



**UNITED DEMOCRATIC FRONT**

**P. O. Box 25063  
FERREIRASTOWN  
2048**

25th October 1983

DA 21  
(unsubscribed  
AZ 46)

The Honourable Prime Minister  
The Prime Minister's Office  
Union Buildings  
Pretoria  
0001

Sir,

The United Democratic Front (UDF) wishes to draw your attention to a series of arbitrary bannings of a wide range of its public meetings to discuss your Government's new proposals on the constitution and the "Koornhof Bills".

The Front is an alliance of community, church, political, worker, professional, student, women and youth organisations of democratic and non-racial outlook. A little more than four hundred organisations launched this Front on August 20, 1983 at Mitchell's Plain - Cape Town. Today there are over five hundred and thirty organisations affiliated to it and the number of its affiliates continues to grow by the week. Its importance may be gauged from the fact that on August 20, independent observers estimated the number of people represented by the UDF at 1,5 million. We can safely assert that there are close to two million people now represented in it. This is a significant section of our country's population.

The UDF was launched for the purpose of mobilising and expressing opposition to the implementation of the recently enacted Constitution Act as well as the Black Local Authorities Act, the Orderly Movement and Settlement of Black Persons Bill and the Black Community Development Bill. The so called "new deal" is being imposed without any consultation with the people most intimately involved in its implementation and is opposed also because it entrenches apartheid. Under it the unity of our people will be undermined, the workers of our country will continue to be divided along racial lines, students will continue to suffer under unequal educational opportunities, the religious and cultural life of our people will remain crippled, the oppression and exploitation of women will continue and family life will further deteriorate. In addition recreation and non-racial sport will suffer.

Pf. JAO

And, at a time/...



And, at a time when important debates on the future of our country are being conducted both at home and around the world, we believe that it is a great error on the part of your Government to refuse to heed the voice of all these people who comprise the United Democratic Front. Since the national launch of the UDF in August your Government has banned practically every meeting of the Front as well as those of its affiliates or of other organisations of the people who are opposed to your Apartheid policies.

Your Government has gone to the extent of banning a meeting of the Secretariat of the UDF in Johannesburg. It is pertinent to indicate that this meeting was concerned with purely administrative matters of the UDF. To suggest, as your prohibition order claimed, that "public peace would be seriously endangered" if it went ahead, is as devoid of truth as it is far-fetched.

It is clear therefore that the banning of these meetings is inspired by motives other than the professed maintenance of law and order. And, in the context of growing opposition to your Government's proposals, it is impossible to escape the obvious conclusion that these bannings are calculated to create a false impression both externally and internally - an illusion of acquiescence in and support for apartheid as enshrined in the Constitution Act and related legislation.

We condemn this undemocratic style of government and must remind you that the escalating racial and violent conflict in our country and on its borders with our neighbours is a result of the deeds and misdeeds of successive white governments since the Union Act of 1910. Indeed, this new set of proposals, if implemented, will only exacerbate rather than ameliorate human and race relations in this country.

We appeal to you and your Government to desist from what is clearly a dangerous path of confrontation and conflict upon which you are presently intent. The authoritarian methods of deciding the future of our country such as the whites-only referendum, the banning of public meetings held for discussing it and the suppression of any meaningful opposition to your apartheid grand designs can only land our country and its people in disaster.

We sincerely believe that a speedy and harmonious solution to the country's problems can be found. To this end we call upon your Government not to implement the Constitution Act and not to enact the Koornhof Bills. We urge you to release all political prisoners unconditionally, to lift the bans on those who are silenced and restricted and to recall those who have been forced into exile by the inhuman and racist policies of successive White minority Governments. The chosen leaders of all our country's people can then sit together in an atmosphere free of fear and suspicion to work out a constitution based on the will of the people - a constitution acceptable to all.

As a first step/...

P.P.

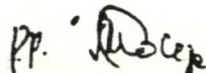


As a first step in this democratic direction we suggest that you refrain from banning public meetings convened by the UDF, its affiliates and other organisations opposed to apartheid. As mature and responsible citizens we have an obligation to participate in the process of shaping the future of our country. It would be irresponsible of us to sit back complacently and entrust such a grave responsibility to one racial group - whether that group be Black or White.

Your Government must heed this voice of reason, respond to the urgency of this moment in our country's history, and abandon its present disastrous course.

Yours faithfully

  
A. Gumede  
PRESIDENT

  
O. Mpetha  
PRESIDENT

UDF  
ACT AGAINST  
APARTHEID  
The government must  
stop the...  
job

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