

Long live UDF - Ban Apartheid

Interview with the UDF acting national secretary

Q: What repressive measures have been taken against the UDF since its formation?

A: To give a full list of repressive measures meted out against the UDF and its affiliates is a near impossible task. Repression against the UDF has taken a wide variety of forms. On the eve of the UDF launch, anonymous handbills were distributed announcing that the inaugural conference was postponed. Delegates travelling to the Cape Town venue were harassed by police. Police physically prevented an entire bus-load of Bloemfontein delegates from travelling to Cape Town.

At public meetings held by the Front, security policemen are often visibly present outside the hall, photographing and filming those attending the meeting. Large contingents of heavily armed riot policemen are on stand-by.

A large number of handbills slandering the UDF or spreading misinformation about it have been distributed. We believe that these handbills are a part of the state's propaganda (using inter alia the state controlled TV and radio stations) to discredit, defile and disorganise the Front.

Activists in the course of their day to day work are harassed by the police. This takes forms ranging from confiscation of leaflets to detention without trial. In some cases those who signed the UDF declaration (as part of the Million Signature Campaign drive) were subjected to interrogation.

Whilst we have not violated the Internal Security Act, many of our meetings are banned. In October last year a meeting of the National Secretariat (a committee consisting of twelve people) was banned.

The headoffice of the UDF is constantly observed by the security police and on one occasion was raided.



Meeting called by the UDF to protest the army's invasion into Sebokeng

Q: Why do you think the UDF has been subjected to this harassment?

A: The reasons for the intense harassment are twofold:

Firstly to destabilise, and disorganise the Front. The government clearly has attempted to prevent us from campaigning against the sham 'reforms' and exposing the fraud of Botha's new forms of domination.

Secondly, the state attempted and continues in vain to alienate the UDF from the masses by slandering it on the one hand and intimidating its supporters on the other.

Having failed in its attempts, the government detained UDF leadership on the eve of the elections for the tricameral parliament. The Minister of Law and Order has now embarked on a propaganda campaign to associate the UDF with the ANC. They hope in this way to scare away our constituency and justify future repressive action against us.

LONG LIVE UDF



UDF T-shirts, buttons and stickers are worn by thousands - indicating the Front's growing popularity.

Q: What does the UDF think about Minister Le Grange's accusation that the UDF has been trying to create a revolutionary climate over the last two years?

A: The Minister and his government fail to see any difference in destabilising apartheid and destabilising South Africa. We certainly are trying, not only, to destabilise but also to destroy apartheid and all other forms of oppression. We use every possible peaceful means of mobilising our people against oppression. If this constitutes the creation of a revolutionary climate for Mr. Le Grange, then we offer no apologies.

Q: Why do you think Le Grange has launched this attack on the UDF at this time?

A: Having failed miserably to pull the wool over the eyes of the coloured and Indian communities; to divide the coloured and Indian communities from the African majority; to fool the international community into believing that Botha's sham reforms constitute real change; to consolidate and strengthen apartheid; the government now resorts to desperate measures. We now suffer the long-term 'preventative' detention of our leaders and the blanket ban on all political gatherings during September. And the recent utterances of Le Grange indicate that the state is about to unleash even harsher repression.

Q: What is UDF's response to the Minister's accusation that UDF is a front for the ANC?

A: To be a front for the ANC, the UDF would have to act on their instructions and could not simultaneously employ democratic decision making procedures. Although both

the ANC and the UDF are working towards the establishment of a non-racial democracy in South Africa, we follow different strategies to reach that end.

The fact that some of the UDF leadership were members of the ANC prior to its ban, does not make the UDF an ANC front. The notion of the UDF being a front for the ANC is therefore without substance.

Q: What does the UDF think about the accusation that agitators and outsiders have been responsible for events in the Vaal and other areas in the past weeks?

A: Those who claim that 'agitators' and 'outsiders' are responsible for the township uprisings are in fact saying that the people accept years of oppression and suffering at the hands of the white minority.

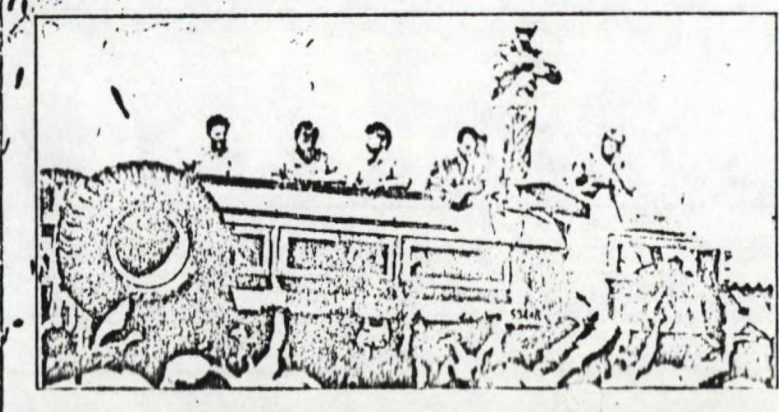
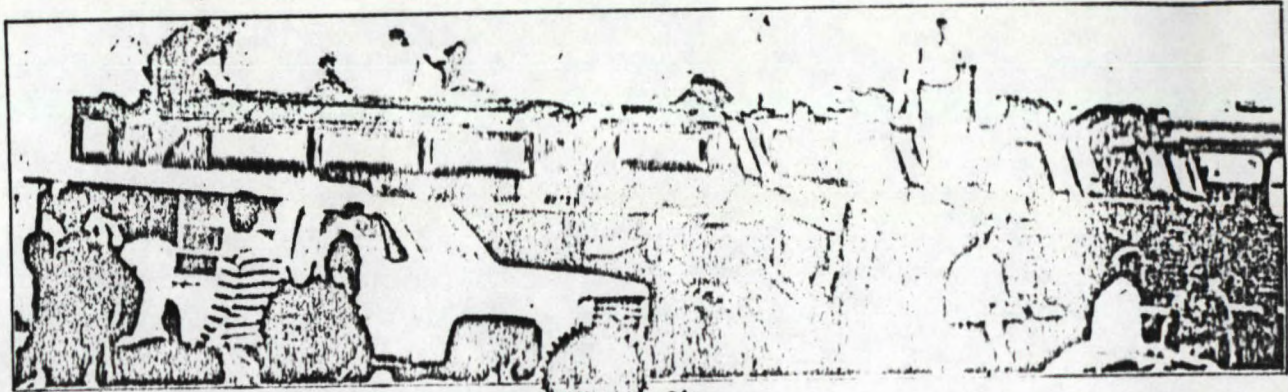
The uprisings took place in almost every urban township. So where did the outsiders come from? The agitator and outsider theory has been formulated in order to distract the world's attention from the real grievances of the people; that of high rents, unequal education, inadequate township facilities and the imposition of dummy councils.

Q: Who do you think is responsible for the violence in the townships over the last few weeks?

A: The violence, injuries and deaths must be placed squarely on the shoulders of the government. In almost every case, a march, strike or any other form of peaceful protest are responded to by teargas, rubber bullets, and sjamboks. It is precisely this kind of response which leads to an angry response of self-defence from the people.

Most important of all, the system which dehumanises people in the name of Christianity is responsible for the violence.

60700



Collection Number: AK2117

DELMAS TREASON TRIAL 1985 - 1989

PUBLISHER:

Publisher: **Historical Papers, University of the Witwatersrand**

Location: **Johannesburg**

©2012

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 the collection records 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 is part of a private collection deposited with Historical Papers at The University of the Witwatersrand.