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xxxxxx	14.5.84	Rhodes. (98)
	15.5.84	Pietermaritzburg. (99)
	16.5.84	Durban (100)

It's nearly a year already - well, certainly nine months since that great launching in Cape Town on ~~Mixxxx~~ Mitchell's Plain - the launching of the United Democratic Front on August 220th - the Front which speaks for all democrats, the Front which we are building.

Then we declared our determination to work for a South Africa based on the will of the people - our own South Africa of the Freedom Charter.

We pledged ourselves to strive for unity through united action against the evils of apartheid - a simple and inspiring goal. I am glad I have lived this long. May I still live long enough to see the realisation of our dreams.

Let's look for a moment at what it is, this United Democratic Front - it is an alliance of many different types of organisations, community organisations, church organisations, workers' and professional organisations, student bodies, women's and youth organisations - BUT they all have one thing in common - a democratic and non-racial outlook and a hatred of apartheid and all forms of oppression.

And, my goodness, how it ~~grows~~ has grown, this child of ours that was born on August 20th, mind you, it was a good sized baby even then with its 400 affiliates ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ representing more than a ~~thousand~~ ^{million} people - and now it has 600 affiliates and represents some two million people - after only 9 months

It cries loudly, too, this fast growing child of ours, it calls upon the government to release all political prisoners - NOW- and without conditions, not remission favours. Let me break in for a moment to pay my tribute to David Kitson, released last Friday after almost 20 years as a political prisoner in Pretoria. Oh, yes, he got remission - 7 months out of 20 years. Welcome home, Dave! - Let's give him a big hand, shall we? And spare a thought for Denis Goldberg, his gaol mate, but Denis faces a life sentence, like Mandela and Sisulu and Mbeki and Mlangeni, and Motsoaledi and ~~and~~ Mhlaba - from the Rivonia Trial

The UDF also calls on this government to lift the bans on those who are silenced and restricted and to recall those forced into exile by the

by the inhuman racial policies of successive white minority governments. ... ~~Then~~ ~~.....~~ the chosen leaders of all our country's people could sit ~~gather~~ together in an atmosphere free from fear and suspicion - sit together to work out a ~~constitution~~ constitution based on the will of the people - a constitution acceptable to all. I am sure the government hears our call - but it doesn't reply - except by harrassment, banning and persecution.

For this government retains domination and oppression as key features of its power base, and in its alleged restructuring of the framework within which it rules.

State

We now have a Security Council effectively controlled by the military and by big business - a shift of decision making power from Parliament to unelected bureaucratic structures.

The UDF is the reply of the people to that ! It is growing apace - the Rev Frank Chikane, one of our vice-presidents, says "...Its raging like wildfire throughout the country, consuming every element of apartheid on its way."

I think maybe that's more of a prophecy than a report ! But it ~~is~~ is true that the U.D.F. is bringing pockets of resistance throughout the country into a united front - "Unity in action" - that's what it is.

All the same we mustn't be carried away by any euphoria about this unity in action - we must use all opportunities to strengthen our organisations, revive those which are declining and create new grass-roots organisations where there are none.

Our immediate goal must be to organise and mobilise the people of S.A., and for you especially on campus, but not only on campus - to create new structures that will enable us to destroy the monster of ~~apartheid~~ apartheid. Then we shall have a people's struggle towards a people's victory, giving birth to a people's government. Remember, "The People Shall Govern."

I want to look for a moment at the present picture that S.A. presents. We cry aloud that all forms of oppression and exploitation must end. But we must also realise that we have a very long way to go - for it is clear that the old oppression is still here - and its not just alive and well and living in South Africa - but just as alive and viciously active as ever it was'.

Taxation? Plenty of that but no representation and no just share in the benefits flowing from that taxation schools? houses? hospitals? pensions? - all based on racial discrimination. Now GST is to rise to 10% - 3% increase and I am very sure not the last. True, GST is to be taken off basic foodstuffs - where it never should have been in the first place - that doesn't mean that the poor are not going to be hit by the GST rise. And the mass of the people had no say in this decision - oh, why don't they say, " No say, no pay!!

Yes, the evils of apartheid are all still here - Show me one that ~~is~~ isn't - No, don't talk to me about plastic international restaurants or high rise flats for the few black wealthy - what about the OTHER end of housing?

What about the dreadful and dreaded mass removals? Mogopa, Leandra, Dimbaza, Kyalitsha, and the ~~long~~ ^{shameful} list of so many other places? Hounding the homeless - the ultimate in oppression. I see Koornhof says only 2 million, not three and a half - I think his arithmetic has slipped somewhat.

What about education? ~~Even~~ ^{South African history archive} at the university level what are we left with? The spirit of quota, even if not the letter of it. Raising the academic ^{entry} standard very neatly eliminates many potential students. B Black or white? But who struggles to get to matric? Black or white?

We are told that there are more teachers and more classrooms for black schools - but yet only one in five of black schoolchildren in primary schools ever get to a secondary school. And teachers are 1-41 pupils in black primary schools.

How many of those one in five ever get to matric, let alone to University Entrance? Well, only 50% passed metric and only 11% get ~~university~~ university entrance - and that is precious few and now ~~ex~~ they must compete for university ~~xxxx~~ admission at a higher ~~xxx~~ academic level - against white matriculants from privileged homes and privileged schools. And the age limit of 19 for standards 9/10 - what about the children who ~~must~~ must stay ~~xxxxxxx~~ out of school for a couple of years while they earn money or perhaps make way for a younger brother or sister to attend school?

Curtis Nkondo has said that Bantu Education is intended to keep the pass rate low so that blacks would remain to fill the lower unpaid jobs. " If we give Africans an academic education, " he says, " then who will do

the manual work?" Makes you think , doesn't it?

How much real competition can there be for these restricted, rarified ~~places~~ university places? It seems to me that the black child is still barely knocking at the university door.

And that 's oppression - to deny opportunity through race - no matter how cleverly disguised.

And what about women, black women? For the plain fact is that the African mother suffers sorely under our oppressive system - oppressed by our pass laws - yes, yours and ~~mine~~ ~~we~~ cannot really shed our guilt, can we? For don't we batten on the material benefits of this system?

It is the black sister who bears the brunt of the forced removals, isn't it? SHE has to see her furniture removed, with all the intimate personal possessions of her family, loaded onto a truck, exposed to public view. Sometimes you ~~you~~ couldn't really call it furniture - so shabby and makeshift it is - through sheer poverty. And it must go away to the far-off veld. There she and her family must build a home again, create it out of the agony and the anxiety and what is still left of the home that was once yesterday. ~~Kuis~~

Passes? Do you know that about 30,000 African women are arrested every year for pass offences? Who are they, these women? Are they mothers? Mostly, I am sure. but what happens to their families? to their young children? when they are arrested?

And even the higher wages for some, doesn't mean more food - inflation sees to that. And don't forget the money that goes to expenditure on defense instead of to subsidies on food.

So the rich get richer and can still afford to eat, but the poor get poorer, for their real wages don't meet the increased cost of food and children ~~will~~ go hungry.

Perhaps I don't really need to spell this out and I could go on for much longer , but I want to shout it from the housetops that there is no real change - the black people are as oppressed, as they have always been I don't want to say, " As they always ^{will} be " for ~~we~~ must say NO to that - a loud NO - yet our voices are still too few.

Soon we'll come to June 16th - the eighth anniversary of the day when the first black schoolboy in Soweto was shot dead by the police - the first of 600 more to lie dead in the Soweto streets. It is our precious day of mourning, of re-dedication to the struggle for freedom.

For US, June is indeed a very special month - the month of the Congress of the People, of our own Freedom Charter. Remember? "SA bwlongs to all who live in it, black and white. "... The people shall govern." June is the Soweto month, it is also the month of the great Defiance Campaign, in 1952. But what is it to the Prime Minister, Mr. P.W. Botha?

It is the month in which he will be luncheoning with Maggie Thatcher. What a pretty pair !!

As they fill their stomachs ^{with} good food and good wine, I wonder if this precious pair of prime ministers will spare a thought for the hungry, homeless victims of the apartheid oppression which HE is imposing and SHE is supporting.

It is indeed a sordid ~~sorry~~ system that we have here, despite the fine houses, despite our much advertised three houses of Parliament. "Tricameral" reminds me of something to be kept secret, like trials held in camera - perhaps after all its not such a bad name.

But they forgot to build the fourth house, which would have been ^{higher} than the other three put together. - a "so-called" parliament for the African people. But we can do without it - do we really need a fourth monument to hypocrisy and dishonesty? Perhaps there are enough of these caricatures of even so-called democracy (with separate dining rooms of course !!) - those Parliaments which have been so carefully rigged that the Indian and Coloured members can never win (though they can of course draw fat salaries for not winning !) I suppose Botha will boast to Maggie of his new dispensation - which is in fact still the old dispensation - of oppression.

So what to do about it? We ~~we~~ can't just put out the lights and go to sleep, can we? We must be heard - our NO's must ring through this land, right down to Robben Island and Pollsmoor cells and up to Pretoria.

And of course all this is just what the UDF signature campaign is all about - to show this government that a million ~~xxxx~~ people - and more - don't want this system of oppression to go on.

And its so simple - we don't ask people to do much, just to put their names and addresses and declare - nation wide - that:

we reject apartheid
 we support the struggle of the people for right and justice
 we say, "Yes" to the United Democratic Front.

A million signatures? Well, that's not really so ^{much} ~~much~~ hits only ten ~~hundred~~
 hundred thousand, that's all !

But those million signatures have to be got somehow - they don't just float in the air. They are there for the getting, that's for sure, but it is We, Us who have to go out and get them and ⁱⁿ the getting make people understand about the UDF and just why ^{we} are collecting ~~collecting~~ these signatures - otherwise they will be sterile signatures, just names, - and we don't need those.

And we haven't got much longer if we want to get our million signatures by August 20th - the first birthday of the UDF. I ~~WISH~~ we could get them by June 2nd - Botha's lunch date with Maggie - and send a telegram to her from all of us to say that we, the people of S.A. reject this man. " He is not our leader - our leaders eat prison food in gaol. "

In conclusion, let me quote from Alan Boesak

" Let us work with joy and commitment for what we believe is right. There is a tough battle still ahead... So many people still need to be informed, organisations need to be built, campaigns must be run, new hearts must be won and new minds must be changed. "

" Our adversaries have at their disposal the instruments of power, propaganda and intimidation.

But WE have on our side, justice, integrity, loyalty to the ideals of freedom, democracy."

CAN we ask for more ?

A M A N D L A