

Billy Nair Interview:

Question: Comment on the state of the UDF now that Murphy and Valli have been detained, and that there seems to be an increase in various forms of harassment that hadn't been the case as far as detentions in the previous few weeks. Where does that put UDF, particularly with Valli and Murphy being out of circulation?

Billy Nair: Like the experience that we've had with Popo, and Terror Lekota, we had to quickly adapt to the new conditions that were thrust on us by the absence of our important people. So, similarly, and more particularly coming at a time when a spate of detentions... during the emergency the arrest of two of our leading people has brought the UDF into difficulty, but like all other state repression generally, since the formation of the UDF, we've been able to overcome those problems in the course of time. We are making adjustments. We have a collective leadership that is now going to exercise the functions of two of the people, and moreover, we are going to appoint functionaries, we are going to have people who are going to be able to take over. For sure, notwithstanding the difficulties, is going to definitely overcome the problem.

Question: Could you go into a little bit more about UDF adapting to repression. The fact that a National Working Committee session was held seems to indicate that UDF has found methods to overcome the state's surveillance and detentions and so on. Could you maybe elaborate a bit more on how its affected your operations, and if its changed your methods of work?

Billy Nair: The onslaught on the UDF over the last two Emergencies has been pretty heavy - over 30 000 people taken at various times over the two emergencies - but we have succeeded in overcoming the problem by restructuring particularly the regional structures of the UDF; and quite remarkably through initiatives and innovations by our activists they have been able to function very successfully at the grassroots level, constituting street, zone and other committees to maintain the str

Apart from this, the UDF regional structures, although heavily hit by the Emergency and repression generally when some of our leading cadres were killed by the security forces and vigilantes, were able to pull together the regions, and this was demonstrated amply by the NWC conference that was held towards the end of May, where 9 out of 9 regions were present, and took part.

We wouldn't say that we've mastered it altogether as to how to overcome the difficulties under severe repression as we

are experiencing now, but we are fast improving on the techniques of organisation. Now, the UDF, it must be said, insists on maintaining its legality. And it is while maintaining our existence legally, we want to ensure that we so structure ourselves that the police, the vigilantes and so on do not easily discover our activists.

Question: You mentioned the area committees and so on, clearly one of the key aspects of the strategy of the democratic movement is setting up the zonal and street committees and so on - a more grassroots form of organisation perhaps than existed a few years ago - and yet that seems to have been one of the main areas on which the state has focused its crackdown. To what extent have the street committees and structures of people's power survived the onslaught from the state?

Billy Nair: Well, they have been surviving under extremely difficult conditions. Indeed, you have on the one hand the might of the state apparatus, buttressed by vigilante activities, which is out to crush our organisations. We admit that we have faced very severe repressive actions of the state and its surrogate forces. But without letting go too much to our enemies, we want to say that we are adapting our organisation to meet the repressive conditions.

This found expression in the fact that there was unanimity at the NWC that we have to so constitute our structures that they do not lend themselves to easy state repression or disorganisation. So it means that while we are not an underground movement (we are insisting on maintaining our legality), we do recognise the fact that we cannot operate normally. And the state is obviously ~~not~~ intent on giving us that chance to operate legally.

It is not prepared to give the space with the obvious intention of displacing us with structures that are state supporting - the RSC's, the JMC's are a very good example. We are convinced that the state is not going to succeed. It has failed miserably in attempting to put its surrogates in the place of democratic structures. It is trying to resurrect the Black Local Authorities, obviously aided and abetted by the JMC structures which they have been setting up. But they are not fooling our people.

Apart from the national working committee and the attendance there, we had this demonstrated when we had two successful stayaways on May 5 and 6 and again on June 16, when the UDF and all its structures, together with COSATU, was able to pull off the biggest stoppage of work in the history of this country. That is notwithstanding the very severe repression which both the UDF and COSATU have met over the last few years. So, the state has not succeeded. We are convinced of

that. And it is not going to succeed in displacing the democratic movement with its surrogate forces.

Question: Could you tell us more about how you see the state's strategy at the moment: on the one hand they seem to have started reviving certain 'reform' aspects: on the other hand the main repressive strategy seems to have been through the JMC's and the State Security Council. How do you see the state organising its forces at the moment?

Billy Nair: What we see the state strategy is is three-fold. One is to crush the democratic movement. Secondly to displace the democratic movement with its surrogate apparatus. And thirdly, to effect such reforms so as to win over the people. Indeed, on all three points it has failed... in the first place it has failed to crush, as has been demonstrated for example by the convening of SAYCO under repressive conditions. And the holding of the National Working Committee are two examples of how they have failed to crush our organisations.

On displacing our organisations - there too they have failed because our people have no confidence in state structures any longer. ^{ever} People like Tom Boya and ~~even~~ Gatsha Buthelezi will have nothing to do with the RSCs and so on. They impose certain conditions like the democratic movement, they also insist that they should release all political prisoners and lifting of the emergency and so on and so forth before they participate in state structures. Now echoing once again the demands made by the democratic movement. In any event we do not say that they will not at ~~delete~~ some stage or other collaborate with the state. ~~But~~ it clearly demonstrates that far from the state winning support that even people who are operating in state structures find it repugnant to operate in dummy institutions today.

QUESTION: Is that kind of failure producing any significant divisions within the state, within the National Party Between the 'hawks' and the 'doves', do you see any significance in those apparent divisions that might exist there or do you think that through the elections there has been one consolidated position?

BILLY NAIR: well the election has demonstrated that there has been a decided shift to the right. Within the ambit of that shift you find this Dakar conference has taken place. There have been some sweet noises about reform emanating from the 'doves' in the Nationalist government eg Stoffel van der Merwe has been projected as a liberal. Those attempts are cosmetic, they are actually trying to placate the black populace to fulfill the second point that I made in regard to the state's strategy which is to sell Apartheid in a diluted form, make it appear a sweet bit of poison. People know this only too well.

This public relations exercise on the part of the state with all its limitations, is even being stymied by the 'hawks'. So quite clearly we see the state having been taken over by the army and the security forces. Parliament has become a mockery. A so called constitution that is supposed to have legislative powers - far from it. Important decisions are taken by the NIS who are about 10 or 15 people who are at the top who really take decisions. So what we see is that there has been a shift even within so called democratic structures that are representative of white aspirations.

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There has been a shift to the saving the executive exercises ? powers. So the NIS is actually the real decision making body and the JMCs and RSCs are going to be dictated to by the NIS. So its not even the cabinet that is really taking the decisions. So looking at it from the point of view of democracy as enjoyed by white South Africans you find that there's a decided shift there to a clique or a cabal which is controlling the politics of this country. Hence with impunity they could take ore emptive strikes, support reactionaries like RENAMO and UNITA and so on without reference to Parliament.

So Parliament has virtually become a rubber stamp. So in like mind you find that Provincial councils have become nominated bodies, dummy institutions directly responsible to the central executive. There have been noises recently that mayors and town clerks will have to be appointed although they are very quick to dismiss this as merely speculative. They appear to be quite serious about this and we are going to see that happening through the RSC structures when there will be a displacement of peoples local town councils.

So democracy in so far as the whites knew it, blacks have never known ~~democracy~~ in this country. We know the fascist jackboot, that's all. But what we see is that as long as the vast majority of the people do not enjoy democratic rights the minority which has been enjoying it over the years will find its own position whittled away, its own rights being whittled away, so much so that the shift to the right in the last election did not come as a surprise to us at all because the whites have led themselves into the position where they have allowed the executive to exercise powers on their behalf.

QUESTION: What does that mean, perhaps in the medium term, for the prospect of negotiation. Does it look like there are no gaps at the moment whereby the state might be pushed into a situation where they are prepared to negotiate on the fundamental issues?

BILLY NAIR: As far as we see it negotiations with the state at the present juncture unless there is a decided shift from

its present course, negotiations will be on its own terms that is to accept the structures, the institutions, the constitutions as pronounced by the nationalist party in its caucus. Whatever is decided upon will be foisted on anyone who is prepared to negotiate. So you find that even its very close friends who are operating within the bantustan structures and even the local structures are being imposed upon and they are told in no uncertain terms that you have to accept RSCs or we're going to go ahead bulldozing this through. So notwithstanding even the rejection by Gatsha Buthelezi of the RSCs they are going ahead with the RSCs.

You could say that there appears to be no room for negotiations particularly between the democratic movement and the Nationalists. So we find that increasingly the state is using its own apparatuses - that is force and the threat of detention and the spate of trials- for instance what is on trial at Delmas really is the ideals for which the UDF stands. Now if our people are convicted there it will be the UDF that actually stands convicted for espousing a democratic cause. So they are using the courts as well to stimv, to actually destroy apart from force, apart from detentions, use of vigilantes.

{ So the course that the state has chosen really is force to *force* pressure even the democratic forces to accept its ? rather than to meet the aspirations of our people. So we find that what we're heading for is a collision course. The state insists on imposing its own will on the people and the peoples complete rejection of Apartheid, the nationalist government.

Its legitimacy is also being questioned constantly. That none of its pronouncements are believed by anyone including its own friends namely Israel, the United States- all its lackeys -even those props on which it relied for support recently begged Israel to entervene on its behalf in trying to get the European Community to play down or let up on its campaign against SA. Israel rejected that and exposed South Africa's initiative to get Israel to represent it in the European Community. So there you find that all props are collapsing.

So, it is this scenario that we are faced with and we are convinced that from all the developments that History is on the side of the people, both blacks and whites. This is born out by the fact that COSATU has adopted the Charter and more unions outside of COSATU are thinking of adopting the Charter. So UDF soon will adopt the Charter on its 4th anniversary. *re-phrase* So you have a dynamic different to that which is being chartered by the Nats. That is why I say that we are moving not parallel to each other we are just moving in opposite directions. The Nats are fighting a losing battle, they must lose it. The only problem that arises is that in

losing that battle they want to plunge this country into disaster before giving up. It is now for the whites and blacks - all the democratic forces, all those who want to see a change and a peaceful democratic SA- to club together as quickly as possible to redirect the course of history.

The Nats are not the masters of the situation. The vast majority of the country, the democratic movement, as led by the African people, must win notwithstanding the force and the might of Magnus Malan. They have boasted that the state has not used its firre power as yet threatening to use it at some time. Now we would as a reminder of the old history of the Afrikaner that they had also take up arms ultimately against the British imperialists who were oppressing and exploiting them. So in like manner they have also not learned from recent history with the American backing of the Haiti, the Philippines and also South Korea. With the might of America behind these three states there was a massive revolt in all those three states in quick succession. Now SA is in a far weaker position than those states and yet the Nats in their arrogance do not learn from history. We are convinced that in the developments that are going to take place and if the Nats do not give way and don't see reason or if white South Africans do not apply sufficient pressure together with the blacks to actually change the course of things in this country very quickly, we are going to head for a similar catastrophe. And the Nats are not going to stop it. Its not a threat.

The UDF has insisted that we have decided to chart a peaceful non-violent course but what is being thrust on us is violence of the worst order. Our members, our leaders, our activists have been killed. Many of our people ahve been kidnapped, murdered. Many of our comrades ahve been sent to the gallows, others have been shot by vigilantes, by the state. We are convinced that there is a hardening in the course of the struggle - the state far from softening the attitude of the blacks to it or to fascist rule. It is this cauldron that is boiling all the time that is ultimately going to explode to a catastrophe and is going to be unstoppable.

The Nats should also remember their own history and the peoples history- that is that people were forced sometimes to take very drastic measures at huge sacrifice and the UDF has insisted that it is not going to enter the arena where the Nats are strong. We are going to persist in our peaceful, non-violent forms of action for the simple reason we are winning. The Nats are weak in that particular field, they cannot match us in the pursuit of our ideals. What they want to do in the short term is to cajole us into the position where we enter the arena of taking up arms. We say no to it. But the question how long are we going to restrain our people, how long are the people going to be restrained

themselves from taking the ultimate action where like the storming of the Bastille in 1789, where the people may be forced to storm the Bastille. This is history, we are not threatening .

We admit that we do not have the capacity for that as yet but we know the course of history where people are pushed into a corner they will fight back. And to avoid such a catastrophe it is incumbent on both blacks and whites , all those who are in the struggle and even those thinking whites who are looking even just a few inches beyond their noses, to think whether they should ? to the Nats those powers which they are now. They should think whether they should not now join the democratic forces. It is senseless for them to run and leave the country in droves like they are doing now , the technocrats , the intellectuals, the professionals ~~are leaving the country.~~ etc. We don't want them to leave the country; they have a contribution to make here, they have to join the fight to correct the impasse that the Nats have led this country into.

QUESTION: On the question of participation in the tricameral parliament , there has been speculation in the press that the UDF has been considering or debating this issue. Can you comment on this, what truth is there in that?

BILLY NAIR: The truth is that there has been no such discussion in the UDF. We reiterated the standpoint of the UDF at the last NWC totally rejecting the tricameral parliament, the entire constitution. When the President of UDF was asked to comment on what should be done to restructure the Presidents Council , the NWC in response to this sent a memo to the state rejecting in its entirety not only the PC because after all it is part of a rotten system, but rejecting the constitution as such as being undemocratic and not expressing the will of the people. We went further calling on the PFP and those in the House of Representatives and the House of Delegates to resign and have nothing to do with the Apartheid system. So it would be unthinkable therefore for the UDF in a matter of weeks after that to really change its position.

Archie was actually expressing his personal point of view although he is one of the co-presidents of the UDF. He felt very strongly that UDF should very seriously think of participating in the tricameral parliament in complete contradiction to the resolution that was adopted of the NWC. In that he felt that it could be used as a springboard to attack the Apartheid system he was not in any way reconciling himself to Apartheid in the statement he made. On the contrary he was asserting his position of complete rejection. What is also in the statement, apart from missing the point that it is one of rejection of undoing the Apartheid system, he was insistent that he was expressing his

personal opinion and not that of the UDF or any of its affiliates. In fact at the Natal regional meeting of the UDF and also the National Executive of the UDF there was complete endorsement for the position taken by the NWC and at all its previous congresses and there was no change. So that is what really should be accepted by everyone. The UDF has not changed its position and is in no way going to participate in institutions that are going to be surrogates of the Nationalist government.

Other: The question of participation would have to be discussed by the UDF and the democratic movement as a whole, so that if the UDF does decide (which is unlikely) to participate, it will be the decision not only of the UDF but of the whole democratic movement. But it has been proved in the past that parliamentary participation won't bring about change in this country. The future of this country lies with extra-parliamentary activities. So I think the position will be ... That will be the position. We only see the possibility of considering negotiating or entering into talks with the National Party if they actually commit themselves to dismantling apartheid. It is only then that we could actually consider having to talk and the talks would be aimed at the implementation of the people's demands... not to actually discuss the constitutional dispensation of the Nationalist Party and so on.

Question: Relations with Inkatha: For the moment anyway Buthelezi has taken a stand rejecting the Regional Services Councils and there seem to have been moves in Natal towards a reduction of the fighting - where does that leave the UDF's view and relations with Inkatha at the moment?

Other: I think that the position of the UDF as regards Inkatha also remains unchanged, because you'll remember that UDF has never been the source of violence or ... with Inkatha. Inkatha always attacked the UDF so that the ball remains in their court. We believe that if Inkatha is sincere in their efforts to try to reconcile with the UDF, they should restrain their members. they should take this policy within their rallies and within their structures - stop their members from attacking the members of the UDF.

The UDF has at all times defended itself. Our relationship with Inkatha will not improve until firstly, Inkatha pull out of the Bantustan structures; stop being the arm for the state in that particular region of South Africa where it is actually administering apartheid and is responsible for the continued oppression and exploitation of our people.

Billy Nair: Just to add that even if it is, like Kangwane, a participant in the Bantustan structures, it should not... Now you see, even if Inkatha is a part of the Bantustan structure, its attitude to the movement generally has been

one of hostility for reasons of its own. Unlike Kangwane, which is also a participant in the Bantustan system, yet it sees itself not as an enemy of the democratic movement.

The movement, UDF, the ANC and COSATU; the democratic movement generally - all their affiliates and so on; do not regard... or the fight is not against Inkatha, the fight is against the state. The question that arises is 'why should Inkatha enter the agenda when there are school boycotts, children are demanding books and an end to school fees and the whole rotten system of Bantu education, why should Inkatha send its vigilantes to attack the students? Why should Inkatha or its members, or members of UWUSA, attack COSATU and its members when they are fighting for decent wages and working conditions? These are the questions that must be answered.

People want decent homes, people want more land - is Inkatha actually addressing those fundamental issues? Is it supportive of the demands of the democratic movement for a democratic and unified South Africa? Now these are the issues. Violence has not sprung up from the UDF or any organisations affiliated to it. On the contrary, at our funerals, at memorial services - the bloodbath at Victoria Mxenge's memorial service: we couldn't have instigated that because it was our memorial service, organised by the UDF. It was Inkatha and the police that came. There is ample evidence for that.

When the NECC called a conference to discuss the issue of Bantu education and the problems relating to school boycotts, Inkatha sent two busloads of its impis, in the wide glare of the public, the press and everyone for them to see - they were dressed in full regalia of Inkatha - to attack the NECC delegates. The burnt out cars, they attacked our delegates, and it ended in a bloodbath. This is without any provocation whatsoever on the part of NECC or any of its delegates. That amply illustrates the question: where does Inkatha stand in relation to the democratic struggle? For the removal of the apartheid system? If that is clear, then for heaven's sake join hands with us. That goes for everyone else.

Question: What about other groups, where there have been certain conflicts in other regions? I'm thinking particularly of AZAPO and some of the groups linked to it - AZANYU and so on - have relations with those groups become less hostile over the past year or so?

Billy Nair: The police have been *agent provocateurs* especially in the Eastern Cape, who were used by the state, and this was constantly drawn to the attention of AZAPO, but only very late in the day they came to appreciate that there were certain members of AZAPO - people parading as leaders

of AZAPO - who were responsible for the atrocities that were committed against our people in the Eastern Cape. It is then that they took action to isolate the people responsible as being enemies of the people...

Question: Is that Maqina?

Billy Nair: Maqina yah. Then you had a similar situation

...(inaudible piece)...

BILLY NAIR: In so far as our general membership is concerned, our affiliates, we insisted upon, through our various structures not to be distracted by in-fighting or fights within organisations but to actually resolve conflicts because after all we cannot afford to dissipate our energies - that goes for Inkhata or any other organisation - AZAPO .

WE cannot be distracted from our main struggle - our thrust is against the system, to bring down Apartheid as quickly as possible. Our appeal has always been for everyone to close ranks and in that context whether its AZAPO or Inkhata or whoever it may be to throw in their weight behind the democratic struggle and not to allow themselves to be used by the system that has exploited some of these things for its own use by publishing its own propaganda , its own leaflets showing sometimes that the UDF is attacking AZAPO, or calling on UDF to attack AZAPO and vice versa. Some people because of the lack of political consciousness they may be easily taken up by state propoganda. Police actually distribute anti - UDF leaflets and anti - AZAPO leaflets in order to cause confusion. What we have said and what we insist upon is that people should close ranks not to be divided and dissipate their energies by in-fighting.

QUESTION: Now in that regard the UDF also seems to have taken a strong line against any possible development of factionalism within its own ranks in order that any differences would not become divisions. Why is it seen as important to combat factionalism?

OTHER: I think as far as that is concerned efforts have been made since ...(inaudible)... to promote ideological coherence within UDF and all the regions appointed educational officers to facilitate that process. With the establishment of the publication ISIZWE we made sure that the so-called ideological differences within the democratic movement are debated.

Now at the last NWC it was reported that much progress has been made thus far in that differences between the regions and also between some individuals and groups within the UDF have been resolved. So we see that process as ongoing. We

believe that some of the problems within the UDF, the so-called intellectual problems were not really intellectual but sometimes you find that they are actually personal. So we have decided to concentrate on political issues and discuss practically issues which confront our organisations and in that way we will be able to move closer to an ideological understanding as far as our struggle is concerned. There generally is agreement that there were some hiccoughs here and there which we are resolving in this way.

BILLY NAIR: In that context where you have the manifestation of regional discipline also sectionalism, all manifestations of racism whether it may be anti-whiteism, anti-Indianism or anti-Africanism. Now within a short space of time to the credit of the UDF they were able to fairly effectively bring about a greater understanding between the so-called races.

The regions for instance wanted to display the hegemony of other regions, the left versus right, so-called nationalists and leftists. These are some of the things that are constantly been attended to. We have succeeded to a great extent. The UDF has proved to be quite an attractive force. Notwithstanding the state propoganda against UDF you have more and more whites seeing the need to join the UDF. From that point of view we have scored some good successes.

QUESTION: *It does appear that to a certain extent the UDF has moved a little bit away from its traditional front form and taken on a tighter organisational form, is that perhaps reflected in the decision to adopt the Freedom Charter?*

OTHER: The formation of the UDF was a political response to a situation. At that particular time the different small organisations from different areas so they need to come together and pool their resources and confront the problem as one. You find that they had their own different programmes and different approaches to the problem itself. They needed to come together to fight those initiatives on the part of the state.

When the elections were over the concentration was on building organisations and in the course of that struggle the ideological questions came into play and that is where the different organisations had to look at the political and ideological aspect of our struggle. And this laid the basis for the same understanding as we see today. I think that it should be understood that the Front is a political initiative. Its not only right wing there and left wing coming together but it is an initiative of the people of this country to try to confront the situation. So that is why it was very easy for people to reach the same understanding politically.

BILLY NAIR: The UDF has maintained its position as a front of various organisations . By working together and uniting in action in the course of the last 4 years there is an identity of interests and in regard to practically all aspects of how we see a future South Africa. So hence the adoption of the Charter did not come as something that was just..(inaudible)...It was the development over the last 4 years that catapulted the UDF into a position where it was confident enough and because of the backing of its affiliates who had already adopted the Charter. There are very few exceptions. So it has been able to carry the people through every stage through action .

QUESTION: The relations with COSATU seem to be much closer than they have ever been with other elements of the trade union movement previously. Could you comment on the relationship between the UDF and COSATU?

BILLY NAIR: Well you see there too like with the affiliates in the UDF the relationship between the trade unions and UDF did not come about accidentally. There too it was a gradual process and its in the course of struggle and joint action that arose when both the UDF and COSATU found the need to spearhead the broad democratic movement. It arose through joint action last year - May Day, June 16 and the call for united action. So a committee was set up embracing UDF and COSATU together with the churches, SACC , SACBC and the NECC to spearhead the campaign. to broaden out .That has borne fruit - the action that was taken in recent months had widespread support of even those organisations who were outside the ranks of the UDF.

So the building bricks that were established was through action and most of the rank and file members of COSATU have already been working in the community structures. So the adoption of the Charter ,the need for forming joint structures at a national and local level was seen by both the UDF and COSATU .The resolutions that were adopted by COSATU for joint structures was an endorsement of the resolution that was adopted by the NWC. So you can see that there as been a complete meeting of wills . We have found through joint action the need for more cohesive structures between the two organisations. This goes beyond the so-called united front .

OTHER: Even if the leadership of the UDF and COSATU had been reluctant to come together the membership of the two organisations were bringing them together. They saw the UDF and the trade unions as one and the same thing.

QUESTION: The Dakar initiative seems to have created a lot of publicity within the country, a lot of discussion within the liberal sector of the white community and a lot of condemnation from the government, the far-right wing and

newspapers like Business Day and various others. That kind of initiative which is outside of the direct realm of the UDF and yet does not seem to be competing with UDF, how beneficial do you think that is to the struggle, to creating dissent against the government within the white community?

OTHER: We don't see the democratic struggle as being only through the UDF so that any initiativeIt helps in the process of politicising the whites about real issues, showing whites that the real struggle lies outside parliament and exposing white people to the realities of the democratic movement. We are actually fighting for a future which will cater for any person.

QUESTION: What would you see as the main task of whites in the UDF? Where should they be looking in terms of organising their own community?

OTHER: Well its very difficult to organise the white community because the white community is privileged. But at the same time the time and initiative should actually be directed toward organising the Afrikaner community because they are making sure that the present system continues. If we had inroads in the white community and the Afrikaner community in particular ,the universities, their communities, their churches - that will benefit the democratic movement as a whole because they have never been exposed to the reality of the situation. They should be exposed to the ideas of the democratic movement, the UDF, COSATU and also the ANC itself. There is that need for contact as well between the democratic movement and the Afrikaner community in particular

BILLY NAIR: The Dakar initiative also points to the fact that a great deal of disaffection with the Nats and that is amongst the Afrikaners themselves. there is need for that initiative now to be taken further and we should not become isolationist or sectarian in our approach. Those comrades in the democratic movement who are affiliates of the UDF must adopt this broad outlook and to address their problems .They are a privileged group but they do have problems eg the ECC has been able to fairly effectively notwithstanding all its difficulties to address the question of conscription. Similarly they have other problems which must be driven home. The message of the democratic movement must not be confined any longer to the black sector as such. White democrats have to convey the message of the democratic movement to whites as a whole more effectively even to the extent of bringing out media concentrating their efforts on the Afrikaner so as to win them over to the democratic struggle.

OTHER: I think that the methods and issues which will be picked up to organise in the white community will obviously differ from those which are used to organise the African ...The fact that most whites during the election shifted towards the CP and towards the right is indicative of the fact that ...They also fear their future, they believe wrongly that the National Party will protect them as far as their security is concerned. So we need to expose that their future and security lies in their actually joining and participating in the democratic movement .

QUESTION: The government has no clear reform strategy which is viable, it is doomed to failure. On the other hand it has not succeeded in its repressive mechanisms of crushing the democratic movement. Where does that leave the imperialist agenda for South Africa. They have clearly been looking in the past towards the creation of third forces towards creating divisions and yet these have not come about. What are the dangers of the imperialist strategy for South Africa ?

BILLY NAIR: The first line of defence of imperialist interests of the Nats themselves after all they are the protectors of their interests and investments. The grand imperialist design has always been to make South Africa a (inaudible) imperial power like Israel in the Southern African context so that it will be a protector of imperialist interests throughout the Southern African region. There the Nats have failed because of the Apartheid system. Quite a number of contradictions have arisen between them and the imperialist backers. But still they would like to see Apartheid go .So there's quite a lot of arm twisting in order to get the Nats to change course.

On the other hand they are very much concerned about the development of the struggle and it is for fear of losing everything that they possess here that they want the Nats to change direction. They are caught within their own contradictions. The Nats cannot hold on any longer without using brute force - that too does not make them very happy. The creation of a third force, the Muzorewas for instance, that too . The very Dakar initiative , the trips to Lusaka demonstrates again that the ANC is a very important factor to the solutions of the problems of this country and we have repeated that over and over again.

The Schultz meeting with Tambo notwithstanding the strings that were attached to it subsequently and with the anti communist ? by the State Dept, the so-called infiltration of the Communists in the ANC - all this was to try to placate the Nats here. So they are trying to isolate the so-called communists from the nationalists . Now this is typical of imperialism and of course the ruling class in any country. But by Nat definition all of us are communists - anyone who

is opposed to the Apartheid system. So it means they will have to eliminate the entire populace or all those opposed to the Apartheid system in order to negotiate with the Nats themselves. People have openly said and this has come from members of COSATU that if you say that fighting for freedom and decent wages and working conditions and adopting the Charter and fighting for a living wage is tantamount to Communism then we are proud to be communists.

So whatever tricks they play today it is too late. People have been fully exposed to the bogey of Communism and people are actually proudly raising the red flag at funerals with impunity. The hammer and sickle is flying all over the place. So the possibility of a third force is out- they may try it but they will struggle. What we see is that there area number of contradictions between the ruling class here and the imperialist backers. They want to help out the Nats from the mess they find themselves in but the NATs in their intransigence wouldn't like to be helped out. They are pulling out all stops to get the Nats on track because they fear losing everything, they fear that the red flag may be hoisted here not the black, green and gold. That is what they are worried about and it is in this context that they may very well be pressuring even the ANC to salvage the pieces in the hope that they will displace the so-called communists.

QUESTION: What do you see as UDFs main tasks in the months ahead?

BILLY NAIR: I think its been summed up in the programme of action of UDF . Our immediate programme is first of all that UDF is going to adopt the Charter on its 4th anniversary . Thereafter there are a whole number of issues such as defending the UDF . There's a campaign "Hands off UDF" in order to protect UDF structures from any further attacks by the state. Its not a slogan but born out by the reality of the situation. We have decided that we are going to advance and at the same time to consolidate and to defend the organisation. Those three words actually embody what we intend doing in the near future. We will restructure ourselves to meet the vigilante threats, to meet the state onslaught. We won't let up on any front.

OTHER: Its clear that this present emergency is mainly directed at the UDF to crush it . So we are going to consolidate and advance .