

Supreme Court overturns ban on UDF meeting

Daily News Correspondent

JOHANNESBURG: The United Democratic Front launched a successful bid to overturn the ban placed on its first Black Christmas meeting yesterday when a Rand Supreme Court judge ruled that there was no reasonable foundation for the belief that the meeting would lead to violence or disruption of peace.

The UDF was represented in the urgent application before Mr Justice G. Leveson by three leading members of Lawyers for Human Rights — its national chairman Mr Jules Browde SC, assisted by Mr Gilbert Marcus and briefed by Mr Norman Manoim, both members of the Witwatersrand committee of the lawyers' group.

It is believed to be the first successful action of its kind in the Transvaal — preceded only by another application brought by the UDF in the Cape some months ago.

The applicant argued that:

□ The ban, imposed because acting Johannesburg magistrate Mr G.J. Schoeman "had reason to apprehend the public peace will be seriously endangered" by the meeting, had been made in ignorance of the UDF's arrangements to ensure good order.

In papers before the court, Mr Popo Molefe, UDF general secretary, pointed out that the organisation had anticipated the ban because of similar action taken earlier last week against the Transvaal Indian Congress. It had therefore written to the magistrate outlining the measures to be taken to ensure an orderly meeting.

Mr Schoeman's order, however, predated the receipt of the letter by a day and therefore could not have taken account of the precautions, it was argued.

□ The wording of the ban was confusing and seemed so wide as to prohibit a simple discussion on rent increases between two neighbours or a committee meeting of Operation Hunger, it was contended.

The banning notice applied to the December 16 meeting of the UDF at Regina Mundi Church in Soweto "or any other gathering to commemorate or discuss the detention of persons related to the UDF and other matters set out in the attached pamphlet (advertising the Black Christmas meeting)".

□ That the UDF had a demonstrable record of well organised mass meetings which had been attended by thousands and which had concluded without incident of public disturbance.

In response, Mr Schoeman, represented by Mr R. Kruger SC, and Mr J. Coetzee, instructed by the State Attorney, placed an affidavit before the court. It stated that his decision to ban the meeting had been based on security police information that other meetings at Regina Mundi had culminated in violence; and that the UDF and several of its affiliates were props for the African National Congress which celebrated December 16 as Heroes' Day.

Mr Justice Levenson ruled that there was nothing in fact to show support for the ANC. He also ruled that the respondent pay the costs of the action.

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Black township to be moved at a cost of R22 million

Daily News Correspondent

VEREENIGING: Bophelong, one of the oldest black townships in the Vanderbijlpark area, will be moved to Sebokeng within the next four years at an estimated cost of R22 million.

The township, which has a population of about 10 500 and which is situated on ground belonging to the Vanderbijlpark Town Council, is said to be in the way of proposed expansion and development of the town.

Vanderbijlpark's public relations officer, Mr Louis Lindeque, said the town council's recent decision to move the township was only confirmation and enforcement of a previous decision, which the Lekoa Town Council asked it to reconsider.

He said that the Vanderbijlpark Town Council had repeatedly granted postponement of the move in the past. Last week the council rejected another representation from the Lekoa Town Council for further postponement of the matter.

The Vanderbijlpark Town Council explained that all available ground for

residential use east of the Golden Highway would probably be fully developed by 1988.

Because the council is planning to make early provision for sufficient stands for an estimated population of 78 800 by 1990, all available ground west of the Golden Highway, including the area on which Bophelong is situated, is required urgently.

In March this year the Lekoa Town Council asked Dr Piet Koornhof, then Minister of Co-operation and Development, to keep Bophelong in its existing place.

The council complained that the move would be uneconomical and that most of Bophelong's residents, of which many are pensioners, would probably be unable to afford the increase in rentals of the new houses in Sebokeng.

The council said that as only 32 out of 1 407 houses in Sebokeng would be affected by the construction of the new Golden Highway, the moving of the whole of Bophelong was unwarranted.

Zulus claim *THE DAILY NEWS* huge tract *17 DEC. 1984.* of caneland on N.Coast

Daily News Reporter

KWAZULU wants 12 900ha of land at Compensation on the Natal North Coast to be ceded to it for an industrial and residential area supporting 300 000 people.

The proposal is likely to meet strong opposition from cane-farmers who stand to lose their land and who fear the impact of development on the area.

KwaZulu Chief Minister Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi made a statement to the Minister of Co-operation and Development, Dr Gerrit Viljoen, at a meeting at Richards Bay, pressing for a better deal for the Zulus.

The meeting ended with an agreement between the KwaZulu and South African Governments to co-operate in the physical planning of the Natal/KwaZulu region.

Chief Buthelezi's memorandum said

the planning of the Richards Bay area was not nearly as important as a "de-concentration" point north of Durban that would relieve pressure on places like Inanda and KwaMashu.

He called for the extension of a tract of KwaZulu territory to include land on the inland side of the railway at Compensation, enabling the development of two industrial areas — one of 600 ha and one of 400 ha.

About 4 000 ha would be for housing and the remaining hilly sugarcane land would be included to consolidate the territory.

Local farmer Mr Peter Goble said some of the canelands that could be lost were very productive, while the whole character of the area would be changed by industrial and residential development. He said farmers would probably unite to oppose the plan.

A farmer who did not want to be named said it would be "a dreadful mistake" for such fine canelands, close to the Tongaat mill, to be lost. Even if his farm was not expropriated, he expected problems from the impact of neighbouring development.

Dr Viljoen said after the meeting there would be more planning meetings.

He had presented for discussion a draft guide for the planning of the Richards Bay area.

The KwaZulu government had presented its proposals and the talks had been productive.

But Dr Viljoen would not disclose any details of the draft guide or the Government's stand on Chief Buthelezi's proposals.

Speaking on the Richards Bay issue, Chief Buthelezi said KwaZulu had been deprived of land whites had appropriated for industrial development.

The KwaZulu Government had drawn up an alternative plan for the area to negotiate wider benefits for the Zulus.

"It is politically and economically immoral to expect Zulu communities around Richards Bay and Empangeni to pay any price whatsoever for further development in the area," he said.

"We would rather shelve this whole development plan than agree to take more land away from our people to favour developments which are in essence for the white economy and from which blacks derive only second-rate benefits."

Chief Buthelezi said he could not be party to forced removals.

4 000 retrenched as furniture trade reels

Daily News Correspondent

JOHANNESBURG: The South African furniture trade — as hard hit if not harder than the motor industry, according to spokesmen — has already retrenched about 4 000 people as empty showrooms bear witness to one of the bleakest Christmas periods on record.

This figure represents about 10 percent of employees in the retail furniture industry.

And furniture experts predict that, whereas there were about 1 400 manufacturers three months ago, this number will shrink to about 800 if present trends continue.

"You can sum it up by saying that it is dead quiet in the morning and just dead in the afternoon," said Mr Arthur Solomon, furniture and appliances general manager of OK Bazaars.

The executive chairman of another major retail chain who prefers to remain anonymous said: "We have had to retrench 700 people already. I estimate that about 4 000 people nationwide have been given their marching orders."

Mr Sid Ellerine, an executive of another major group, added: "As bad as things are now we expect them to get worse in January, February and March."

The furniture men say that the recession has hit so hard that many well-established traders are going into liquidation while others are desperately looking around for potential purchasers of their businesses.

"About 80 percent of the trade is controlled by the major groups. I believe that figure will rise significantly in the coming months," said a spokesman.

Survival

"The small guys are fighting for survival now. I think it will be a blood-bath in the traditionally quiet times of the early New Year."

Mr Solomon said there were a number of reasons for the drop in demand — which he estimates at 30 percent:

- The increase in GST.
- The higher deposits now required on all "big ticket" items.
- The shorter repayment periods.

"The fact that the Government has brought about an attitude in would-be buyers where they are psychologically put off spending," Mr Solomon said.

He said a good example was video recorders.

The deposit required used to be 10 percent but now now was 30 percent.

Repayment was allowed over 24 months. Now it was down to 12 months.

Mr Solomon added: "The high interest rates are also discouraging customers."

'Pro-South Africa' TV film sparks row

CBS employees said before the screening that there had been some debate about whether the show — taped in South Africa — should be broadcast as it "put South Africa in too much of a good light."

The programme said all Americans usually

got to see of South Africa was brief newsclips of rioting.

CBS showed scenes of integration in the workplace, restaurants, bars, sportsfields.

"To our eyes these are merely routine scenes of urban life — in South Africa this breaking down of legislative racial barriers is a cosmic political event. These are changes which only a few years ago seemed beyond possibility," the CBS team said. "The steady collapse of at least some outward signs of apartheid continue slowly."

Showing President Botha welcoming people to the President's Council, it said: "Blacks remain excluded, but Coloured and Asian parties say that they will use their new political rights, however slight, to end that exclusion."

Outside of the townships, "apartheid is disappearing. Petty rules are being repealed or ignored. Sports have become integrated," said

the network.

"There has not yet been a single successful black-dominated multiracial democracy in Africa. Not a popular view, but a bitter fact," said CBS.

"As out of sympathy as one might be with white South Africans' attitudes, one can hardly blame them for holding on to this glorious land."

Interviewed during the programme, President Botha was asked if he envisaged a day when blacks would have full equality.

He said: "Not in the sense that it is being applied in many African states... but in the sense, yes, that it will satisfy my conscience, I say yes."

Daily News Foreign Service

NEW YORK: The biggest TV news programme in the United States last night broadcast a programme on South Africa that was amazingly uncritical of the Republic.

As anti-South African protests carried on around the US, the CBS network's "60 Minutes" show concentrated on "the other side of the story", giving the views of the South African Government.

Describing slow but definite moves towards integration in South Africa, and pointing out the woes of Black Africa, the programme caused a flood of protest telephone calls to the network's headquarters.

"We are getting lots and lots of calls... upset people," said a switchboard operator.

Giving the views of President P.W. Botha and showing the erosion of some forms of apartheid in a way in which veteran commentators in the US said had never been seen on American TV, the programme was broadcast at a time of strong anti-apartheid protests in America.

More than 50 protesters have been arrested at the South African Embassy in Washington. A further 100 have been arrested outside South African offices in New York, Seattle, Boston, Houston, Chicago and Berkeley.

Demonstrations have been held in Mobile, Los Angeles, San Francisco and at the University of Maryland.