

UDF PRESS CONFERENCE

1 AUGUST 1983

KHOTSO HOUSE, JOHANNESBURG

MESSAGES OF SUPPORT

Rev Cecil Begbie - Vice-chair Witwatersrand Council of Churches:

"Apartheid has divided the people of South Africa. There is a need to unite those who are committed to meaningful political change in order to strengthen the struggle for justice and freedom and restore basic human rights."

Dr Essop Jassat - president Transvaal Indian Congress:

"Our struggle is the struggle of all the people of South Africa. The Indian people cannot achieve freedom unless all South Africans are free. It is our duty to engage in joint and united action through the UDF, which voices the aspirations of all freedom-loving South Africans."

Dr R A M Saloojee - vice-president Transvaal Indian Congress:

"The UDF symbolises the natural culmination of the unity of the oppressed. If we are to achieve a just and equitable society, then the UDF must become the unshakeable pillar around which our forces marshall all their liberatory energies."

Prof Ismail Mohammed - chair Transvaal Anti-P C:

"Our day-to-day problems of housing, rents, and transport cannot be solved by the government's proposals. We must counter the proposals and the government's attempts at co-option and entrenchment of white minority rule. We must work hand in hand with all oppressed and democratic-minded people striving for a democratic country."

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Tsietsi Maleho - Azaso national organiser:

"The UDF provides a forum to formulate strategies to oppose the government's new proposals. Students can find a home in the UDF to focus attention on their educational problems with support from activists countrywide."

Francis Baard - Federation of South African Women:

"UDF is most inspiring because it unites all the people of South Africa despite race or class as we did with the Congress Alliance in 1955. It fights the oppression of the oppressed people."

Tiego Moseneke - president Azaso:

"The ruling class has mobilised big business, the army and all its forces on all fronts to continue subjugating us. Azaso feels that a broad united and democratic front like the UDF is one of the means to counter the attempt to sugarcoat the bitter pill of apartheid for the oppressed and exploited."

George Sewpersadh - Natal Indian Congress:

"It is vital for all democrats to strive to build the UDF into a mass organisation so that it can perform its historic task of ending the fragmentation and division that is causing so much turmoil and bitter conflict in our country. If we work on the foundation of the unity of all people our task will surely be achieved."

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Archie Gumede - president Natal UDF:

"The government's new proposals are an admission that the present constitution has failed utterly to preserve the heinous system of apartheid. They are likewise destined to fail in the wake of mounting resistance. The victims of apartheid must oppose with all the might at their command every attempt to perpetuate this vicious system."

Christmas Tinto - patron Western Cape UDF:

"UDF brings together all organisations, irrespective of different ideologies, to fight the common enemy - the minority apartheid government. This unity will ensure our victory - a democratic South Africa free from exploitation."

Oscar Mpetha - president Western Cape UDF:

"We are all aiming at achieving a new South Africa. We cannot achieve that goal unless we unite. Unity is strength. The National Party is in pieces because it is threatened by the unity of the people. The more we unite the nearer we are to our goal."

Dorothy Zihlangu - chair United Women's Organisation:

"UWO is fully participating in UDF. We believe that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white. We reject the constitution/P C proposals and the Koornhof Bills. Let us unite under the UDF."

Shepherd Mati - president Congress of South African Students:

"The struggle waged by the students for a free, democratic and relevant education is one part of the overall national democratic struggle. As such, students need to throw their weight behind this united effort to build the UDF."

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Kate Phillip - president of the National Union of South African Students:

"Now is the time for a democratic organisation nationwide to combine their strength as part of the UDF and with a united voice say No to divide and rule, No to Apartheid in whatever new form."

Wilfred Rhodes, chairperson of CAHAC:

"The P C proposals and the Koornhof Bills will bring greater hardships into our lives. We will be faced with huge rent increases and rate increases to keep the new dummy councils alive. The P C proposals and the Koornhof Bills can never bring about true democracy in our country. Instead it will further divide us. We must totally reject these frauds. We must demand a government based on the will of the people."

Mr Joseph Marks, the UDF vice-president in Cape Town:

"We, the UDF of Cape Town, reject the P C proposals and the Koornhof Bills because it is not the wishes of the majority of the people of this country. We have been ruled by the nationalist government and feel that the P C proposals and Koornhof Bills will extend the vicious system of Apartheid which will also lead to a dictatorship by the minority over the majority. I call on all democratic freedom-loving people to reject the P C proposals and Koornhof Bills with all their might. Let nothing divide us. Forward to a united and democratic South Africa."