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1. PREAMBLE:

Since the last NEC meeting held on 5 and 6 November 1983 interesting developments took place both within and outside the UDF. Major success were scored in boycott campaigns against the Black Local Authorities and Community Councils. Thousands of leaflets were distributed and tens of thousands of our people were mobilized through mass meetings held by the affiliates of the front. This proves that our capacity to mobilize is growing each day. The same period witnessed the UDF National Conference failure to take a definitive decision on the question of the referendum for the Coloured and Indian communities.

Sharply contrasting with the ambivalence of the UDF National Conference is the opportunistic moves by:

1.1 Labour Party:

The Labour Party Congress which dismissed the referendum and called on the government to hold early elections for the Coloured Chamber.

1.2 Rajbansi and Solidarity:

The challenge by Rajbansi to the NIC to take a decision on the referendum, and the subsequent formation of the Solidarity Party which although has declared its intention to participate in the Indian Chamber is calling for a referendum for the Indians. What we need to examine carefully is whether the initiative is not shifting from our hands to those of the reactionaries. This meeting is going to have to address this crucial question.

2. BLACK LOCAL AUTHORITIES:

2.1 Success and Problems:

The campaign to boycott the Black Local Authorities was a resounding success. Thousands of voters stayed away from the polls. Our assessment of the campaign is that the total percentage poll for the whole of the Transvaal and a few areas in the Cape and the OFS is nothing greater than 19%.

Although we scored these victories certain setbacks were suffered by our affiliates - when their activists were either arrested during demonstrations or assaulted after meetings. About four and fourteen activists were arrested during demonstrations at the polls in Cape Town and Welkom respectively. In Port Elizabeth, a PEBCO activist lost one eye when community councils attacked PEBCO members who were campaigning against the elections. Several other people were arrested in different parts of the country or hurt during the campaign, e.g. in the Vaal one activist was bitten by police dogs.

2.2 Challenging Legitimacy of BLA/CC's:

The UDF and its affiliates succeeded in calling for an effective boycott of the BLA's and Community Councils. The next phase of the campaign is to challenge the support and therefore legitimacy of each Councillor in each ward. The secretariate is putting together information relating to the number of Councillors, wards and people who voted per ward in each township. Once that has been done affiliates will go on a signature campaign to prove that those Councillors are unpopular and therefore unrepresentative of the residents. On the basis of the concrete support shown in the signature forms affiliates will call for the resignation of those serving in Black Local Authorities and Community Councils. The challenge to the UDF and its affiliates is to provide an alternative to these structures. We need to develop a common understanding of this alternative. On crucial issues like this one we cannot take a defensive position. The people have shown that they are with us. We need to be on the offensive. We need to take the struggle forward taking with us the masses of the people who have shown their rejection of the "new deal".

3. REFERENDUM:

3.1 Referendum for Coloureds and Indians:

Two months after the white referendum the UDF has not yet taken a definitive decision as to how it is going to respond to the question of the referendum for the Coloured and Indian communities. It is not without cause that the situation is as it is for the Front. Within the Front we have not yet adequately addressed two crucial questions:

- a) development of coherent consultation networks operative at both regional and national level. However one or two regions are fairly advanced in terms of consultation at regional level.
- b) development of common perception of tactical and strategic questions. For this reason we lack common approach even to crucial questions facing the Front at this hour of our history.

The differences on the 'No' vote and boycott of the referendum at the National Conference in PE are a glaring example of our failure to intensify the work of National consultation. They indicate the magnitude of our task of creating coherent and politically disciplined cadreship structure linking up at regional and national level. We need to develop a capacity to ensure that our regions through reason and rational arguments, not emotions arrive at decisions. All decisions must be products of rational arguments. I have no doubt that some of the tactical questions we differed on in PE are fundamental to the UDF's opposition to the new constitution.

3.2 Tactical Flexibility:

The recommendation of conference that a greater flexibility be allowed affiliates and or regions in terms of the constitution was circulated to all regions on 30 December 1983.

4. RURAL AREAS, REMOVALS AND RELOCATIONS:

4.1 Rural Areas:

The UDF work in the rural areas has up to now been very minimal. Although some inroads have been made in the Boland, West Coast, Tzaneen and Kuruman, we ^{ve} not extended nearly enough. Our propaganda does not easily reach rural communities. A number of factors can be attributed to this:

- a) there are no newspapers.
- b) there are either no organisations or the level of organisation is very low.
- c) our own UDF news distribution network does not extend that far.
- d) villages are far removed from the towns.

With the Northern Cape Region structuring itself and the OFS beginning to move, I think the question of employing full-time regional organisers assumes importance each day. The initiative and potential present in the Northern Cape in particular must not be lost. There exist in this region very few activists with organisational discipline.

One of the only two key activists in this region has been demoted and transferred to Pretoria (TVL) by the Bophutatswana Department of Education for his activities in the UDF. The possibility exist for us to lose the remaining ^{one} to industry. I want to motivate that the NEC considers going on a fundraising drive and if successful in this regard consider employing one of the Northern Cape Secretaries on a full-time basis. One of the challenges facing us this year is to build strong regions of the UDF. We need disciplined activists in those areas (rural) who will ensure active participation by the people themselves.

4.2 Removals and Relocations:

One of the immediate challenges facing the UDF today is the violence of removals and resettlement system of the government. The government has intensified its offensive in this Front. In recent months only, over seven communities have either been resettled or threatened with removals. These include Leandra, Mogopa, Badplaas, Lamontville and KTC. People in these areas are looking up to the UDF for support. The Black Sash has on many occasions indicated that they had tried all the methods but failed and that they were looking up to UDF amongst other organisations to begin to play a meaningful role in respect of removals and relocations. Although

in some regions like the Transvaal and Western Cape the UDF had some presence in these affected communities, our work is far from being enough.

The UDF must begin to view the question of removals and resettlements as forming an integral part of its programme. We must develop a strategy to challenge the state in the areas affected by the removal system.

5. NEW HOUSING POLICY:

Housing has over the years been one of key political issues around which our people organised. Now with the new housing policy embodying a lot of contradictions, it seems like housing become the focal point of common community struggles. The UDF must begin to study the provision of the new housing policy, educate the community, prepare resource material and prepare generally for intense campaign/struggles around housing.

6. PATRONAGE:

Bishop Desmond Tutu has accepted the NEC invitation to become one of UDF patrons.

7. NEW REGIONS:

7.1 The Eastern Cape Region of the UDF was launched in Port Elizabeth on 4 December 1983. It is the fifth of officially launched UDF regions. I request the NEC

- a) to accept the two secretaries as members of the National Secretariate and therefore of the NEC;
- b) to work out a procedure for the formation of regions of the UDF.

7.2 Suggested Procedure:

I suggest that regions who want to form regional structures officially must do the following:

- a) notify the General Secretary at least a month in advance;
- b) submit regional draft constitution a month in advance;
- c) submit a list of all known organisations and that of forming the region;
- d) submit minutes of the meeting that decided to form a region;
- e) submit copies of the UDF Declaration signed by organisations forming the region.

8. NATIONAL OFFICE:8.1 Moving Office:

The SACC has decided to move the UDF office to the ground floor to a room that was previously used as a canteen. That place is very unsuitable to be a national office. Attempts to persuade Mr D Vaughan not to move our office to that place have failed. We are hoping to take up the matter with Bishop Tutu when he comes back from overseas (USA) at the end of January.

8.2 Receptionist/Typist:

We have not yet been able to get a receptionist/typist for the National Office. Circulars advertising that post were sent to all regions in November with a deadline as 31 December 1983. The National Office received no applications.

8.3 Use of Telephone:

A circular was sent to all the Transvaal affiliates through the regional office reprimanding them on the use of the telephone and explaining the conditions for the use of it (telephone). Although the problem of the use of the phone has been eased it has not been completely solved.

9. SIGNATURE CAMPAIGN:

Some progress has been made in preparation for the signature campaign.

- A common signature form has been adopted by a majority of regions.
- The National Secretariate recommends that the NEC consider employing a national co-ordinator of the campaign for a period of about 4 months.
- Appointment of regional co-ordinators has been recommended to regions.
- Sub-committees have been recommended to regions.
- Printing of forms will be decentralised.
- A brief document has been prepared.
- A handbook for activists has been put together.
- The possibility of using micro-films for signature forms is being investigated.
- Common storage rooms at regional level have been recommended.
- Regions have been asked to develop their own field programmes that will tie in with the work of organisations.

We need to think creatively of methods of involving students, churches and trade unions in our campaign.

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