

THE RESTRICTIONS:

What were the Govt's motives?

The South African Government should not be allowed to use banning and restriction orders on individuals and organisations to generate disunity within Black political ranks.

In a paper for Clarion Call on the implications of the recent restrictions, Dr Oscar Dhlomo, Minister of Education and Culture and Secretary-General of Inkatha, added that Blacks should, instead, counter the Government's divisive tactics by transforming the Draconian measures into instruments of Black unity.

"We must close ranks in defiance of the enemies of Black unity," he said.

Anybody who cherished the ideal of non-violent and democratic opposition to apartheid must unreservedly condemn the recent restrictions on 18 organisations and certain of their leaders.

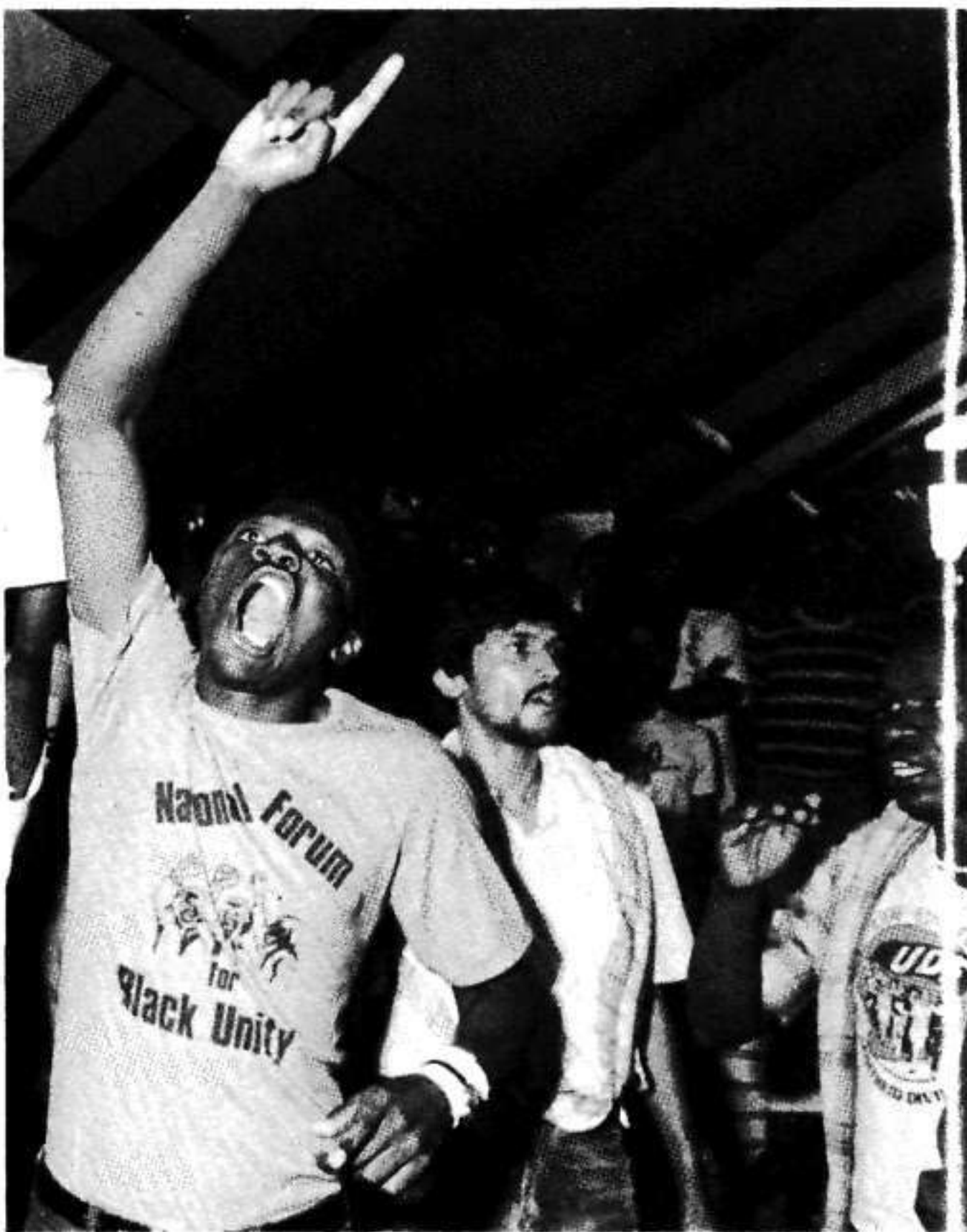
Dr Dhlomo asked what the real motives of the South African Government were with regard to the restrictions.

"Is Black disunity a National Party priority?" KwaZulu and Inkatha were tempted to conclude that it was, he added.

"We are constantly asked by cynics of all descriptions why the South African Government decided to restrict the UDF, COSATU, AZAPO and others and left Inkatha and UWUSA unrestricted.

"Obviously, the South African Government must have been fully aware that certain political observers and leaders would begin to speculate that Inkatha was not banned because it allegedly 'co-operated with the apartheid regime' and therefore could not be a trusted ally in the Black liberation struggle.

"This is a classic smear tactic.



"During the past few months we have already been subjected to this apartheid-inspired speculation, which we vehemently reject. We know what game is being played.

"The Government has tried to pull the rug from beneath our feet in the past – there is no reason for us to think that they have stopped trying to do so. For us the real enemy has always been apartheid and the racist policies of successive South African Governments.

"To try to marginalise us politically just won't work. We won't allow it, we

will continue to oppose the Government's racist legislation. We will continue to strive for a united, non-racial South Africa.

"No matter our differences with some organisations in the struggle, we have always recognised that they revolve around tactics and strategies and that we are totally united in a common aim of destroying apartheid."

Dr Dhlomo said he felt it was unfortunate that ANC President, Mr Oliver Tambo, and Commonwealth Secretary-General, Sir Shridath Ramphal, had

"walked into a Government trap" when expressing their views as to why Inkatha had not been restricted.

"These two distinguished leaders have said that Inkatha was not banned because unlike other organisations it does not pose a political threat to the South African Government.

"It is remarks such as this that ensure that the apartheid-inspired roots of Black disunity continue to sink deeper into our society."

Inkatha found it strange, he added, that the SA Government decided to restrict the UDF at a time when a strategic debate was going on within the organisation on the question of participation or non-participation in Government-created structures.

"This is the kind of debate Inkatha had to grapple with more than a decade ago when the homelands policy was rammed down our throats by the Government.

"Restricting the UDF has of course meant that this debate – no matter what its outcome would have been – was nipped in the bud by the very same Government that claims to be the champion of negotiation politics in our country."

Inkatha also found it strange that this same restriction was imposed at a time when leaders like Mr Archie Gumede and others, whom the Government has now clamped down on, were co-operating with Inkatha leaders in promoting UDF / Inkatha peace talks and negotiations in the strife-torn Pietermaritzburg area.

"Once again the restrictions meant that these vital UDF / Inkatha negotiations could not continue and the SA Government could claim that so-called Black-on-Black violence and not apartheid was the greatest socio-political problem in our country," Dr Dhlomo added.

"All these disturbing developments prompt us to ask: How serious is the South African Government in its declaration that it wants to negotiate with all leaders who subscribe to the politics of negotiation?"

"How involved is the South African Government in clandestine attempts to foster disunity within Black ranks in an effort to prolong apartheid and White domination?"

Dr Dhlomo said he believed Black leaders should at all times keep the following axioms in mind whenever the South African Government acted against their organisations:



Mr Oliver Tambo "fell into a Govt trap"

*Why not
Inkatha?*

*Is Black disunity
a priority?*

■ Political organisations in South Africa did not ban or unban themselves. This was the sordid task reserved for the South African Government. Therefore, in as much as it would be futile and shortsighted to ask the UDF (and not the SA Government) why it was restricted, it would be equally futile to ask Inkatha why it was not restricted.

■ As far as Inkatha was aware, it was not the policy of the UDF, COSATU, AZAPO, Inkatha or any other organisation to get itself banned or restricted.

■ A banning order was therefore an unwelcome and regrettable setback in the liberation struggle and one which should never be used as a yardstick to sort out so-called authentic freedom fighters from so-called collaborators. It would be unfair, for instance, to dismiss an indefatigable human rights activist like Archbishop Desmond Tutu as insincere in his campaign simply because he has never been banned or imprisoned for political offences.

■ If Black politics were to decree that all authentic political leaders had to graduate from Pollsmoor Prison or Robben Island, or that they first needed to be annointed by a banning or restriction order, then the struggle would be delayed indefinitely. Similarly, if Black politics were to decree that a political organisation acquired a certificate of authenticity via a banning or restriction order, then many authentic but as yet unbanned political organisations would be unable to mobilise the populace in the interests of the struggle.

