

CONGRESS RESISTER

NEWSLETTER OF THE TRANSVAAL INDIAN CONGRESS

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We are proved right

At the time of the August elections, government supporters claimed the new constitution was a step in the right direction. They promised that it would bring about peace and security.

But we were not fooled. Our people saw clearly that the Government was using the old tactics of divide and rule, and we realised that the so-called "reforms" were simply a disguised attempt to protect apartheid.

People all over the country, of all races, united behind the banner of the UDF to demand equal rights for all.

And now, after what has happened in recent months, who can deny we were right to reject the Government's new constitution?

The economy is in a mess. Three million people are without jobs. Communities throughout the country are faced with increases in rent and electricity. Food prices are rising all the time.

Taxes have been raised to force us to pay the fat salaries of MPs and community councillors. Large amounts of public money is being spent on the army and the police force, but the government keeps telling us there is no money for housing and education.

This is why people throughout the country — in Phoenix, Sebokeng, Chatsworth, Daveyton, Tembisa, Sharpeville, Uitenhage — are up in arms demanding rents we can afford, the right to work, the opening of the doors of learning and culture, houses, security and comfort, and peace and friendship.

Our people have protested peacefully and made reasonable demands.

Instead of negotiating with our true leaders, the government has reacted with violence. 16 leaders of the UDF have been arrested on charges of treason. 16 people in Crossroads, protesting against forced removals, have been shot dead by police. On 21 March, 25 years after the Sharpeville massacre, 43 people were shot dead.

The international community, shocked at the violence of the Government, has joined with us in condemning them. Indian and coloured MP's, on the other hand, have shown that they are mere puppets of their Nationalist pay masters. They withdrew earlier calls for the resignation of the Minister of Police, Le Grange.

They passed the budget raising GST to 12%. And at a time when our people face hardships, they have been silent. We demand their immediate resignation.

This year is the 30th anniversary of the Freedom Charter. We call on our people to renew efforts to bring about a just, non-racial and democratic society. Only in this way can we ensure a peaceful and prosperous future for ourselves and our children.

Towards a common future

The killing of over 40 people in Uitenhage has provoked worldwide condemnation.

France condemns the "increase in brutal repression" and the Organisation of African Unity demands strong UN action against Pretoria. The disinvestment campaign in the United States has been intensified and even conservatives in Britain have been moved to demand mandatory economic sanctions against SA.

In South Africa, the UDF made it clear that the killings was a "declaration of civil war", and unrest in the country has been fuelled even further.

Thousands more in townships throughout the country take to the streets demanding their education rights, houses and low rents, freedom of movement and the right to work.

South Africa is engaged in an intense political struggle. It is a struggle for democratic rights — after years of suffering under the pass laws, influx control laws, inferior education, forced removals, group areas, the high cost of living and unemployment — all made worse under the new constitution.

Peace will come only to a united, non-racial and democratic South Africa. And such a South Africa will come only through the freedom of the African people.

No section of South Africa can be free for as long as the African people are not.

Our community must fully support and involve itself in the struggle for national liberation. We must do so today as



Townships all over the country are burning. 35 000 mourners at a funeral in Uitenhage

we have done in the past.

The Dadoo-Xuma pact of 1947 firmly established the basis for friendship and political co-operation

We have a rich history of resistance against injustice and oppression under the leadership of Gandhi, Dadoo, Naicker, Nana Sita, Roy Naidoo and others.

The participation of Congress in the 1952 Defiance Campaign and our adoption of the Freedom Charter in 1955 bear ample testimony to our commitment to a common future with the African people.

Today we are an important part of the United Democratic Front. And our united stand against the new constitution in August confirmed our determination to build a new South Africa where all shall live as equals in peace and



Defending a unity built over many years. Ram Saloojee with Albertina Sisulu and Terror Lekota at UDF rally in Soweto.

harmony.

Let no Government attempt threaten this unity, painfully built over many decades of common experience and joint struggle.

Come treason charges,

batons or bribes — we will meet the challenge of the times, swell the ranks of Congress, and march forward, together with all oppressed and freedom loving people, to a new South Africa.

From protest to challenge

Curnick Ndlovu, recently released after serving 20 years imprisonment on Robben Island, has been elected executive chairperson of the



Curnick Ndlovu - chairperson of UDF executive committee

UDF at its National General Council meeting in Azaadville.

Albertina Sisulu and Archie Gumdede, presently facing high treason charges, were re-elected presidents of the UDF.

Terror Lekota remains publicity secretary and Popo Molefe is still the general secretary.

Also elected to the 16 member national executive committee are TIC members Azhar Chachalia and Mohamed Valley.

A keynote address to the more than 350 delegates present said the "overriding challenge for the broad front

is to draw the maximum number of people into the struggle against apartheid.

"Our struggle is a national democratic struggle.

"It is a struggle of the majority of the people — of all classes, races, organisations, groups and individuals who support the fight against apartheid — against a minority regime and its supporters".

The African people, being the most oppressed play a central role in this struggle and only with their liberation can all South Africans be liberated.

Explaining the UDF's slogan, "From Protest to Chal-

lenge" it said this meant a situation where people frustrated the Government's efforts, prevents its advance, forces it to retreat, and if possible cut off all its lines of retreat.

Resolutions condemning the tri-cameral parliament, proposed black forum for African people, forced removals, the New Zealand rugby tour, United States imperialism, the treason trial, pass laws and Bantustans, were among the many adopted at the conference.

The conference received messages of support from up to 40 international organisations.