

in the rural areas. It is these people who are increasingly faced with barbaric forced removals to bantustans and an increased police and military presence. To be effective and truly national, the UDF must try to include these farflung communities and thereby extend our base. Already we have made some gains. The period ahead calls for an intensification of this.

Our future work is going to be crucially affected by the manner and extent to which we address the Koornhof strategy. The continued denial of Section 10 rights to Africans, the removals and relocations and the incorporation of areas into the bantustans are all part of a strategy designed to force Africans into bantustans. Our people in Magopa, Driefontein, Crossroads, KTC, Lamontville and Rambanathi are under the threat of either being removed or of having their areas incorporated into these backyards of Apartheid. In addition, those who cannot acquire Section 10 rights, are forced to the bantustans to starve there.

On the other side of the resettlement/relocation coin is Koornhof's attempt to co-opt a select few through the Black Local Authorities. Yet already we have made substantial gains here: we have successfully mobilized for a boycott; we have created informal organizational structures; we have created organizations opposed to those government created institutions, and we have discredited the Black Local Authorities.

But, we must recognize too, that the Black Local Authorities are a reality. They are being implemented and they will affect the daily lives of our people. What is the next phase of our campaign? Are we going to relax now that we have organized an effective boycott? Or are we going to find new ways to frustrate the Koornhof Bills, and in doing so, develop a coherent strategy against these bills.

Even though we understand the UDF to be a broad front, we must recognize that it is not nearly broad enough. There are many organizations which remain outside our front, organizations which have not been part of the mainstream of the democratic movement over the last few years.

We cannot accept this situation as it is these organizations who will become the targets of co-optation. Our task is to bring them into our fold.

At the same time, this expansion must not happen at the expense of our organizations. The previously mentioned tasks relating to democracy and the building of organizations must be made concrete.

This is the scenario of the next few months. We see the UDF fulfilling these tasks by applying itself to the issues which will dominate discussion at this conference: namely, our response to the referendum/elections, the signature campaign and our campaign against conscription. Unfortunately we will not have time to deal with the question of removals and resettlement, but they must be built into our campaign.

For these reasons, the decisions which we take will be crucial to the future of our work. These decisions must above all, build both the unity of our people, and of our front.

UDF TRANSVAAL SECRETARIAL REPORT TO THE ANNUAL GENERAL
MEETING HELD ON 9 MARCH 1985

Rev "125"

1. INTRODUCTION

The task of compiling a secretarial report which covers the first twenty-two months of the Transvaal Region of the United Democratic Front is a mammoth one. The UDF's rapid growth and its extraordinary dynamism is difficult to capture in a report of this nature. An added difficulty is the absence of all our records which have been confiscated by the security police.

Of the volumes that can be written about the UDF (TVL), we present a modest attempt at reporting on the activities of the Front in this region to date. Many events of the Front are not mentioned here, for such events of the Front are too numerous to mention in a short report.

This report is in four sections. First we will deal with the situation prior to the formation of the Front, then our response, this will be followed by an evaluation of the present situation, and we shall end with pointers to the way forward.

2. SITUATION PRIOR TO THE FORMATION OF UDF

During the period between 1977 and 1983, there was a countrywide wave amongst progressive people towards grassroots organisational work. Although a large number of organisations emerged, these were isolated and sparsely distributed. Political campaigns were either localised or of an ad hoc nature, for example, Anti-Republic Day Campaign and the Anti-Saic Campaign.

The political and economic crisis facing the Apartheid State was ever deepening. By 1982 the state had to undertake definite steps towards resolving the crisis. Amongst these steps was the adoption of the so-called Reform Strategy which in the main involved the Koornhof Bills and the Constitution Act. With this devious scheme the regime aimed at: dividing the cherished unity of the oppressed; co-opting sections of the coloured, Indian and African communities, and thereby broadening its reactionary base; isolating the working class by luring the oppressed middle classes and finally, creating the impression of reform abroad.

P W Botha and the new "enlightened" Nationalist Party emerged as the great Afrikaners who would resolve the crisis. The white public and the Western Nations were convinced of this - The bold, confident Botha was on the march. His political moves served to confuse the ranks of the PFP, and he confidently allowed the ultra-right verkramptes to be alienated. He became the darling of big business. This campaign climaxed with the Eshowe Conference (held on 4 January 1983) - for a moment it seemed as if this grand trick would work.

In November 1983, the white referendum was conducted. On the eve of the referendum the first major provincial rally was held as part of the National Campaign against the fraudulent constitution.

On the international scene, the regimes Western allies were on the offensive against solidarity groups, claiming that there were signs of change in South Africa. At the same time the US was stepping up "constructive engagement" with this illegitimate state. The South African question was slipping from the agenda of International Human Rights Organisations.

3. OUR RESPONSE - THE IDEA OF A FRONT

It became clear that only a United Front of all the people of our land would be able to effectively counter this onslaught. This United Front Against Apartheid would: unite our people across racial lines; unite democrats across class boundaries; co-ordinate resistance to the reform strategy at a local, regional and national level; link the struggles of the urban centres to those of country-towns and rural areas; counter the state propaganda both at home and abroad; unite groups and organisations with different ideological leanings and ignite the fires of resistance in every corner of the country.

The conference of the Transvaal Anti-SAIC Committee provided the opportune moment to issue the call for united action. In the Transvaal an interim committee was formed to begin the ground work and in May 1984, the Transvaal UDF was launched with a General Council and a consultative committee for the purposes of co-ordination. The region was not fully constituted and structures were not finalised, for every attempt was being made to draw in as wide a range of progressive organisations as possible, into the Front. A concerted attempt was even made to persuade Azapo to affiliate. In most quarters the idea of the UDF was received with excitement and enthusiasm. In July 1983 the first Transvaal Regional Executive Committee was elected. Comrade Albertina Sisulu, who was in detention at the time, was elected as President.

On 20 August 1983, six hundred people from the Transvaal attended the National launch of the UDF, either as delegates or as observers. The historic launch had an electrifying effect on organisations and individuals throughout the country, and the Transvaal was no exception.

On returning from Cape Town, the region plunged into the first major campaign of the UDF - the Anti-Black Local Authorities Campaign. The Programme of Action of this campaign included; the formation and strengthening of local organisations like the SCA, VCA, etc. It also included door-to-door work, workshops, propaganda and mass-meetings. By December 1983, through our campaign, we displayed that the new Black Local Authorities were as unpopular as the hated Community Councils. The campaign also laid a firm basis for the eventual dismantling of the Black Local Authorities in most townships. Through this campaign the UDF was introduced at a mass level in almost all the townships. We failed, however, to link the campaign to issues in the coloured and Indian areas.

By this stage, a number of important new organisations were formed, and affiliated to the Front. Amongst them are the VCA, SOYCO, AYCO, TIC and the Anti-PC Committee.

In November 1983, the white referendum was conducted. On the eve of the referendum the first major provincial rally was held as part of the National Campaign against the fraudulent constitution.

In this period, the 'Solidarity with the People of Ciskei Campaign' was undertaken jointly with affiliated and non-affiliated trade unions like CCAWUSA and MAWU. The solidarity campaign was in response to the events surrounding the uprisings and brutal repression in Mdantsane.

We ended 1983 at the National General Council held in P.E. The Conference dealt almost solely with the infamous debate surrounding the coloured and Indian referendum. The Transvaal delegation went ill prepared to the Conference and the resulting difference on the issue led to bitter conflicts and divisions which haunted the Transvaal UDF for many months thereafter.

In February 1984 the Million Signature Campaign was launched at a rally in Soshanguve. Amongst the aims of the campaign was to: consolidate the mobilisation during the Anti-BLA Campaign; to intensify grassroots work by entering into one-to-one discussions with people in the streets and in their homes; to display to the regime, the world and our people that the UDF has a large number of supporters. The campaign stretched on for much longer than initially planned. In the Transvaal, about 60 000 signatures were collected, rather than the targeted 250 000. The campaign was hampered by state harassment and counter propaganda. However, the campaign assisted greatly towards advancing the aims of the Front. Firstly, it provided a means for active involvement of a large number of people who had not previously participated in the activities of the Front. Secondly, it acted as a unifying campaign in the sense that it was conducted in all constituencies and amongst all the affiliates throughout the country. Thirdly the campaign introduced the UDF and its policies to hundreds of thousands of people at a personal level - perhaps herein lay the greatest value of the campaign. And, lastly, the propaganda generated by the campaign served to counter state propaganda. Thus, what on the surface appeared to be a harmless collection of signatures was in fact a campaign which engaged the state on terms and at a pace dictated by us. This campaign was not a reaction to a state initiative but rather forced the state to react to us on our terrain.

The P.E. Conference decided that a campaign against conscription should be launched. However, this issue was not addressed as a campaign, apart from it being linked to the Anti-Constitution Campaign by the TIC and Anti-PC Committee. This was because most organisations outside of the white community did not regard this as an immediate issue.

No report can be complete without mentioning the only major fund-raising activity we engaged in - the highly successful People's Festival was held in March last year.

By mid year the Anti-Constitution Campaign had taken root, particularly in the Indian and coloured communities. Intensive door-to-door work was being conducted in these areas. This campaign was also being conducted by the youth organisations, women's organisations, trade unions and organisations in the African townships. The momentous victory that followed, once and for all shattered the false image created by P W Botha.

The first large scale detentions of leading UDF activists was on the eve of the August elections. Despite the repression suffered by UDF, affiliates intensified the struggle against the racist regime. The Vaal Civic Association embarked upon a rents boycott which is historically unprecedented. Neither the occupation of the townships by the SADF, nor the detention of every politically active person, nor the many deaths in the streets could quell the militancy of the people.

On the education front, COSAS had continued to draw in more and more schools into the battle for SRC's and relevant education.

All of these events culminated in the highly successful two day stay-away in November. The stayaway united trade unions and UDF affiliates in action.

Because of the repression against UDF, the slogan "Long Live UDF, Ban Apartheid" was adopted by the NEC. It was decided that a pro-UDF Campaign around this slogan be conducted.

The year was closed with the Black Christmas Campaign, a campaign which was used to take stock of the events of the past months and to generate solidarity with those who suffered because of the uprisings.

We debated Edward Kennedy's visit early this year, and thereafter began work for the Peace Prize Celebration. The celebration was very significant in that it brought the UDF new allies. Its significance also lies in the fact that it was the biggest UDF function ever held in Soweto.

On 19 February 1985, scores of homes and offices were raided by the security police and a further eight people were detained for high treason. The state is continuing in its attempts to disorganise the UDF and at the same time marginalise it by alienating the Front and its leadership from the masses. Fortunately we were much better prepared this time than we were in August last year - our operations have continued smoothly.

4. THE PRESENT SITUATION

At the organisational level the Front has grown to become very strong. Today there are organisations in many, many more areas than had existed prior to the formation of the UDF. There is also a new sense of militancy amongst the people. They are displaying a preparedness to fight the Apartheid system regardless of the cost. However, many organisations in the Front do not have strong and sophisticated organisational networks and yet many others do not have a developed layer of activists.

By effectively mobilising against the Black Local Authorities and the Tri-Cameral parliament, we have broken the back of the state's so-called reform strategy. At the same time, with the intensification of the struggle and the deepening economic recession, the state has little hope of resolving the crisis it faces. The state is no longer forging ahead confidently, nor is its strategy as clearly worked-out as it once was.

On the international front, the balance of forces has definitely swung into our favour. The South African question is once again high up on the agenda. As a Front, we are also in dynamic interaction with support groups and other organisations throughout the world.

5. THE WAY FORWARD

A programme of action for the UDF has begun to take shape in the following issues and campaigns: the Anti-repression and Release our Leaders Campaign, the cost of living issue, the Anti-Conscription Campaign, the Anti-Forced Removals Campaign, the development of organisation in rural areas and the Campaign to bring the Black Local Authorities, the Tri-cameral Parliament and the Bantustan Governments to a halt.

We go forward confidently with the knowledge that not many more of our AGM's will be held under Apartheid rule.

- 7 -
1983-08-20

UNITED DEMOCRATIC FRONT CONFERENCE

PEAKERS

ERGIL BONHOMME

LEN LAMBERT

EV. XUNDU

D. NAIDOO

AHLANGU

OPO MOLEFE

AUL DAVID (Acc. No. 8)

R. MARKS

RANK CHIKANE (Acc. No. 10)

EWA RAMGOBIN (Acc. No. 1)

R. KHAN

R. MOTLANA

ERROR LEKOTA

JURTIS NKONDO (Acc. No. 6)

ADDY KEARNEY

MAM SOLOMONS

J. NAIDOO (Acc. No. 3)

US LANGA

IMPORTANT ORGANISATIONS, PEOPLE AND OCCASIONS MENTIONED

ACTU (8, 87)

A.N.C. (24, 37)

EVOLUTION (8)

1955 PEOPLES CONFERENCE (24)

FREEDOM CHARTER (24, 64, 68)

UNITY IN ACTION (26, 43)

AMBO (39, 49, 68)

WAPO (61)

MANDELA (68, 86, 96)

UTHULI (68, 96)

R. MARKS (68)

ATHFADA (68, 86)

PEOPLES LIBERATION MOVEMENT (72)

JOINTY NAICKER (86)

JENNIS GOLDBERG (86)

JOVAN MBEKI (86)

RAYMOND MHLABA (86)

WALTER SISULU (86)

BUYISILI MINI (87)

MOBILIZE (94)(43)

POPULARIZE (94)

ATHREWS (96)

"ELUTHI SIBAKHUKHELE KAHLE ABANTU ESIBAQHASHILESO" (LET'S PAY BETTER OUR EMPLOYEES).

Because even among us, you find people who have been blessed with wealth, who pay poorly, if least discount, or there should be a conscious, a conscious decision here, among the members here to relieve the cost of living in order that each, even those of us who are blessed to be having business, to be in professional business, should be able to relieve the costs of living by paying at least, a good wage, to those who work under them. (Applause).

I therefore say therefore that eh the whole issue of the, eh ra, of the, of the, of the, of the costs of living is a farce and a programmes and ways and means can be found of how best to distribute the wealth of this country, such that, everybody benefits and benefits well.

Thank you very much.

(Clapping).

210. CHAIRMAN : Thank you, REV. XUNDU.

MR. R.D. NAIDOO.

MR. R.D. NAIDOO.

Western area and Natal. Mr. Chairman, if we look at the history of the working class - struggle, in this country, right from the early days, we found that the workers participated in the struggles for only one thing.

For decent living and decent living conditions so that they may enjoy the full spell of life in this country. Unfortunately in our country, starting right back from the 1938 to now, and I was involved in the Trade-Unions Movement.

We were unable to organise the unorganised workers in this country. Primarily for the reason the Pass Laws were ba, a great obstacle in bringing about unity in the ranks of the working-class. As time

went on, we found that the workers despite the many many difficulties, were able to rally around the banners of their own Trade Unions and conducted illegal strikes according to the pa, Laws of the Land. Right up to the time of the 1955, when the SOUTH AFRICAN CONGRESS OF TRADE UNIONS came out very clearly under the banner of the AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS, where able to give a direct lead a direct lead to the working class and point out. (Applause).

And pointed out to the working class of South Africa that do not unite now, we will lose our every Birth-right in this country and we will use, even lose, our Trade-Unions rights. The Government of this country foresaw there is a raising tension, that is coming against the White united front, the white united front, so therefore, they introduced the WIEHAN and the RIECKETT-COMMISSION to bring about some laws, where the Black Trade Unions can now organise themselves. What did these

WIEHAN and RIECKETT COMMISSION meant to the working class, a further division in the ranks of the working class as are, as a result, the militant SACTU was banned, and all of us went to lick our wounds, and we went back and we re-assessed our situation and we realised now that our struggle lies, everyone of you, are present here, must
240. realise now that our struggle lies in the hands of the working class. (Applause).

MAMA ZSHLANGU.

As long as

(The speech is in XHOSA and interpreted to ENGLISH!)

As long as we the working class will man the machinery, who handles the tools, we are going to lie low.

And going to wait for something to fall from heaven, then I am sorry to say, the fascist machinery will come into oppression.

243. They will destroy the entire Trade Union structure to the machinery that the Government has now created, and we need support from the opportunists in our ranks.

250. Therefore comrades to now say, time has come, the revolution is now beginning under the banner of the UNITED FRONT.

274 (Shouting, whistling and clapping).

We the working class, we the working class, wherever you are, whether you are domestic servants or a mine worker, white collar worker, must now rally our organisation and march behind the UNITED DEMOCRATIC FRONT, and work for the system where the exploitation of man by man will be done away with and (shouting, whistling and clapping).

And we must, and we must relentlessly work until the means of production is in the hands of the working class.

(Shouting, whistling, screaming and using the slogan of) "AMANDLA - NGAWETHU, AMANDLA - NGAWETHU, NGAWETHU".

CHAIRMAN :

Thank you, thank you very much, R.D.

We ask for a further contribution and I am sure everybody else will be in the shade now.

(Applause).

MAMA ZSHLANGU.

(The speech is in XHOSA and interpreted to ENGLISH:

NDIYANIBULISA NAM KULENJIKALANGA

INT.

268. I greet you all this afternoon.

NDIZAWUTHETHA PHANTSI KWALAMAXABISO OHYUKILEYO NAM NDIVA NDIVUKELWE.

INT.

I'll also speak on behalf of these fact, of high cost of living.

274. SONG IN ZULU. (9(a)).

Collection Number: AK2117

Collection Name: Delmas Treason Trial, 1985-1989

PUBLISHER:

Publisher: Historical Papers Research Archive, University of the Witwatersrand

Location: Johannesburg

©2016

LEGAL NOTICES:

Copyright Notice: All materials on the Historical Papers website are protected by South African copyright law and may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, displayed, or otherwise published in any format, without the prior written permission of the copyright owner.

Disclaimer and Terms of Use: Provided that you maintain all copyright and other notices contained therein, you may download material (one machine readable copy and one print copy per page) for your personal and/or educational non-commercial use only.

People using these records relating to the archives of Historical Papers, The Library, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, are reminded that such records sometimes contain material which is uncorroborated, inaccurate, distorted or untrue. While these digital records are true facsimiles of paper documents and the information contained herein is obtained from sources believed to be accurate and reliable, Historical Papers, University of the Witwatersrand has not independently verified their content. Consequently, the University is not responsible for any errors or omissions and excludes any and all liability for any errors in or omissions from the information on the website or any related information on third party websites accessible from this website.

This document forms part of a collection, held at the Historical Papers Research Archive, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa.