executive Council shall be filled by postal vote by the branches of the affected region. The Secretary-General shall announce and call for nomination for such vacancies.

SECTION SEVEN

VOTING

(a) Voting at all meetings and/or sessions of the Convention shall be by show of hands unless the chairman/presiding officer otherwise decides.

(b) Voting powers at National Congress shall be constituted as follows:

- (I) For the first 100 or part thereof each branch shall have three (3) votes.
- (II) For each additional three hundred (300) or part thereof, up to one thousand (1000) there shall be one (1) additional vote.
- (III) For each additional five hundred (500) or part thereof, up to two thousand (2000) there shall be two additional votes.
- (IV) No branch shall have more than ten (10) votes.
- (V) No member of less than three months standing shall be allowed to vote.
- (VI) Each member of the Executive shall be entitled to one vote provided that the presiding officer shall be entitled to a casting vote as well as a deliberative vote.
- (VII) Voting by proxy shall not be allowed.

SECTION EIGHT

NATIONAL CONGRESS

(a) The supreme and highest government and policy making body of the Convention shall be the National Congress in session; and shall meet once a year, at a place and time determined by the National Executive Committee provided that;

(I) The President of the Convention in consultation with the National Executive, may convene a special session of the National Congress whenever it deems it desirable and necessary to do so.

(II) The National Executive Committee shall convene a special session of the National Congress if and when it is requested to do so by not less than two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) of the total number of branches.

(b) The National Congress shall comprise of delegates from branches and the National Executive Committee.

(c) The National Congress shall have the power and authority to take decisions by: a majority vote of those present and voting in all aspects of the policy, principles, organisations, finance and discipline of the Convention; and all such decisions shall be binding on the Convention and all its formations provided that the National Congress shall have no power and authority to repeal, abrogate, amend, rescind and/or alter its own resolutions and/or decisions on Constitutional policy, principles, aims, objectives and goals unless agreed to by not less than two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) majority of members attending the session of the Congress in question and voting.

SECTION NINE

BRANCHES

(I) The Regional Director shall subject to approval of the National Executive Committee, establish branches.

(II) Delimitations of branches shall be determined by the National Executive Committee in consultation with the branches in that region.

(III) Each branch shall supervise all aspect or activities of the Convention within the area of its jurisdiction.

(IV) Each branch may submit to the National Executive Committee or National Congress for consideration, recommendations concerning the principles, aims, objectives and goals of the Convention.

(V) Each branch shall hold, at least, one Congress annually.

(VI) Each branch shall consist of not less than twenty-five (25) members.

(VII) Each branch Congress shall elect delegates to the National Congress.

(VIII) Each branch shall have an Executive Committee consisting of

- (a) Chairman
- (b) Vice-Chairman
- (c) Secretary
- (d) Head of Sub-committees e.g.
 - (I) Finance Committee
 - (II) Projects Committee

POWERS, DUTIES AND FUNCTIONS OF THE BRANCH EXECUTIVE

The Chairman shall:

- (a) Be the head of the branch.
- (b) Be the Chief Executive member to whom the Executive members shall be responsible.
- (c) Whenever possible and necessary represent the branch.
- (d) Carry out the aims and the objects of the Convention.
- (e) Preside at all meetings of the branch.

The Vice-Chairman shall:

- (a) Assist the branch chairman in the execution of his duties and deputise for him should he for some reason be unable to carry out his duties.
- (b) Be responsible together with the Secretary, Treasurer for the branch fund-raising.

The Secretary shall:

- (a) Be responsible for the safe keeping of the books and/or records of the branch.
- (b) Be responsible for the secretarial work of the branch.

The Treasurer shall:

- (a) Be responsible for the custody of and shall keep a register of all capital assets of the branch.
- (b) Be responsible for the financial assets of the branch.

SECTION TEN

FINANCES

- (a) Funds shall be deposited with the bank to be determined by the National Committee.
- (b) The National Executive Committee shall frame and prescribe regulations and procedures to be adopted and followed by any or all formations of the Convention with regards to finances.
- (c) The Secretary-General shall be in charge of finance.
- (d) All financial transactions carried out in the name of the Convention shall bear the signature of the Secretary-General and one of the President or Vice-President.
- (e) The Convention shall appoint its own auditors and/or financial advisers who shall be allowed to inspect and/or audit the Convention's financial books and/or records.
- (f) Books and/or records of the Convention shall be audited

annually before National Congress.

(g) The Financial year of the Convention ends in October the 30th.

(h) All payments shall be made by cheque except in the case of petty cash requirements.

(i) The Convention shall be a body corporate capable of managing its own assets and liabilities.

SECTION ELEVEN

PROPERTY

The Convention shall be empowered and entitled to sell, purchase, hire, lease mortgage, pledge and in anyway alienate or deal with both movable and immovable property acquired by any of its formations which property shall be registered in its name or in the name of one of the trustees appointed for that purpose by the National Congress in the event of any law requiring it to be registered thus on behalf of the Convention.

SECTION TWELVE

LEGAL PROCEEDING

The Convention may sue or be sued in its own name, and shall appoint its own legal advisers.

SECTION THIRTEEN

DISSOLUTION

(a) The National President shall, should the need arise, convene, in consultation with the National Executive Committee, an emergency National Congress which shall vote on the matter.

(b) In the event of any assets left after the dissolution, the National Executive Committee shall be empowered to distribute such assets to any Black Organisation/s it deems fit.

INTERPRETATION OF CLAUSES

1. Unless inconsistent with the context, **BLACK** shall be interpreted as those who are by law or tradition, politically, economically, and socially discriminated against as a group in

the South African society, and identifying themselves as a unit in the struggle towards the realisation of their aspirations.

2. Unless inconsistent with the context, words importing masculine gender shall also denote feminine gender.
3. Unless inconsistent with the context, **CONVENTION** shall mean the BLACK PEOPLE'S CONVENTION.
4. Unless inconsistent with the context, **EXECUTIVE** shall mean the NATIONAL EXECUTIVE of the CONVENTION.
5. Unless inconsistent with the context, **RESIDENT** shall mean any Black person who has intentionally decided to reside in South Africa permanently.
6. Unless inconsistent with the context, **WHITE GOVERNMENT** shall mean the White government of South Africa.
7. Unless inconsistent with the context, **BLACK COMMUNALISM** shall mean the philosophy of sharing that is characteristic of the Black People throughout the world.
8. Unless inconsistent with the context, the **NATIONAL PRESIDENT** shall be the National President of the BLACK PEOPLE'S CONVENTION.
9. Unless inconsistent with the context, the **MOVEMENT** shall mean BPC.
10. In the event of any dispute and/or disagreement arising as to the meaning or interpretation of any section, sub-clause, word or words of this constitution, the final arbitrator shall be the National Congress.
11. Unless inconsistent with the context, word **ONLY** in the preamble of the constitution shall be understood to be qualifying political movements.
12. Unless inconsistent with the context, **REGION** shall mean at least three branches in the same geographic contiguity.



ON GOVERNMENT CREATED PLATFORMS

The Black People's Convention, as a political movement working for the Black People in the country recognises Government created platforms e.g. Bantustans, Coloured Representatives Council and South African Indian Council, for what they really are namely:

1. White racists of this country, and white racists alone are the sole architects of these platforms.
2. They are created for the express purpose of diverting the energy of the Black people from the true struggle for liberation to racialist, tribalist and generally divisive political undertaking which at best keep the real and true goal of total liberation out of immediate sight and attention by Black people and at worst serve to bolster the white racist regime of those who created them.
3. They are a built-in safety valve in the balloon of Black frustration through which the steam is let out so that the balloon should not explode in the face of the oppressor.
4. They are designed to cheat the Black man into participating in his own oppression because of built-in safeguards that make it impossible for any Black person using them to liberate himself.
5. The creation of these separate development platforms is aimed to hoodwink the international community into accepting the racist policy of the white regime as a sincere programme designed in the interest of the Black people and any participation in these platforms by Blacks can only give credibility to the fraudulence, to the detriment of the Black People.
6. They are designed such that those Black people who participate in them are the ones who soil their hands by doing the dirty work designed and planned by white racists.

It is against this background that BPC

1. rejects government created platforms,
2. has opted to operate as a political movement outside the framework of these institutions.

3. Believes:

- a) that Blacks have an inalienable right to determine their destiny,
- b) in this solidarity of all Black people irrespective of ethnic origin prescribed residential areas or religious affiliation, It is in this solidarity that our power as oppressed people lies.
- c) the whole of Azania is the homeland of all its inhabitants and that no group has a right to partition our country to suit their own motives.
- d) in a Unity State in which all inhabitants of Azania form one unit one nation whose affairs shall be run by the government which must be representative of the people of Azania.



V

THE BPC ECONOMIC POLICY

The BPC have a **THIRTY POINT PLAN OF HOW THE Economic Policy** would be implemented in a liberated Azania.

- Land being a God-given gift to the people comprising a nation, should be owned by all the people, with the state being entrusted with its control.
- All industry which involves direct exploitation of land, such as mining, forestry, should be owned by the state.
- Family units should be allocated land for dwelling purposes.
- Such plots allocated to family units could neither be bequeathed, or otherwise disposed of without prior consultation with the state, provided the state would consistently protect the interests of the family units concerned, and their future generations.
- Land allocated for private agriculture, commerce and in-

dustry should be rented from the state by the persons or concerns involved.

- Organised societies and religious groups, such as sports and church groups should be allocated land according to their reasonable needs and should be required to rent such land from the state.
- All agricultural activity should centre around the formations of co-operatives which would be entrusted with the responsibility of spearheading agriculture in consultation with the agriculture department.
- Rural life should be re-organised so that more economically manageable villages could be established and basic essential services could be made available to the villages and in turn the People's agricultural activity could be jointly organised.
- It should be the duty of the state to assist such villages and co-operatives in marketing their agricultural products for both internal and external consumption.
- The state should play a leading role in the planning and development of commerce and industry.
- Industries whose products are of strategic importance to the nation should be owned by the state. These would include factories, manufacturing arms and armaments.
- Industries that are of vital importance to the economy of the nation such as major corporations and major finance institutions, should be owned by the state.
- Community initiation and ownership of industry should be encouraged where they can be easily and productively organised.
- Privately owned industry and commercial undertakings should be allowed without state assistance and within the framework drawn up by the state department responsible for commerce, industry and trade.
- The level of foreign participation in industry and commerce should be kept to a minimum, as defined by the department responsible for commerce, industry and trade.
- Salaries paid by employers to their employees in private

industry and commerce, as well as in co-operatives, community and state-owned enterprises, should be carefully supervised by the state—to lay down specific minima for specific jobs.

- In all cases, the state should protect the interests of workers against exploitation and unsatisfactory working conditions.
- Trade unions of workers within certain crafts should be encouraged and recognised, and should enjoy a particularly privileged position with the department controlling labour.
- Wages and salaries assessments should be periodically reviewed by a special tribunal consisting of representatives of trade unions and the department controlling labour.
- Village stores should be owned by the communities they are intended to serve.
- Organisation of small-time commerce, such as drapery and grocery stores should rest in the hands of district commercial councils, operating on behalf of specific geographic communities in consultation with the department controlling commerce.
- Such commercial councils should seek to generate profits for the development of the communities they serve.
- The state should on its own, participate in financial institutions, ~~in competition with~~ private enterprise through the formation of a national financial corporation which would run a national bank with branches and an insurance house with branches.
- The state financial institutions should operate a developmental loan policy for the assistance of co-operatives, community and individual enterprises provided that there would be a differential interest charge for private and community enterprise.
- The state through its department controlling commerce and industry, should at all times restrict importation of goods only to those categories and levels that are essential for a complete existence and should encourage local production of goods which could be sustained from natural re-

sources and industry within the country.

- The state should also operate its own importation programme through a national corporation, in competition with privately owned import houses, so that imported goods could reach the people at minimal and acceptable prices.
- The state should control marketing of local produce and goods intended for both internal and external marketing, so that such produce and goods could be available for internal consumption at minimal prices and external goods at advantageous prices.
- All public transport should be "controlled" by the department responsible for transport such as that the state, through its various organs should participate fully in intra and intertown, interprovincial as well as national and international transport.
- There should be no provision for private ownership of public transportation for anything beyond intra-provincial transportation, except by special licence, provided that all railways, harbours and airway transportation should be owned completely by the state.
- The state should allow fair competition between privately-owned and state-owned mass-media enterprises, except that all radio and television stations should be owned either wholly or jointly by either the state or the communities, and provided that all postal and telegraphic services should be in the hands of the state.



VI

RELATIONS: NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL

The Black people's Convention, being a movement working for the National Liberation in South Africa, has the following as its policy of relations:

NATIONAL

1. The movement shall maintain positive relations with all those national organisations, be they political, cultural, religious, student, youth or other-wise that subscribe to the goal of liberation as defined and understood by the movement. Relations with these organisations by BPC shall be at the level of consultation and collaboration on matters of common concern taking on invitation in their occasions or projects, helping them wherever asked by them to do so if this is possible, co-operation with them for the purpose of developing the struggle for National liberation.
2. The movement shall also maintain positive relations with all those groups who by their nature cannot be national but who nevertheless support the liberation Struggle. The relations with these groups will be at the same level as for national organisations referred to above.
3. Furthermore BPC shall maintain positive informal relations with those national groups that operate outside the framework of the apartheid policy. Relations with these groups will be on the basis of expounding the message of the struggle for liberation and its relevance to the liberation of the Black people in this country. For this purpose their open meetings, conferences and projects shall be the movement's point of focus. In this way the movement will be able to keep in touch with the membership of these groups from whom it must gain not only membership but also general support.
4. Relations with other organisations, national and international are a sole prerogative of the National Executive.
5. The movement shall relate with whatever organisations it deems fit, to relay the true feelings of Blacks in their country to the outside world.
6. The movement notes the historical presence of other political movements and recognise their right of existence while maintaining solidarity relationships with them.
7. This policy on relations is designed to enable the movement to have that broad base that is so essential in a movement to have, that purpose to work for the liberation of any people. At the same time it is designed to maintain a sufficiently clear stance about the whole white racist system.

TOWARDS A FREE AZANIA — PROJECTION: FUTURE STATE

We Black people of Azania, under the guidance and leadership of the Black People's Convention, recognise the need to radically change the Azania society to be in keeping with the wishes, aspirations, hopes, interests, ideas and ideals of the majority of the people of our country.

We therefore are striving and working towards the establishment of a society in which:

1. All sane adult persons who are citizens of our country are accorded the Franchise irrespective of colour, race, religion, status in life or any other consideration.
2. All sane adult persons participate in the making of the laws under which they live through our people's National Assembly which shall be a body constituted of duly elected representatives of our people.
3. All people shall be equal in the eyes of the law irrespective of colour, religion, status in life or any other such consideration.
4. All citizens of our country form a united nation irrespective of ethnic origin, language differences, skin colour or any other such consideration.
5. All citizens shall be protected ^{how?} each from exploitation by other. Kag

LAND

6. Ownership of the land, sea and air space shall be vested in the state.
7. All citizens with reasonable need for land on which to have a home shall be allocated proportionate land for this purpose.
8. Distribution of land to organised groups be it for sporting, religions, farming, industrial, trading, commercial or any other such purposes shall be done in accordance with a central National Plan.



EDUCATION

9. Education is an instrument of national unity.
10. Education is geared towards raising the cultural social, economic and intellectual level of all citizens.
11. The general content of education is geared towards the promotion of self reliance, a high level of critical awareness, understanding the community and its problems, a sense of positive self-identity.
12. Education is geared towards the destruction of imperialist, racialist, tribalist, sectionalist, colonialist and neo-colonialist notions.
13. Emphasis in general education shall be in the following areas:
 - i) With respect to languages, there should be one international language and one national vernacular language which shall be selected by the people's Political structure.
 - ii) Environment studies touching on Geography, History, Economics, Political and Constitutional structures mainly of our country, but also as compared with States in Africa and others throughout the world.
 - iii) Humanities shall include social anthropology, sociology, and elementary community development.
 - iv) Basic science shall include arithmetic, mathematics, elementary physics and chemistry comparative economic systems.
14. A programme of rapid elimination of illiteracy shall be designed and implemented.
15. Elementary education shall be free and compulsory for all citizens.
16. Specialization in education is introduced at the minimum effective level.
17. All teachers in all standards shall be specially trained to specialise in the various fields specified above.

RELIGION

18. There shall be religious freedom, but control shall have to be exercised over the proliferation of different churches, for this purpose a credential council shall be set up. All ministers of religion shall be civil servants, paid by the state directly.

HUMAN RIGHTS

19. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations shall be observed and respected.
20. Our Country shall be aligned neither to the West nor the East but shall see itself as part of the Third World.

HEALTH

21. Health services are the primary responsibility of the State.
22. Professional medical Councils shall be recognised and the standards set by these upheld in the rendering of medical services; all medical and para-medical personnel shall be civil servants.

DEFENCE

23. Every sane and healthy adult person shall form part of an effective national defence force;
24. There shall be no use of national territory by foreign forces;
25. Peaceful collaboration with all nations of the world on the basis of principles of mutual respect, national sovereignty, territorial integrity, non-aggression and non-interference in domestic affairs, equality and reciprocity of advantages, peaceful co-existence;
26. Development of economic and cultural relations with all nations whose governments respect the principles mentioned in 25 above;

SOCIAL WELFARE

27. The welfare of the handicapped shall be the primary responsibility of the state;
28. National social welfare shall cover care for the following categories for which there shall be state-aided societies and institutes, crippled deaf and dumb, mentally retarded,

blind, aged, orphans, people with certain specific diseases and any other deserving categories;

29. Special emphasis shall be laid on the development of whole communities especially in cases of disasters like floods, fires, drought, famine, earthquakes and epidemics;
30. People under conditions of social aberration like alcoholism, drug addiction and habitual prostitution shall be taken care of and be rehabilitated through the state machinery;
31. All economically active citizens shall contribute to the welfare of the handicapped;
32. A social Welfare Council sets out standards for the rendering of social welfare service and help in shaping of social welfare policy;

FARMING

33. Farming shall be practised in a collective communal way rather than an individual way;
34. For purpose of 33 above, rural communities are re-organised such that the total land available for farming is distributed equally and evenly among them.
35. Farming shall be aimed at raising and maintaining a high level of produce for purpose of self sufficiency;

INDUSTRY, TRADE, COMMERCE

36. Monopoly in industry, trade and commerce shall not be allowed to play any role in our economy;
37. The principles of socialism are institutionalised into industry, trade and commerce;

LAW

38. All citizens shall have the right to fair trial and access to legal defence and to this end the state shall:
 - i) set up legal advice bureaus with qualified lawyers who will interpret all legal matters to every citizen requesting this;
 - ii) lawyers shall be employed as civil servants to afford all citizens equal opportunity of good legal representation.