

COSATU plans Charter

WORKERS around South Africa have started talking about a Workers' Charter.

A Workers' Charter - like the Freedom Charter - will spell out what rights and changes workers would like to see in a future South Africa.

Workers in South Africa are the main producers of the country's wealth but are denied political and social rights.

The Freedom Charter was drawn up by thousands of South Africans and endorsed at the Congress of the People in 1955.

Not only does the Freedom Charter call for national emancipation, but also that the mineral wealth, banks and monopoly industry be transferred to the ownership of the people.

In July 1987 COSATU adopted the Freedom Charter as a guiding document at its Second National Congress. As the Congress resolution said it "reflects the views and aspirations of the majority of the oppressed and exploited in our struggle against national oppression and economic exploitation".

This year the Third National COSATU Congress took a decision to launch a campaign on a Workers' Charter which would set out the specific demands of the workers which would have to be met in a post apartheid society.

The Workers Charter will go hand in hand with the Freedom Charter. It was decided that there would be a long and extensive process of consultation and discussion - similar to that of the Freedom Charter.

The process will not only involve COSATU members but also other unions, unorganised workers, the unemployed as well as other sectors of the oppressed people of our country.

The process will end in a special Workers Charter Congress at which the Workers' Charter will be finally drafted and endorsed.



A Workers' Charter will spell out the rights workers don't have now

The COSATU resolution also noted the ANC Constitutional Guidelines provides for the incorporation of a Workers' Charter in the Constitution of a post-apartheid South Africa.

It said the Workers' Charter must be a product of through debates, discussions and consultations involving the entire toiling mass of our country.

A Workers' Charter will be rooted in the special experiences, problems and hopes of workers and in a sense feed into the Freedom Charter. Other sectors such as education and health are developing their own charters.

There are already draft Workers Charters circulating among workers for discussion and criticism.

The South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) has prepared a draft version of a possible Workers' Charter, and so has the South African Communist Party (SACP).

It is important that workers start discussing demands to be included in the final version.

Talking about a Workers' Charter

SOME of the main issues up for discussion in two draft Workers' Charters drawn up by the SACP and SACTU are:

Ownership and control of the economy

- Giant corporations should be placed under the control of the state
- Workers will participate in the planning and running of enterprises through their trade unions and at the workplace
- Economic policy will try and create the wealth needed to bring about a more equal distribution
- Steps will be taken to do away with white monopoly of ownership and control
- All enterprises, state owned or private, must guard the interests of workers and the country and the state will intervene where they do not look after people's basic needs
- After apartheid is defeated working class organisations will work together towards the creation of a democratic socialist country

Full political rights:

- All workers should have a vote
- All workers should have greater control over the wealth they produce
- All workers shall participate fully in all decisions that affect their lives both at home and work through political, trade union and community structures

Right to work

- Every adult has a right and a duty to work
- The new state should work to

create jobs for all

- There should be equal access to jobs and no-one should be discriminated against on the basis of race or sex
- All workers will be paid a living wage
- There should be a national minimum wage
- Child labour will be prohibited
- Special attention will be paid to sorting out the problems of domestic workers and farm workers

The right to organisation and struggle

- There should be no restrictions on the rights of workers to organise into political parties or trade unions
- Trade unions should be independent from political parties and the state
- Trade unions should take part in economic planning
- Workers should have the right to negotiate and strike
- All labour laws must be consulted with trade unions

The right to media access

- Steps should be taken to break the monopoly of the media by big business and ensure worker access

The right to family life and social facilities

- All laws which stop families living together will be abolished
- Migrant labour will be phased out and ended
- The state will build houses or flats and schools for workers and their families close to where workers work
- All enterprises will help cre-

ate places of recreation, creches and health clinics

- No one, male or female, will lose their job or not be able to get a job because they have children

Freedom of movement, assembly and speech

- Pass laws will be abolished
- A free South Africa will uphold ILO Conventions on worker rights

Training and education

- Trade unions will raise the political and cultural understanding of workers
- Workers should be taught new skills
- Illiteracy should be abolished

The right to health and safety

- Conditions of work will not threaten the health and safety of the workforce or community or create pollution
- All workers shall have the right to paid annual leave and paid sick leave
- Those injured at work will receive proper compensation for themselves and families
- Disabled workers will be re-trained for other jobs

The right to security in old age

- All workers will get a proper pension

The rights of women workers

- The state will integrate all women workers as full and equal participants in the economy. All forms of discrimination against women workers will be prohibited.
- Positive steps will be taken to correct discrimination

Lucky is waiting on death row

ALTHOUGH Comrade Lucky Valford Nomnganga was granted leave to appeal, his appeal failed. Comrade Lucky is waiting to be legally murdered on death row.

As in Comrade Mgedezi's case, the NUM is prepared to spare nothing in order to save Comrade Lucky's life.

The union is preparing petitions where all concerned comrades can sign, and these petitions will be handed over to the State President. This will be a way of showing the government that we value Comrade Lucky's life and it should be spared.

Comrade Lucky was a Secretary of the Shaft Steward's Com-

mittee at the No.6 Shaft in Western Holdings.

On the 28th November 1988 he was sentenced to death on two charges of murder. The focal point of the case were the events of 5 June 1987 in which two mine officials were killed

Mine security officials have still now not been brought to trial for the six mineworkers that they shot dead on that same day.

No evidence was led which indicated that Lucky had inflicted any wounds to the deceased.

On the basis of "common purpose" - he was there and in the crowd - the wounds were attributed to him.