

Lest we forget: What the 17 organisations did

United Democratic Front: The UDF, nearly five years old, embodies the flowering of a range of resistance organisation in the early 1980s. Its banning this week embodies the retreat of those organisations under recent repression.

It was launched on August 20-21, 1983 before 12 000 people at Mitchell's Plain including representatives of some 400 organisations. This grew to 700-800 affiliates ranging from powerful community groups like the Soweto and Port Elizabeth Civic organisations, youth congresses and trade unions, to local church groups, sporting clubs, and professional bodies.

UDF's total membership was estimated at one million. It was made up of 10 regional UDFs with three presidents: Albertina Sisulu, Archie Gumede and Oscar Mpehla.

Initially, the UDF had a three-pronged aim: to oppose tricameral constitution, the "Koomhof Bills" and the elections for new black local authorities. These issues were pursued primarily through the Million Signature Campaign.

The Vaal uprising of September 1984 transformed the UDF. Its focus moved from the head office's formal, centrally-planned campaigns to the struggles of affiliates, particularly in black townships, around issues such as rent and local authority representation, etc. With it the initiative now shifted to the stronger affiliates, such as Cosas and the civics.

The declaration of the first of the current state of Emergencies in August 1985 did not hit the UDF too severely. Many affiliates actually grew, and more covert, local organisation flourished in the form of street and area committees.

But successive Emergencies began to take its toll, with many leaders detained or in hiding and the head office effectively closed down. Christmas Against the Emergency campaigns were launched and calls were made for an end to the Emergency, the release of prisoners, and negotiation with legitimate leaders — but not with same organisational back-up as before.

A major blow was the detention and subsequent charging of two major UDF officials, **Terror Lekota** and **Popo Molefe**. Their trial for treason, known as the "Delmas trial", has become a trial of the UDF as a whole, with the state accusing it of involvement in a conspiracy with the ANC and SACP.

Historian Tom Lodge summarises its role in this way: "The UDF was about the most effective political force that has operated in black townships ever. Now that it is in retreat, there is a tendency to dismiss it. But I think it was very important. The UDF did create an activist culture that will continue under different forms and will always present a challenge to the government."

Azanian Peoples Organisation: Azapo was formed six months after the government's 1977 clampdown to "fill the leadership gap" in black extra-parliamentary resistance. The leading black consciousness organisation in South Africa, it is also the major constituent of the National Forum.

Initially Azapo was led by activists who had avoided arrest. Its five central aims were to conscientise and mobilise black workers through black consciousness; to work for a relevant education system; to encourage liberation theology; to expose "the exploitative and oppressive apartheid system"; to encourage black unity and to secure a "just distribution of wealth and power".

In 1982, Azapo engaged in one of its best-known campaigns: the boycott of an international soccer tour. After 1983, the organisation experienced an influx of former Robben Island prisoners at leadership level. These included some of the BC leaders imprisoned after the 1975 Saso trial.

Azapo took part in the drafting of the 1983 **Azanian People's Manifesto** and expresses grave reservations about the Freedom Charter.

Azapo has continually striven to broaden its support base, but has never enjoyed the groundswell of support which characterised the earlier era of black consciousness organisations. Azapo has increasingly emphasised the socialist content of its philosophy, which distinguishes it from earlier manifestations of black consciousness.

It enjoys a close relationship with the black consciousness-aligned **National Council of**

Who did what. A guide to the various organisations—most of them affiliates of the UDF or Azapo—which were restricted yesterday

Trade Unions and several left-wing groups based in the Western Cape. A period of intense conflict with UDF affiliates ended after the imposition of the Emergency, though ideological differences still run deep.

Detainees' Parents Support Committee: The DPSC was formed by friends and families of those caught in a wave of detentions in August 1981. Since then, it has grown into a major human rights monitoring and campaigning body that has won two international awards.

From the first days, the DPSC's vision grew gradually: it began to campaign for the release of all political prisoners, then the abolition of apartheid — believing that detention would exist as long as the current political system existed.

The DPSC runs an advice office in Johannesburg, from which it campaigns for legal changes and for political prisoners' rights, monitors repression and helps arrange family visits, food parcels and clothing for detainees.

It published a monthly report which has served as the most reliable monitor of repression available in South Africa.

South African Youth Congress: First mooted by the Congress of South African Students in 1982, Sayco was eventually launched early in 1987 to co-ordinate the organisation of youth (as opposed to student) activists across the country. Claiming an initial membership in excess of 500 000 and made up of regional structures, it was the largest youth organisation in South African history and the UDF's largest single affiliate.

Launched when the second State of Emergency had already taken a toll on overt youth activism, its operations have always been "semi-underground". Sayco was more militant than its predecessors, adopting the slogan "Freedom or Death — Victory is Certain". Its central political credo was informed by the Freedom Charter, and its leader, Robben Island veteran Peter Mokaba, urged close co-operation with student groups, unions and civics. Sayco's leadership was dubbed "the Class of '87", in a direct reference to the ANC Youth League's "Class of '44" which included Nelson Mandela, Oliver Tambo and Walter Sisulu.

South African National Students Congress: Until December 12 1986, Sansco was known as the Azanian Students Organisation (Azaso), reflecting its black consciousness roots. In 1983, supporters of the Freedom Charter gained control, and steered it steadily towards the UDF.

Sansco is the dominant organisation at university and college campuses, with some 80 branches by the end of last year. Its membership, difficult to estimate reliably, certainly ran to several thousand. Sansco worked closely with the National Union of South African Students, and had alliances with Sayco and the school-based UDF-aligned National Students Co-ordinating Committee. Sansco gave attention to campus issues, like bursaries and accommodation, but also took up national campaigns. Several senior Sansco officials are in detention.

Cape Youth Congress: Formed in 1983 to unite youth in the Western Cape, Cayco played a prominent role in the UDF's formation and in the anti-election campaign of 1983. Cayco's stated aim was to organise the youth, believing that "militancy and anger were politically insufficient". The group boasted 36 branches at the end of 1986 and subscribed to the Freedom Charter. Cayco leaders admitted that the detention of its leaders during the 1986 State of Emergency, was a setback, and in 1987, Cayco cadres bore the brunt of the "witdoek" war in Crossroads. Many of its members died in the conflict.

Soweto Youth Congress: Formed on July 31 1983 in Dube, Soweto, Soyco became the dominant youth organisation in South Africa's largest township. Firmly aligned to the UDF and endorsing the Freedom Charter, Soyco

worked closely with its sister organisation, the **Soweto Students Congress**. Soyco was prominent in most major political campaigns in Soweto, and was a founder member of Sayco. For a time its members fought a bitter conflict with the rival Azanian Students Movement, but this dissipated during the second Emergency.

National Education Crisis Committee: After the formation of the Soweto Parents' Crisis Committee in October 1985, a national meeting of parents, teachers and pupils was convened to evaluate the schools boycotts. The 312 delegates and 300 observers, all agreed that parents and teachers "should play a greater role in the educational struggles of children". The meeting presented a list of demands to the government and educational authorities, and a larger gathering followed in April 1986, in Durban. Here the NECC was officially constituted, and made an historic call for boycotting pupils to return to school. Thousands of pupils did just that, but the return began to crumble as grievances continued and security force remained in black schools. The NECC tried repeatedly to negotiate with educational authorities and set up a commission to investigate "people's education." By late 1987, most of the NECC's leadership was in detention.

Azanian Youth Organisation: Azayo was "relaunched" in 1987 as a national umbrella structure for youth aligned to the National Forum and Azanian People's Organisation. The organisation's strength was never reliably estimated. Azayo was aligned to the student wing of Azapo, the Azanian Students Movement which in 1986, claimed 30 000 members. Azayo subscribed to the Azanian People's Manifesto of 1983.

National Education Union of South Africa: The teacher's union most clearly identified with the UDF, Neusa initially drew members away from the conservative **African Teachers Association of South Africa**, but later sought to move that organisation closer to its own position. A prominent participant in many UDF campaigns, Neusa styled itself "progressive" and was showing steady growth when it was banned.

Vaal Civic Association: The VCA, formed in September 1983, was at the centre of the Vaal uprising a year later and a mainstay of the rent boycott.

Catering for residents of Sebokeng, Sharpeville, Boipatong and Bophetong townships, it was formed in reaction to poor township conditions. It challenged first the community council and later the Lekoa Town Council on sharp rent increases.

In 1984 residents decided to march in their thousands to the headquarters of the Lekoa Town Council. The clashes with police that followed marked the beginning of the Vaal uprising.

Most of the executive are now in detention and some are in the dock at the "Delmas" treason trial.

Craddock Residents Association: Cradora was one of the first UDF-affiliated civic organisations to organise communities in street committees.

It was the central organisation in this Karoo township, which experienced one of the longest ever school boycotts, and launched some of the first consumer boycotts of white shops, bringing local white leaders to the negotiating table.

Formed in 1983 to fight rent increases, Cradora and its leadership were subjected to repeated state harassment. Early in 1984, Cradora's founding chairperson Matthew Goniwe and three colleagues were detained for six months. Meetings were banned and repeated police harassment was alleged.

Cradora suffered a bitter blow when Goniwe, Fort Calata and Sparro Mkonto were killed in mysterious circumstances in June 1985.

Port Elizabeth Black Civic Organisation: PEBCO, born on October 10, 1979, is one of the country's oldest black civic organisation. Pebeo called for a single municipality for Port Elizabeth, and rejected separate com-

munity councils and municipalities. Its aims were to fight for the civic rights of all PE people, to fight discriminatory legislation, to seek participation in all decision-making, to fight for black freehold rights anywhere they chose and to resist all attempts to deprive blacks of their citizenship.

Thozamile Botha, its first president, was a charismatic, natural leader. When he was dismissed from his job only weeks after Pebeo's launch, PE was hit by strikes, particularly the massive one at Ford.

Pebeo also fought the planned removal of Walmer township, but on the eve of a stay-away its leaders were detained and four were house arrested. When a number of leading PE activists like Henry Fazzie, Edgar Ngoyi and Sipho Hashe returned to the townships from Robben Island, Pebeo began taking a more militant direction.

Western Cape Civic Association: WCCA was formed in 1982 to fight injustice and malpractice among local authorities. It brought together civic associations in Cape Town's black townships and in the Boland towns of Paarl and Worcester. By 1984, WCCA claimed a paid-up membership of 4 000.

The WCCA's major fight was against the removal of people to Khayelitsha, 40km outside Cape Town. It also fought evictions and helped residents get permits to stay in the Western Cape. Other activities of the WCCA included action against increased bus fares and opposition to the creation of community councils.

Soweto Civic Association: Steps to organise the SCA were taken in September 1979 as a successor to the Soweto Committee of Ten. By 1980, the UDF-affiliated SCA had 33 branches and was spearheading a campaign against proposed rent hikes.

It led a boycott of township council elections in 1983 and in June 1986, joined the countrywide rent boycott. A number of SCA officials, including president Isaac Mogase, secretary Amos Masondo and organiser Vusi Kanyile have been in detention for over a year.

Release Mandela Committee: Formed in Natal in 1983, the RMC campaigns for the release of all political prisoners, the unbanning of organisations and negotiations with legitimate leaders. It recently launched a campaign for the release of life prisoner Harry Gwala, reportedly seriously ill, and has been involved in the campaign to save the "Sharpeville Six".

Detainees' Support Committee: Descom is a UDF-affiliated umbrella of groups doing support work for detainees around the country.

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respond imaginatively to new directions in Soviet policy initiated by Mr Gorbachev.

Gen Malan's initiative, however, contained a fatal weakness as it stood, Professor Barratt added.

The general was trying to separate the Angolan and Namibian issues. His offer of an Angolan settlement excluded resolution of the inter-related and protracted Namibian conflict and thus had little or no chance of acceptance by the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Union would demand a settlement of the Namibian conflict on the basis of the 1978 UN peace plan, as contained in Resolution 435, Professor Barratt said.

South Africa had previously linked the two issues by demanding the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola as a pre-condition for implementation of resolution 435. General Malan now appeared to be trying to disconnect them.