

#K2117/J2.19

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THE NATIONAL SECRETARIAT REPORT ON THE UDF NATIONAL LAUNCHING CONFERENCE  
AND THE PEOPLES RALLY

*Bew "T1"*

1. INTRODUCTION: Seven months of hard work by the Western Cape, Natal and Transvaal regions of the United Democratic Front reached fruition on 20th August 1983 when the UDF was nationally launched at Rocklands Civic Centre Mitchell's Plain Cape Town.

People's Rally organized by the UDF was held in the evening of the same day at 6.00pm.

2. CONFERENCE: The conference started at 10.00am. The opening address was delivered by Rev. Frank Chikane, one of the five vice presidents of the UDF Transvaal region. (His paper explained the broadness of the UDF as a Front and also answered the question why we needed a front. Presiding at the conference was Trevor Manuel one of the two regional secretaries of the UDF Western Cape region. He was helped by Virgil Bonhamme the vice chairperson of the UDF Natal region who chaired the last session of the conference. The conference was attended by one thousand delegates and about 500 observers..

3. ADOPTION OF DOCUMENTS:

The following documents were adopted by about a thousand delegates:-

3.1 UDF Declaration

3.2 Broad guidelines on programme of Action

3.3 Working principles with one addition on clause three. (see clause 3.4 of the working principles)

3.4 Resolutions on various aspects (see list of resolutions)

4. JOINT EXCO MEETING:

4.1 EVALUATION OF CONFERENCE AND RALLY:

On Sunday 21st August 1983 members of the committee of the three structured UDF regions met together with the P.E. UDF steering committee to evaluate both the conference and the Rally. Very constructive criticisms and comments on various aspects were brought forward.

4.1.1 RESOLUTIONS:

Resolutions not explicit enough on what the

2/..... UDF was going to do.

was going to do. Some resolutions were too long.

4.1.2 DECLARATION: Is a very important document and more time should have been allocated for a discussion on it. It was proposed that in future important documents be discussed at regional level before the conference as that would help avoid contradictions.

4.1.3 WORKING PRINCIPLES:

P.E. felt that they had very little time to acquaint themselves with the W/P. They point out that they very little consultations took place between them and the National Secretariat of the UDF. P.E. request that they be given time to develop their own criticism of the W/P and to forward their recommendations.

4.1.4 PROGRAMME OF ACTION:

(a) CRITICISMS:

More time should have been spent on the POA. Everybody should have left C.T. knowing exactly what was going to be done.

(b) SUGGESTIONS:

- (i) Emphasis on report back on POA.
- (ii) Regions must forward suggestion on POA.
- (iii) A national seminar be organized to look into all resolutions.

4.2 GENERAL DISCUSSIONS

It was felt that the discussions were very abstract. They did not take into account concrete issues affecting the people.

There was no clear understanding on the concept of a front and the thrust of politics. It was accordingly recommended that the NEC prepare a document explaining a front and that this document must be circulated amongst all the UDF affiliates for discussion.

4.3 RALLY

4.3.1 CRITICISMS:

We (UDF) were too ambitious to have wanted to hold a rally and conference on one day. Secondly that the venue was very small for the crowd. It was recommended that the UDF try to channel the interest, excitement and enthusiasm displayed in Cape Town in organization.

#### 4.4 CROWDS

Whereas our marshalls effectively controlled the crowds at both the conference and the rally it was felt that:

4.4.1 that UDF needs to learn a lot in terms of how to control crowds more crowds are to be expected and UDF must provide the necessary guidance.

4.4.2 to know how to respond to harrassment by the police. (announcement that the police were coming to the rally could have caused panic.

#### 4.5 PUBLICITY SECRETARIAT

Thenature of the campaign was that the UDF is taking up and the very broadne of the UDF is going to rely on the media for its propoganda and furtherance of its policies. To realise this task the publicity Secretariat must be considered by the NEC.

It was strongly recommended that the UDF defines in clear terms the role of the National UDF News and spell out the relationship of the National Publicity Secretary to the UDF News.

Minutes of the UDF held on 10 and 11 September 1983 at

Phoenix Settlement in Durban

1. Present

A Gumede  
G du Plessis  
H Hlaethwa  
C Tinto  
J Marks  
V Bonhomme  
P Molefe  
C Salojee  
T Manual  
Y Mohammed  
J Phahla  
A Mokoena  
M Xundu  
A Boraine  
M Lesia  
G Sewpersadh  
M Lekota  
M Ramgobin  
M Valli  
Derek  
D Neer  
P Msotho

2. Apologies

Mrs A Sisulu  
Mr Oscar Mpetha  
Dr Ram Salojee  
Mrs C Carolus  
Prof J coovadia

3. Correspondence

Invitation from Mr Clive Menell of Anglovaal sent on behalf of the "Synthesis" was rejected by the NEC. The Secretary General was asked to write him a letter of regret.

#### 4. REPORTS

##### 4.1 NATIONAL SECRETARIAT REPORT:

A National Secretariat report covering the Port Elizabeth presented by the National secretary was adopted.

##### 4.1.1 PORT ELIZABETH:

It was agreed that Port Elizabeth be a separate region from Border and East London as it is far from the two regions.

4.1.2 Port Elizabeth interim committee was planning mass meetings. Assistance of the N.E.C. required to address public meetings. Documents on the UDF were required.

Document must explain - history of the UDF

- what a front is
- how UDF functions

UDF audiovisual material required - Derek

##### 4.2 OTHER REGIONS:

##### 4.2.1 BORDER REGION:

It was noted that UDF had no contact with Border.

It was agreed that one of the fulltime officials must go and examine conditions in that region.

##### 4.2.2 ORANGE FREE STATE - NEW DEVELOPMENTS

To the knowledge of NEC there was no structure. Transvaal requested to make a follow-up on O.F.S.

Brandford required - M Ramgobin  
car plus petrol expenses to organize Orange Free State  
experienced NEC members to run 2 workshops  
proposal budget for organizing Orange Free State was  
R500 - R600

O.F.S. confident of ability to launch UDF in a week if resources were available.

NEC responded by instructing publicity secretary and S.G. to go and study conditions in the region.

P.S and S.G. to determine the needs and possibilities in the O.F.S

##### 4.3 REGIONAL REPORTS:

Reports from the following regions were received and adopted by the NEC:

1. Transvaal
2. Western Cape and
3. Natal

These reports are attached to these minutes

### FRONT FORMATION:

It was noted that the leadership and activists within the UDF have little understa of the nature of a front that UDF was. (Y. MOHAMMED)

It was reiterated that the basis of the UDF formation was opposition to "reform proposals" and the Koornhof Bills. It was also noted that the front formation of the UDF could only be meaningful if defined in terms of all its ramifications such as removals, school boycotts etc. It was agreed that a document be drafted on the UDF front formation. Yunus volunteered to write it.

### 6 FUNCTIONS OF THE NEC & RELATIONS WITH REGIONS

The following decisions were arrived at on this aspect:

- minutes of the NEC be made available to regions
- \* • regions must exchange minutes of their meetings
- Views of the NEC be extended to regional councils through regional structures.
- the NEC has interventionist role particularly on matters relating to policy e.g. referendum
- Coloured management committees, Community councils elections etc are matters regional issues to be handled directly by regions.

### 7. FUNCTIONS AND DUTIES OF:

Functions and duties of Publicity Secretary and the Secretary General were defined. See attached copy on functions and duties.

#### 7.1 NATIONAL OFFICE

It was agreed that the national office would be in Johannesburg. The publicity would be based in Durban, so as to be nearer the president at all times.

#### 7.2 TRANSPORT

The transport problem was considered and the Treasurers were mandated to handle the matter of transport.

#### 7.3 CONTROL AND SAFE KEEPING OF PROPERTY

It was observed that the UDF would need to ensure control and safe keeping of its own property. The matter was deferred to the following NEC meeting.

#### 7.4 TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT

A minimum salary of R600 was decided upon for both fulltime officials. Both Publicity and General secretaries were advised to submit their budgets on a weekly basis to the National treasurers.

## 8. RELATIONSHIP FO S.G TO THE PRESS

S.G might make press comments in consultation with the Publicity Secretary particularly on matters that might have a bearing on policy.

## 9. FINANCE

9.1 Western Cape reported expenses of about thirty thousand rands on the National Launch of the UDF, bill R7000 damages to the hall and on chairs estimated at R1 250.

More money was spent on people who were left in Cape Town by their own transport. Natal owed Western Cape R1 500.

9.2 Natal reported that its initial Budget was R22 000. Collected R38 000 which equalled financial commitments in the final analysis. Natal's immediate expenses for the next four months would include budget for transport and office. Amount deposited R13 000.

9.3 Transvaal was requested to present its budget at the next NEC meeting.

### 9.4 SOURCES.

It was agreed that the national treasurers must identify funding agencies and work out a system to ensure that the regions do fund raising from common sources as the national.

Seek clarity on the fund raising act.

Approach lawyers with a view to knowing the legal implications of the act.

Investigate matters relating to contracts with funding agencies.

Prepare detailed report on UDF national expenses, salaries of officials etc.

## 10. PROGRAMME OF ACTION

In its discussion of the POA the NEC noted some of the important factors that any serious programme must take into account. These included to educate, train, prove organisational skills, deepen understanding and to heighten the political consciousness of the masses.

In line with these principles the NEC resolved to encourage the UDF affiliates to take up issues such as housing, local authorities, CMC elections and to commemorate all great events.

### 10.1 OTHER DECISIONS ON POA

All regions must work towards a people's weekend starting on Friday October 28 culminating in mass rallies on 29th and 30th October. It was further agreed that church services and vigils must proceed. The rallies and other activities would project the UDF as a popular extra-parliamentary opposition. It was pointed out that the focus of the UDF must transcend the referendum to include local authorities elections.

### 10.3 SOME SUGGESTIONS ON POA

- ✓ The UDF must have a regular focus at a national level. The focus could be done on a monthly basis depending on the type of issues taken up.
- A publication common to all regions be produced.
- The idea of a declaration signature campaign be discussed at regional level.

### 11. PUBLICITY AND PUBLICATIONS

Progress report on relationship with newspapers was given by Publicity Secretary (See report) It was agreed that the UDF news-national be produced by the end of September. Its contents were to include amongst other things:

1. The referendum
2. Local authorities elections
3. Removals in Khayalitsha
4. Regional programmes of action

Regions were to be requested to submit their articles by Wednesday 14 September. It was hoped that the master copies would be sent back to the regions by Monday 19.

### 12. REFENDUM

The NEC decided that the referendum was not irrelevant to UDF opposition. Whilst not making it the major focus of debate the NEC rejected the whites only referendum as racist, undemocratic and as an attempt to shift the debate from 'reform proposals to a simple YES or NO vote. The NEC took the position of total rejection of P.W Botha's reform offensive and saw the referendum as clearly connected to it.

The priority was to build the UDF, it was noted. To start with the referendum was viewed as completely incorrect. It was accordingly resolved that a statement be released at a press conference on the referendum which was due on Tuesday 13 September at Khotso House in Johannesburg. (For further information on the referendum please see POA.)

### 13. INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

The NEC resolved to have no contact with the American, British and Israeli diplomats because their countries supported the forces of oppression the world over. SG and Publicity Secretary were mandated to set up meetings with diplomats in South Africa and also to establish links abroad. SG was also instructed to write letters to all support groups and individuals who sent messages of support on the National Launch of the UDF. SG was further requested to send copies of the Grassroots supplement with the UDF declaration to those groups and individuals.

### 13 CISKEI AND THE BANNING OF SAAWU

Following the repression in Ciskei and the banning of SAAWU the NEC took these decisions :

- \*to call mass meetings in protest of th banning of SAAWU and to pledge solidarity with the people of Ciskei,
- \*to draw the unions into the campaign. If the unions already had plans of their own, the UDF should try to fit into their programmes,
- \*the secretariat to call urgent meetings with the unions in all structured regions,
- \*to issue press statement on the banning of SAAWU
- \*to expose the fraud of the Bantustan policy
- \*the secretariat to work out proposals for meetings with unions on an ongoing basis
- \*Western Cape region find out what unions were doing regarding illegal arrest of unionists from GWU and African Food and Canning Workers unions
- \*Durban region to approach the Durban office of SAAWU
- \*Transvaal region to approach the Legal Resource Centre on the illegal handover of the unionists from GWU and AF&CU to Ciskei by the SA police

### 14. AZAPO

The NEC decided that discussion with Azapo should continue through the Transvaal region of the UDF.

### 15. THE BLACK SASH

It was reported that Popo Molefe and Cassien Saloojee had met the Black Sash to discuss areas of co-operation. It was further stated that the Black Sash and the two UDF members mentioned above had agreed to exchange literature of the respective organisations.

### 16. UNIONS

#### 16.1 FOSATU

Popo Molefe reported that he had set up a meeting with Joe Foster the General Secretary of Fosatu. The meeting was planned to coincide with the Fosatu NEC meeting which was going to take place on Saturday 17 September 1983 at Wilgespruit, Roodepoort.

It was pointed out that whereas the UDF had to ensure that it <sup>did</sup> not become an obstacle in the way of the unions' move towards unity, it needed however to prepare itself for possible gravitation of Fosatu into its ranks.

#### 16.1.2 LEVEL OF CO-OPERATION

It was noted that although Fosatu and other unions had not yet affiliated to the UDF that did not preclude co-operation at specific levels.

The following were identified as areas wherein the UDF and Fosatu could co-operate:

- \*fight against sales tax on food
- \*fight for extension of workers rights to domestic and farm workers
- \*campaign for a national minimum wage
- \*fight against forced subscriptions for management imposed unions
- \*fight against unemployment

#### 16.1.3 DELEGATION

Messrs. Molefe, Lekota, Mohammed and Rev Chikane

#### 16.2 AFRICAN FOOD AND CANNING WORKERS UNION

It was agreed that NEC must make a follow-up on a meeting between the UDF National Secretariat and the above union held in Cape Town on Thursday August 18 1983 at the union offices.

The Western Cape regional secretaries were requested to find out which days the AF&CWU NEC was going to meet so that a meeting with the union could be set up.

#### 17. PATRONAGE

It was decided that Popo Molefe must approach Bishop Tutu and ask him to be one of the UDF patrons. It was further decided that the decision of the NEC be discussed by the regional councils in various provinces.

#### 18. REMOVALS

Removals and resettlement were identified by the NEC as areas that the UDF must address itself to. It was felt that the possibility of creating a commission in that respect needed consideration. However no definite decision was taken on the matter.

It was decided that a newsletter on removals produced by the Surplus Peoples Project be acquired for study as the NEC did not have experience on removals and resettlement.

Other decisions were:

- \*request the Surplus peoples project to distribute UDF News in rural areas.
- \*request to Surplus peoples project to provide literature on removals and resettlement
- \*Regions of the UDF should identify and work with resistance groups in areas affected by removals
- \*each region look into the possibility of creating a portfolio on removals and resettlement.
- \*regions of UDF should organise seminars on removals and resettlement.

#### 19. LAMONTVILLE AND HAMBANATHI

It was reported by Natal that the SA government had decided to make Lamontville and Hambanathi part of Kwa-Zulu. A campaign was unfolding and the UDF was invited to address protest meetings. Mewa Ramgobin had been invited to speak at protest meetings against the inclusion into Kwa-Zulu.

#### 20. LESOTHO

The NEC did not think UDF was best placed to comment on the removal of refugees in Lesotho. It was instead decided that RMC and other organisations should be asked to comment thereon.

#### 21. EDUCATION

Following increasing crises in schools the NEC decided to ask regions to create a commission on education.

It was further agreed that the Publicity Secretary must issue a statement in consultation with the Transvaal region on education. It was suggested that Curtis Nkondo be approached to head the education commission.

#### 22. CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS

It was felt that as the campaign by conscientious objectors unfolded and many objectors were being charged, the UDF had to play a definite role. The UDF role was identified as a supportive one, manifesting itself in speeches, press statements and publications on conscientious objectors.

It was decided that all regions of the UDF should identify conscientious objectors support groups in their respective regions and to consult them for information on conscientious objection.

#### 23. CULTURAL BOYCOTT

A message supporting Paul Newman, Arthur Ashe and company for their courageous decision to campaign against shows by foreign artists at SunCity was read by the Publicity Secretary.

#### 24. PROGRAMME OF ACTION

After lengthy deliberations guidelines to a programme of action were adopted by the NEC.

These included:

- \*door to door campaigns
- \*church services and vigils
- \*local meetings

These would build up into a people's weekend by October 30 1983 and stretch on to challenge the Local Authorities elections on November 25 1983.

It was recommended that regions should add more flesh to the guidelines as they required flexibility based on material conditions in each region/area.

Another suggestion that a UDF calender with pictures and declaration be produced each year was passed by the NEC.

#### 25. NEXT NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

The next meeting of the NEC will held:

Venue: Jiswa (Johannesburg)

Time: 10.00am

Date: 6&7 November 1983.

1. FUNCTIONS AND DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL AND PUBLICITY SECRETARY

1.1 Secretary General:

- to co ordinate and convene the National Secretariat
- to convene the N.E.C. and the N.G.C. in consultation with the N.E.C.
- to be responsible for maintaining and safe keeping of all but financial records of the UDF.
- to promote the growth and development of the UDF nationally and internationally in conjunction and in consultation with the National Secretariat and N.E.C.
- to be responsible for all National UDF correspondence

1.2 PUBLICITY SECRETARY:

- to promote all the national media, publications and publicity of the UDF.
- to act as a channel through which all press releases shall be issued.
- to act as a PRO of the UDF
- to promote the image of the UDF
- to monitor and in conjunction with the Regional Press Liaison officers project the image of the UDF.

FORT ELIZABETH - WORKSHOP ON 14 AUGUST 1983

1. INTRODUCTION:

In accordance with the decision taken in Cape Town on the 21st August, 1983 the National secretariat held a workshop at Malabar in P.E.

2. ATTENDANCE:

About 100 activists attended this workshop. At least 13 organizations were represented.

3. OBJECTIVES OF WORKSHOP

3.1 to improve our understanding i.e. the understanding of the National secretariat of the dynamics of the situation in the P.E. region.

3.2 to gain knowledge on how organisations operate in this region

3.3 to acquaint activists with the history of the U.D.F.

3.4 to develop a common understanding of the concept Front

3.5 to familiarise activists with the documents of the U.D.F. such as the Declaration, the working principles and the resolutions.

4. PROGRAMME OF WORKSHOP

4.1 History and present state of UDF

An outline of the history of the UDF, its origin, the process of building, its structure and the tasks facing it were discussed.

4.2 CONCEPT FRONT

The concept front was discussed extensively with a view to giving the activists a better understanding of different alliances. And within various alliances to situate the UDF clearly.

Under this heading, attempt was unable to show factors which influenced movement towards a front.

4.3 Documents of the UDF

A short explanation of the Declaration and policy based on resolutions was discussed.

4.4 Discussion local situation and organizations

There was a lengthy discussions on the conditions and organization in P.E. It emerged during the discussion that there were about 54 organizations in P.E. However most of them were very weak and were not meeting regularly. According to reports given to the National Secretariat

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