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'A single, non-racial, unfragmented South Afric

UIDE backed by Sm 20 missations

By CHRIS FREIMOND Political Correspondent

CAPE TOWN.

The Government's constitutional reform plan suffered another serious setback at the weekend when a nonracial opposition grouping the United Democratic Front - was formed in Cape Town with the claimed backing of 400 organisations throughout the country.

An estimated 6 000 people braved bitterly cold winter weather and

of Mitchells Plain to hear a team of high profile speakers urge the rejection of the proposed new Constitution.

The launch of the UDF represents the broadest alliance of anti-Government groups since the congress movement of the 1950s.

Observers believe it has the potential to become the most significant extra-parliamentary opposition group in the country particularly if the Government goes ahead with referendums on the new constitution for coloureds and Asians.

Its backers, including the SA Council of Churches, the SA Allied Workers' Union, the Council of Unions of South Africa and scores of community, sports, cultural, church, politicrammed into a community hall and cal, and students organisations, have given a huge tent in the "coloured" suburb the UDF the potential support of upwards of a million people.

> Its major concern is now clearly to organise at grassroots level and transform the euphoric support at Saturday's launch into commitment to its long term goal — a country united under a single, politically equal system.

The new national executive met for the first time in Cape Town yesterday to formulate a programme of action, details of which will be released

Patrons under which the UDF was formed include some of South Africa's foremost civil rights campaigners, among them the ANC leader, Mr. Nelson Mandela, Mrs Helen Joseph, Dr Essop Jassat, Mr Dennis Goldberg, Mr Hassan Howa, Dr Allan Boesak, and Dr Beyers Naude.

The three national presidents elected at a congress held before the mass rally -Mrs Albertina Sisulu, Mr Archie Gumede, and Mr Oscar Mpetha — are also veterans of the civil rights campaigns

of the fifties. A declaration adopted by the congress committed the UDF to work for "a single, non-racial, unfragmented South Africa. . . free of bantustans and group areas".

In an address to the rally Dr Boesak said: "I believe we are standing at the birth of what could become the greatest and most significant people's movement in more than a quarter of a century."

In a sense the formation of the UDF highlighted and symbolised the "crisis" apartheid and its supporters had created for themselves. Despite over 300 years of white domination people were still not prepared to accept racial injustice and were ready to face the challenges of the moment, he said.

The time had come for white South Africans to realise their future was "inextricably bound" with the destiny

of other South Africans. A recurring theme of the meeting — the need to accomodate all groups, including whites, sympathetic to the ideals of political equality was stressed by Dr Boesak.

"...we must not allow our anger for apartheid to become the basis for a blind hatred of all white people," he said.

There was a need to reconcile blacks and whites and acknowledge that "the quality for our struggle for liberation cannot be determined by the colour of one's skin, but rather by the quality of one's commitment to justice, peace and human liberation".

Dr Boesak's comment, and those of other speakers along similar lines, were seen as a reference to the National Forum, a recently formed, black consciousness-orientated grouping, which does not see a role at this stage for whites in the "liberation struggle".

Police kept a low profile throughout the meeting. UDF organisers claimed they were warned to ensure that all sup-porters were indoors — or face action for an illegal.

éwill stand Political Staff

THE United Democratic trade unions as well as Front (UDF), to be community, women's, launched at a meeting in student, religious, youth, Cape Town on August 20 sports, political, profesin opposition to the Gov- sional and business orernment's constitutional ganisations and interest plan, will represent peo- groups. ple of all colours and "All have clearly recreeds, according to a jected the constitutional statement from the proposals and the Koornmovement's leadership. hof Bills.

The statement today said the date for the launching was decided on at a meeting of the UDF's national executive committee in Johannesburg at the weekend.

Policy

meeting was to define a common approach and policy in resistance to ciety under the banner of the constitutional proposals and the envisaged new legislation on urban blacks.

The statement said the strength of the movement lay in the demo- and it is in the process of ratic nature of its com- being finalised," the vsition.

It would be made up of

Commitment

"All of us have recognised that these manoeuvres of the State are designed to weaken the people's resistance by dividing them, while entrenching apartheid.

"We have firmly and The purpose of the unanimously committed ourselves to the achievement of a democratic sothe UDF through active participation of thousands of members of our organisations.

"A declaration of policy and intent has evolved statement read.

Inousands expected at Cape launch of UDF

By Jo-Anne Collinge

Internal liberation politics are expected to reach a high-tide mark this weekend with the Cape Town launch of the nationally organised United Democratic Front.

As busloads of supporters from four provinces head for the Rockland Civic Centre, organisers are readying themselves for a crowd of 5 000 at tomorrow's public rally to launch the UDF into national politics.

The event is a culmination of resurgent political interest expressed through scattered township residents' organisations and labour bodies over the last four or five years.

UDF, the creature born of this process, is quite unlike other radical opponents of apartheid - past or present.

In contrast to the Congress Alliance of the 1950s, which was a close grouping of wellestablished national organisations, and the Black Consciousness bodies, which operated as individual units, the UDF is a loose association of over a hundred organisations, large and small.

Affiliates range from localised tenants' groups to large labour bodies - such as the Council of Unions of South Africa and the General and Allied Workers' Union - and from provincially-based political bodies, like the Natal and Transvaal Indian Congresses, to student organisations, such as the Azanian Students' Organisation and the Congress of South African Students.

What binds them together, according to a statement of principle to which all affiliates subscribe, is the belief in a future "non-racial, unitary state in South Africa, undiluted by racial or ethnic considerations as formulated in the bantustan policy" and in a united struggle of "all democrats regardless of race, religion or colour" to achieve this vision.

Although UDF leaders have repeatedly stressed that the organisation is a front - a coming together of independent or-



Oscar Mpetha . . . serious candidate for presidency despite facing a prison term.

ganisations in a specific line of action - and that members retain autonomy, the success of UDF will lie in holding the active allegiance of its many and varied members.

Commenting on this on the eve of the national launch, a spokesman for the national secretariat said he believed strong UDF regional organisations, established in the seven months since the organisation, were believed to be the key to cementing the front.

He said provincial bodies had been set up after months of consultation with members and prospective members in the Western Cape, Transvaal and Natal. Interim committees existed in the Eastern Cape and Free State, he added.

The tasks of the weekend's gathering will be to adopt a national constitution, to elect a national leadership, to revise the declaration of principles and to draw up guidelines for a programme of action.

The constitution is expected to be based on existing regional structures. It is understood to allow for a symbolic leadership - by way of patrons - as well as practical leadership. In a recent Transvaal UDF council meeting it was suggested that patronage would be reserved for those who were barred by practical considerations from participating - exiles, the



Mrs Albertina Sisulu . . . UDF is determined to maintain links with resistance tradition.

banned and imprisoned.

Three frontrunners seem to have emerged for presidency of the front - veteran Cape trade unionist Oscar Mpetha, Natal lawyer Mr Archie Gumede and Transvaal women's leader Mrs Albertina Sisulu, wife of jailed African National Congress leader Walter Sisulu.

The fact that Oscar Mpetha is a serious contender despite facing a prison term for a Terrorism Act conviction, and Mrs Sisulu, despite being in custody and facing charges under the Internal Security Act, is a measure of UDF's determination to retain links with the resistance tradition that dominated the pre-Sharpeville era.

Yet the UDF has been careful to point out that it does not view itself as a simple successor to the Congress tradition; nor is it bound by the Freedom, Charter, which the Congress Alliance formulated.

The cornerstones of the UDF are non-racial, democratic beliefs. "Although the declaration of principles will be revised at the national meeting, its essence will not change," the spokesman asserted. The programme of action is also expected to retain central features of the guidelines set out in January when UDF was first mooted. Prime among these was resolute opposition to Constitution Bill.

Bid to salouage anti-apartheid front's rally

By Jo-Anne Collinge

A widespread effort has been mounted to disrupt the national launch of the United Democratic Front, which promises to be the largest political rally organised by an internal anti-apartheid group in decades.

Hundreds of pamphlets discrediting the UDF and falsely announcing that Saturday's mass rally in Cape Town had been called off, were dropped in Johannesburg townships and in the city near the University of the Witwatersrand and at a church hall used by the UDF in Durban.

But busloads of UDF supporters from the PWV and Durban areas left as scheduled last night. Organisers in Cape Town are preparing for a crowd of 5 000 at the rally at the Rockland Civic Centre. Supporters from the Reef alone are expected to number at least 500.

The rally will be preceded by a meeting of about 1 000 delegates from hundreds of constituent organisations of the UDF. Their tasks will be to elaborate non-racial, democratic statement of principle on which the front is based, to adopt a national constitution and elect a "Expected repressive State national leadership.

national presidency are provin- make this the only possible cial UDF presidents Mr Oscar course of action at this stage," it Mpetha from the Cape, Mr Ar- continued, ending with an urchie Gumede of Natal and the gent plea: "Do not go to Cape Transvaal's Mrs Albertina Sisu- Town."

Speaking from Cape Town last night, Mr Zac Yacoob, national publicity secretary for the UDF, branded the disinformation attempt as "mischiefmaking by agents of apartheid". Mr Yacoob said the pamphlets were dropped at St Anthony's church hall, Centenary Road, Durban, a departure point.

Batches were also dumped yesterday afternoon in Soweto, Lenasia, Newclare, Bosmont, Eldorado Park, Braamfontein and central Johannesburg.

Mr Yacoob predicted thattempts to overturn the UDF would forge a new unity among its participant organisations.

One set of pamphlets, ostensibly issued in the name of the National Forum Committee, Sacos and Azapo, claimed the UDF was "an obstacle in the path of total liberation of Azania by blacks for blacks".

The pamphlets described the UDF as "the old, white-dominated SACP-ANC alliance dressed up in a new guise".

Another set, ostensibly issued by UDF, said the "interim national executive committee has decided with much regret to postpone the national rally.

action, including strong indica-Leading candidates for the tions of mass arrests at the rally

Thousands to gather for launching of JUB

By ANTON HARBER and

Johannesburg are expected to join thousands of others travelling to Cape Town from around the country for the "National People's Rally" that will launch the United Democratic Front (UDF) tomorrow,

According to the organisers, six busloads of people were due to leave from Johannesburg last night for the massive meeting that will launch the body to oppose the Government's constitutional proposals.

About 70 others were flying and dozens were driving down in private cars.

The launch of the UDF seems set to establish another major obstacle to the successful implementation of the Government's proposed new constitution.

The non-racial UDF is expected to unite tens of thousands of people from about 400 organisations thoughout expected.

AT LEAST 600 people from Bid to disrupt rally

Political Reporter HUNDREDS of fake pam-

phlets claiming that the United Democratic Front's national launching had been postponed were yesterday distributed in Johannesburg. The UDF's national secre-

tariat immediately issued a statement confirming the rally was going on in Cape Town as scheduled and blaming the pamphlets on "those who seek to divide our people".

lined "UDF rally postponed" Sharpeville.

and said in large letters: "Do not go to Cape Town."

It said the interim nationa executive had decided, with much regret, to postpone the national rally to be held to morrow in Cape Town.

"Expected repressive state action, including strong indi cations of mass arrests at the rally, make this the only pos sible course of action at this stage," the pamphlet said.

It also said the rally would The pamphlet was head- be held next month in

the country.

The launch in Cape Town's suburb of Mitchells Plain, will include a national congress due to be attended by about 1 000 delegates from around the country, followed by a mass rally at which about 4 000 people are

The UDF is being formed in direct response to the nex consitutional plan. It aims to unite "all political grouping working outside of Govern ment-created political inst tutions" in opposition to th planned new constitution an the "Koornhof Bills" affect ing blacks.

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The pamphle distributed in the confuse Town Oax.

Mass UDF rally expected to draw thousands of people

By SAM MABE

A MASS rally expected and independence but to attract thousands of co-operate in opposing people from all over the the President's Council, country is to be held in the new parliament and Cape Town later this Koornhof plans," said a month at the launching of the United Democratic Front (UDF).

At a Press conference yesterday, the UDF's interim Publicity Secretary, Mr Zak Yacoob, announced that the launching would take place on August 20.

The decision to launch the UDF nationally was taken at a meeting held at the weekend by African and Indian leaders from various parts of South Africa.

The leaders included, among others, veteran worker and Cape Town community leader Mr Oscar Mphetha, who is currently out on R1 bail pending the outcome of an appeal against a fiveyear jail sentence passed on him under the Terrorism Act.

The formation of the UDF, whose regional branches in the Transvaal, Natal and Western Cape were launched over the past few months, was a direct result of the controversial constitutional proposals and the Koornhof Bills against which the UDF is rallying.

"It is a united front in which all organisations will keep their identity

UDF press statement.

"The conscience and the moral impulses of all freedom-loving people held in Johannesburg of South Africa have been aroused. People have been moved to reject these pernicious and evil laws which consolidate the heresy of apartheid.

"Whilst the UDF articulates the viewpoint of the broad cross-section of people, we accept as fundamental that the



UDF LEADERS: Some of the leading delegates at the conference held by the United Democratic Front in Khotso House, Johannesburg, yesterday included (left to right), Mrs Albertina Sisulu, Dr A Saloojee, Mr Archie Gumede, Mr Zac Yacoob and Mr Yunus Mohammed.

main burden of exploitation and discrimination falls on the poor.

"Accordingly, the main thrust of the organisation is directed towards the participation

of working people in the workplace, in communities and wherever they may be.

"The grand design of apartheid is to fragment

those who deliberately refrain from helping us to maximise this unity, advance the cause of the enemy and delay the cause of democracy,"

added the statement. our people's unity. And AT RALLY: Mrs Martha Mahlangu.

Representatives:— Name College Address: TRANS-WORLD TUTORIAL COLLEGE CLERICAL DUTIES JBUSINESS MANAGEMENT JBOOKKEEPING & ACCOUNTS TRAIN FOR CAREERS THAT PAY! SHOWS YOU HOW

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lems facing them in their

one of the speakers at tention from the prob- at the rally. people of South Africa interest of all oppressed He said it was in the

and Allied Workers'. the forces that separate president of the General to be united and to resist Mr Samson Ndou,

cause among blacks. sion they were going to them because of the divi- Africa. terday urged to reject the problems of South little could be achieved. Witwatersrand were yes- tensify rather than solve wanted liberation, very the University of the posals were going to in- the part of those who about 1 000 students at university, said the pro- there was sacrifice on were condemned and at the Great Hall of the He added that unless constitutional proposals Front (UDF) rally held daily lives. THE COVERNMENT'S the United Democratic Slaging proposals

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SOWETAN, Friday, September 2, 1983