AN ANALYSIS OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE WITH SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO THE ROLE OF THE UNITED DEMOCRATIC FRONT IN SOUTH AFRICA

BY

JACQUELINE DAKU-MANTE

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Faculty of Humanities, University of Pretoria

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Supervisor: Prof M. Hough

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To God almighty for giving me the strength to go through this programme.

To my supervisor for his guidance.

To my friends and family who lost out on my presence during this time.

To Paula and Cara for their secretarial and administrative support

(i)

<u>DEDICATION</u>

The study is dedicated to all advocates of peace and justice

TABLE OF CONTENTS

(iii)

CHAPTER THREE: AN OVERVIEW OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE IN SOUTH AFRICA UP TO THE BEGINNING OF THE 1980S

CHAPTER FOUR: THE FORMATION AND OBJECTIVES OF THE UNITED DEMOCRATIC FRONT (UDF) IN SOUTH AFRICA.

CHAPTER FIVE: THE UNITED DEMOCRATIC FRONT AND CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE STRATEGIES

CHAPTER SIX: EVALUATION

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.   Identification of the research theme

Civil disobedience dates back from as far as the 1919 revolution in which the Egyptians fought against British occupation. Documented evidence of civil disobedience has been categorised into waves, with the first wave being the civil disobedience movements of Poland, Bolivia, Uruguay and the Philippines between 1980 and 1986. The second wave was that in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union in 1989. In this year, communist regimes in six Eastern and Central European countries met non-violent resistance which brought down the one party state system. The third wave was in Sub-Saharan Africa. From Benin to Burkina Faso, Guinea, Senegal and Mali, waves of democratisation removed through massive nonviolence, old regimes of those countries, with the best known one being in South Africa with the removal of apartheid in 1994 (Johansen, 2007:149-156).

However, it was the works of notable proponents of civil disobedience such as Thoreau and Gandhi that attracted scholarly interest. Thoreau in his classic "On the Duty of Civil Disobedience" (1849) and Gandhi's "Autobiography: The Story of my Experiments with Truth" (1983) explains the concept of Sayagraha which literally means insistence on truth and which promoted passive resistance where resistance was expected to be basically non-violent. This concept of passive resistance is what subsequently developed into civil disobedience.

From an era of civil disobedience mainly involving the non-payment of taxes, civil disobedience has expanded into many forms but with one general aim, namely to oppose laws or rules deemed oppressive. Thoreau at the time, simply took the path of "opting out". His essay contributed greatly to the understanding of civil disobedience in modern times and has helped shape the forms it has taken. To Thoreau, laws are not to be obeyed if they are unjust. While he was prepared to accept minor injustices, he was not prepared to obey laws if they served as a general injustice to others (Thoreau, 1849).

Albert Camus was another advocate of civil disobedience. In his novel titled "the rebel" he argues that there will always be violence and oppression in the world and as such man has a permanent responsibility of refusing to obey or to oppose these injustices (Melber, 2000:235–244).

Advocates of civil disobedience such as Martin Luther King, have stressed the justification and motivation for the use of civil disobedience. In a comment on civil disobedience, Martin Luther King noted that "the non-violent approach does not immediately change the heart of the oppressor. It first does something to the hearts and souls of those committed to it. It gives them self-respect; it calls up resources of strength and courage that they did not think they had. Finally, it reaches the opponent and so stirs his conscience that reconciliation becomes a reality" (Sandhi Institute, 2002).

A number of strategies are employed in civil disobedience. For example, civil disobedience can assume the form of social non-cooperation, economic non-cooperation, or political non-cooperation. Often it manifests as strikes, boycotts and protest marches (Sharp, 1990:42-45). Sometimes civil disobedience movements can assume a revolutionary character as was eventually evident in the strategies of the African National Congress (ANC) and the United Democratic Front (UDF) in the struggle in South Africa.

Notable as it is, the law breaking feature of civil disobedience creates various issues, in that first and foremost, breaking the law is wrong because with the exception of cruel and tyrannical governments, every citizen is more than legally obliged to obey the laws. However many actions when seen in the light of prevailing circumstances may prove not to be wrongful. Again, not every act that deliberately breaks the law is an act of civil disobedience. Bank robberies and assault for example, are criminal acts because they are often committed in the hope that the perpetrators will not be apprehended. Civil disobedience on the other hand must have an element of protest, must be public, and conscientious. Hence the element of "conscientious protest publicly performed must be present" (Cohen, 1971: pp 10-23).

The apartheid period in South Africa and the post-apartheid era, is replete with acts of civil disobedience making South Africa a classic case study of the concept of civil disobedience. Civil disobedience started in South Africa at the beginning of the century during Ghandi's clashes with Prime Minister Jan Smuts and the South African government. This first instance in history of mass civil disobedience on a significant scale, was aimed at the country's racial policies (Heyns 1993:1).

So pervasive was it that in April 1992, the Goldstone Commission appointed an international panel of experts to advise one of its committees on the most desirable rules and procedures for the conduct of mass demonstrations, marches and picketing. In his submission the chairman of the panel noted that "demonstrators want to affect the actions of government, of institutions or of powerful private parties." The panel thus "recognises that those effects can come about in many several ways including: a symbolic demonstration of the breadth and depth of views on a particular issue; boycotts or strikes supported by picketing which in turn, can be either purely persuasive or more or less threatening to those who ignore the pickets; through the consequences of various forms of peaceful civil disobedience interfering with the normal operation of a government and its citizens and by violence or the destruction of property or the threat of these consequences" (Heymann, 1992:1-3).

The panel noted that in some locations in South Africa, a demonstration could easily turn into "armed violence, instigated either by opponents of the demonstrators or small violent groups within an otherwise peaceful demonstration…" (Heymann, 1992:1-3) In South Africa in the 1980s especially, it became difficult to distinguish between civil disobedience and revolutionary actions which included violence. Currently some manifestations of civil disobedience still exist in South Africa.

2.   Study objectives

The main objective of the study is to analyse the concept of civil disobedience by providing an overview of its historical development, with a focus on its objectives and strategies and how it was applied in South Africa specifically by the UDF in the 1980s. In addition to the main objective, the study will aim at achieving the following specific objectives, namely:

➢ To determine if civil disobedience as a concept and its strategies, is going through or has gone through any notable changes since its inception.

➢ To assess the extent to which UDF policies and strategies fitted into the framework of civil disobedience.

➢ To briefly compare manifestations of civil disobedience in South Africa in the pre-1994 period with manifestations in the post-1994 period.

3. Literature survey

Much of the literature on civil disobedience has developed from the 1840s since the work of Thoreau titled "On Civil Disobedience." His work dwells on how far governments can go in exercising authority and if indeed, they are vested with this authority. Another notable aspect of his work dwells on who has the right to decide what is just and unjust and subsequently if one has to obey or not. He does not deny that there is such a thing as a government which is mandated to exercise authority over its people (Wikipedia, 2013). He does not believe in conforming and having to accept the prescribed methods of redress because as he puts it "they take too much time, and a man's life will be gone…It is not my business to be petitioning the Governor or the Legislature any more than it is theirs to petition me; and if they should not hear my petition, what should I do then?" (Thoreau, 1849).

The era of the 1840s saw civil disobedience manifested mainly as a passive form of resistance. Kuper cites the contribution of Ghandi and his *Satyagraha* to the development of knowledge on passive resistance. He identifies the classification of passive resistance movements on the basis of the motives of the resisters as put forward by Ghandi. While passive resistance in the orthodox English usage has been regarded as the weapon of the weak, in other instances, non-violence in itself is regarded as an expression of strength. Another distinction is made between passive resistance and civil disobedience on the basis of the mechanisms used. Civil disobedience has a more active component but both are fundamentally non-violent. These mechanisms function in a way to render the system of domination embarrassing to the rulers or by converting the rulers through a change of heart (Kuper, 1960:74-75).

Sharp presents an extensive analysis of the methods and various strategies used in non-violent actions such as civil disobedience. He emphasises the fact that non-violent action is not inaction but rather action that is non-violent. In a number of cases, non-violent action has been selected because it was deemed as the most likely to succeed. Sharp discusses methods such as non-violent protest and persuasion, non-cooperation and non-violent intervention. In addition certain mechanisms of change are linked to non-violent action. These are namely, conversion, accommodation, non-violent coercion, and disintegration. Some of these methods may translate into actions such as boycotts, strikes, withdrawal of allegiance to a particular authority, among others. The importance of strategy, the importance of the *loci* of power, the link between repression and non-violent action, and the effect of combative non-violent discipline resulting in what has come to be known as political *Jiu-jitsu*, have all been shown to be major factors in non-violent action (Sharp, 1990:37-65).

Cohen highlights what civil disobedience is and is not and how this is linked to the law. Civil disobedience is classified on the basis of whether it is direct or indirect, the morality of civil disobedience and if civil disobedience should be punished or not. The interplay between the rightness of civil disobedience and its justification is also dwelt upon. This follows the notion that an act is justifiable if a reasoned demonstration of its rightness can be given (Cohen, 1971:1-92). Since there is much uncertainty and disagreement over what is meant by rightness and how it is to be established, there is bound to be controversy over claims that acts of civil disobedience are justified or unjustified. This controversy arises from what Cohen terms the seven arguments against civil disobedience (Cohen, 1971:92-172).

In providing a historical account of the trends in civil disobedience, as far as South Africa is concerned, Du Pisani points out that the era in South Africa where the freedom of political expression was preached but hardly practised, gave way to an era where the safeguarding of human rights was high on the political agenda. He however notes that the way in which this political freedom was granted after being passed into law, varied considerably depending on the era. The eras have been categorised as 1910-48, the pre-Apartheid era; 1950s, the Coloured vote and

defiance campaigns of the 1950s; suppression of extra-parliamentary protest of the 1960s and 1970s; resurgence of black resistance and the state of emergency in the 1980s; and from 1989, the turning point protest marches (Du Pisani, 1990:577-587). Of all the eras, the 1980s have been noted as the most active in terms of the intensity of civil disobedience.

Lodge highlights the strategy of "mass action" proposed and adopted by the leadership of the ANC. This included stay at home campaigns, political strikes, bus boycotts, and the observance of "prayer and dedication" by resisters (1983:91-109).

The South African government's handling of civil disobedience acts was rather high handed, aggravating the situation further. To counter the various and increasing acts of civil disobedience, the government implemented a system of "total strategy" which was intended to defuse protest outbreaks and to bring economic and political stability to South Africa. Its purpose was to maintain white hegemony while restructuring some aspects of the social and political order. This however led to greater resistance and subsequent calls for mass civil disobedience (Worden, 1955: pp 127-137).

The UDF on its part, engaged in civil disobedience by embarking on tactics such as rent boycotts where households in Vereeniging, had withheld rent and payments for utilities since 1984; consumer and bus boycotts were for example, embarked upon in Port Elizabeth, where they refused to buy from white South Africans and there was a bus boycott in Soweto, ordered by UDF leaders, against an increase of 17 per cent in bus fares (Lodge, 1991:95-96).

The role of trade unions, civic organisations and student groups among others, saw to it that the education struggle for example, contributed to producing a generation of anti-apartheid activists. The trade unions on their part, raised the revolutionary consciousness of the working class and the civic associations also created new structures such as the street committees which challenged the authority of the local government (Houston, 1991:264-267).

While much of the literature on the concept of civil disobedience provides a detailed account of methods of non-violent resistance, there is not much available on the links between non-violent resistance and revolutionary objectives and methods as was the case in South Africa regarding the activities of the UDF and the ANC. The works of writers such as Sharp provide a detailed account of methods, strategies and mechanisms of change in civil disobedience, but not much on the possibility of the coexistence of civil disobedience with revolutionary strategies (Sharp, 1990:60-77).

Despite the existence of sources on both the concept of passive resistance and civil disobedience, and sources relating to these campaigns in South Africa, including that of the UDF in the 1980s, such as Lodge (1991), UDF (1987) and Houston (1999), certain voids remain. The interplay between violent and non-violent actions rather than their total separation and the extent to which civil disobedience in South Africa, especially in that period, followed the prescriptions and strategies of civil disobedience theory, raise the need for a specific analysis of these aspects which this study aims to address.

4.   Formulation and demarcation of the research problem

The main research question to be answered in this study is to assess to what extent civil disobedience can co-exist with revolutionary organisations using violence to achieve their objectives.

Secondary questions to be investigated are the following:

➢ What notable changes have occurred over time to the meaning and practise of civil disobedience, and which factors led to these changes?

➢ How did the policies and strategies of the UDF exemplify the concept of civil disobedience?

➢ Does there appear to be any resemblance between current manifestations of civil disobedience and the campaign of the 1980s?

Following the research questions as set out above, the study is based on the following assumptions.

- Civil disobedience has developed into a more fully blown strategy than the original strategy of passive resistance.

- The policies and strategies of the UDF initially resembled some aspects of civil disobedience but eventually deviated from this due to a change in strategy.

- Some contemporary manifestations of civil disobedience in South Africa for example from the 1950s to the end of 2012, resemble certain methods used in the 1980s but the objectives differ.

5. Methodology and sources

The study will use description and analysis, as well as some brief comparisons of how civil disobedience manifested in the 1980s in South Africa as opposed to the current situation, and how strategies changed.

For the conceptual framework related to civil disobedience, the study will among others, use Sharp (1973, 1990), Cohen (1971) and also Heyns (1993) as they deal extensively with civil disobedience and associated concepts such as passive resistance. The conceptual framework to be used will largely be based on analysing the concept of civil disobedience to include its origins, contemporary meaning and more recent examples of its manifestations in for instance the former Eastern Europe.

The case study will focus on South Africa as a country which is and has been beleaguered by a culture of civil disobedience. The development of civil disobedience within the context of the pre-1994 period will be discussed, and specifically that of the UDF in the 1980s with a brief reference to some continued manifestations in South Africa in the post-1994 period.

Primary as well as secondary sources will be used in the study. Primary sources include documents from the various political and pressure groups such as the UDF, for example *Isizwe: The Nation, Journal of the United Democratic Front*; Report *of the National Working Committee of the United Democratic Front* (1987); ANC documents; debates of Parliament; and speeches by notable figures, among others.

Secondary sources will include annual yearbooks of the South African Institute for Race Relations as well as books such as *On Civil Disobedience and Civil Government in South Africa* (Heyns,1993);*The Creation of A Mass Movement: Strikes and Defiance, 1950-1952.* (Lodge,1983); and journal articles such as *Civil Disobedience and beyond: Law, Resistance and Religion in South Africa* (Murphy, 1992).

6.   Structure of the research

Chapter 1: Introduction

The first chapter will serve as an introduction and will outline the objectives and structure of the study, the research problems that will be addressed, and the methodology and assumptions of the study.

Chapter 2: Civil Disobedience: A Conceptual Framework.

This chapter will provide a conceptual framework on the objectives, strategies and methods of civil disobedience, and an overview of its evolution to date. It will distinguish civil disobedience from concepts such as passive resistance, political violence, insurgency and revolutionary warfare.

Chapter 3: An Overview of Civil Disobedience in South Africa up to the Beginning of the 1980s.

This chapter will trace the origins of the Defiance Campaign in South Africa with a focus on events between the 1950s and 1960s as background to the later campaign led by the UDF.

Chapter 4: The Formation and Objectives of the UDF in South Africa.

This chapter will focus on the formation of the UDF; its structure, organisation and objectives; as well as the links between the UDF, the ANC and other protest movements in the 1980s.

Chapter 5: The UDF and Civil Disobedience Strategies.

This chapter will compare the strategies and tactics used by the UDF and the strategies contained in the theory of civil disobedience to identify similarities and

differences. It will also briefly indicate to what extent some manifestations of civil disobedience seem to still manifest in South Africa in the post-1994 period, and to what extent they resemble or differ from the manifestations in the 1980s.

Chapter 6: Evaluation

This chapter will serve as a summary and the assumptions formulated in the introductory chapter will be assessed. This will be followed by a brief conclusion.

CHAPTER TWO

THE CONCEPT OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

1.   Introduction

This chapter will address the concept of civil disobedience and related concepts and definitions. The objectives, elements and methods of civil disobedience will also be addressed, as well as how different circumstances and government types affect these. A brief overview of the historical development of civil disobedience is provided as a background to its more recent manifestations.

2.   Definitions and elements of civil disobedience

Various definitions of civil disobedience exist. Though a number of characteristics are common to these definitions, the concept of civil disobedience has evolved over time.

2.1.   Definitions

Every civilised community is governed by rules. Making these rules and enforcing them is primarily the function of government. As such, any civilised community requires the existence of a stable government, with the ability to make and enforce these rules. Respect for the law, is an essential ingredient in producing a functioning and stable society. There is however often a deliberate refusal to obey laws, hence criminality, or as a means to draw awareness to certain injustices or wrongdoings in society. When this takes on a non-violent form, it is referred to as civil disobedience (Cohen, 1971:1-3).

Civil disobedience has also been defined as "a public act which deliberately contravenes some law or measure endorsed by public authority and likely to be officially enforced…" (Harris, 1989:14). It has also been described as a kind of conscientious violation of the law, which seeks to maintain the values that laws promote. Others have described civil disobedience as disobedience intended to attain a change in the policy or the principle served or expressed by the law being disobeyed, or by another law (Gans, 1992:138).

11

It is also defined as a means of reforming the political and legal structure with the objective of changing or removing some laws which are deemed unjust (Vicencio-Villa, 1990:65-66). In addition, it has been stated that it refers to "any act or process of public defiance of a law or policy enforced by established governmental authorities, in so far as the action is premeditated, understood by the actors to be illegal or of contested legality, carried out and persisted in for limited public ends, and by way of carefully chosen and limited means" (Bay, 1971:76).

While the most common approach to civil disobedience is one that recognises it as a form of conscientious, public and non-violent protest against a law or act which is considered unjust, the objectivity of conscience is raised. Issues of what the limits of conscience are, and the sanctity of law, come up as the disobedient is often asked to justify the acts by being ready to submit to whatever punishment is meted out to him or her. This is seen as being the basis on which some writers argue that one should only disobey where the wrong can truly be felt, and which can be judged as such on the grounds of moral standards. This approach has however been seen as turning disobedience into a kind of dramatic communication which will be rendered unjustifiable as long as there are reasonable and lawful channels of redress. This approach makes little of disobedience because disobedience exists to highlight wrong or unjust laws, and as such cannot take place only in the absence of reasonable and lawful channels (Zweibach, 1975:146).

From the above, certain points such as the need to break a law; the need for the civil disobedient to make a public show of his or her actions; that the action should not be violent; and an innate acceptance of the legitimacy of the system, although this could be an issue; submission to arrest and punishment among others, are common to all these definitions and these fundamentally form the pillars on which the elements of civil disobedience are based. The next section will analyse these salient characteristics emanating from the above definitions.

2.2. Elements of civil disobedience

The discussion on what constitutes civil disobedience highlights certain elements which seem to appear in most discourses on the subject. These elements however do not always render civil disobedience a clear issue.

2.2.1. Illegality

Civil disobedience connotes a situation where rules, regulations, decrees and commands are in place and are enforced by public or civil authorities. Disobedience must therefore be directed at public and civil rules and regulations, and not towards rules of a private nature such as that of an organisation or company (Harris, 1989:5).

Civil disobedience requires the breaking of rules or norms laid down by the state. When an act simply goes against social norms it cannot be deemed as an act of civil disobedience, especially when it does not break any laws. Apart from readiness on the part of the civil disobedient to take punishment that comes with his or her actions, illegality must also apply on two fronts. In the first instance, the civil disobedient must break laws and thereby commit a crime. In the second instance, in societies where the rule of law prevails, the question arises as to how narrow the definition of illegal should be in identifying civil disobedience. Where a narrow interpretation of the term "illegal" is preferred, it will mean that flouting of doubtful laws will not constitute civil disobedience. In this regard there is no such thing as 'legally justified civil disobedience". Fundamentally and by definition civil disobedience is unlawful, and if conduct is approved by the legal system, it becomes legal (Heyns, 1991: 14-45).

The concept of civil disobedience presupposes that the obedience which disobedience negates is one owned by government. Others however have a different view in that they see the obligation to obey as something owed to a community of juridical men in the name of a common life, to which the government is little more than a party in a formalised way. While many approach civil disobedience on the basis of how one may confront public authority, others deem the critical problem to

13

be one of specifying the reasons why one may do so, and the conditions under which one is not bound to obey (Zweibach, 1975:145).

2.2.2. Non-violence

This is mostly considered as the fundamental and distinguishing character of civil disobedience which sets it apart from other forms of resistance. It deviates from the assumption that violence can be effective only when met with violence, and is actually designed for opponents who have the capacity and ability and willingness to use violent sanctions. The asymmetrical environment created between the seemingly weak and strong, requires that once adopted, the users of non violent action must keep to it (Sharp, 1973: Part Two: 109-110).

Non-violence is perceived to be effective because it functions as moral *Jiu-jitsu* as this gives non-violent resisters the moral high ground. This is achieved through the refusal to use violence, coupled with shows of honesty, determination and moral courage. This ensures that oppressors are taken off guard. (Danielson, 2003:375) The non-violence and the goodwill of the victim act in the same way that the lack of physical opposition by the user of physical *Jiu-jitsu* does, and this causes the attackers to lose their moral balance. Instead of gaining support from the masses, the attackers lose the usual support they would have had if the resisters had used violence. This strategy throws the attackers off guard (Gregg, 1971: 51).

However some have argued that there are really no differences between violent and non-violent methods of protest. They argue that non-violent resistance could also impose suffering and restriction of freedom and destruction of property, and as such it is not easy to distinguish between violent and non-violent coercion, and between coercion and persuasion (Danielson, 2003: 376).

There are various schools of thought on what constitutes non-violence. Three of these notions are however the commonest ones. Firstly, there are the absolute pacifists who believe that personal suffering is a vital and necessary component of non-violent civil disobedience. However through this act of suffering, innocent people may directly or indirectly suffer as well. This tends to negate the purpose of

14

engaging in non-violent acts. Another school of thought is that of the principled pacifists who through their own judgement of what is right or wrong, act accordingly in terms of how far they should go with their actions and the target of suffering. Making the right choices which will ultimately generate the minimum use of violence, is not always an easy task. Thirdly, there are the pragmatic pacifists whose actions are geared towards specific objectives such as social justice. For example to achieve social justice, non-violence then becomes an acceptable means to an end (Bond, 1988:86-87).

2.2.3. Openness

For civil disobedience to make an impact and have the desired effect, the act of civil disobedience must be performed in the open, with an open acceptance of responsibility for the disobedient action and a willingness to face the consequences. Such open shows of civil disobedience within the community, give such actions the characteristic of being civic and democratic by providing a voice to people to communicate with those in authority on issues of concern to them, with the aim of getting those in authority to change their position on such issues (Heyns, 1991: 35-37).

2.2.4. Motivated by conviction

Acts of civil disobedience are not merely motivated by self-interest, neither by a desire to be cruel or simply defiant but by a conviction that a law, rule or policy is wrong. However there is definitely an underlying motive of self-interest in the choice of campaigns which people join. (Heyns, 1991:3740)

2.2.5. Political acts

Politically-motivated civil disobedience aims to achieve some result of importance in the body politic. The speed of the change signifies the effectiveness of the action (Cohen, 1971:58). Political power breaks down when people refuse to give their support to the government or to obey it, and in this way, the support that

governments require is denied them. The duration and numbers involved will eventually it is assumed, lead to loss of political power (Sharp, 1973:16).

There is however a very narrow meaning as to what is political, as only acts of disobedience which are accompanied by full intentions of achieving political results, are truly political (Gans, 1992:138-139).

Politically motivated acts can be defensive or result oriented. When a person refuses to comply with a particular legal requirement because he or she considers the requirement to be wrong but does not intend to do anything to bring about change, then the action is deemed as being defensive. Here the actions of the disobedient are deemed to be private or internal. On the other hand, when the aim is to bring about change in the social system, then the action is results oriented and a public or external one. Gandhi however rejected the term "passive resistance" as a description for his own acts of defiance because he regarded his approach as active and confrontational. His civil disobedience was consequently results-oriented (Heyns, 1991:41-42).

The next section will attempt to analyse some of the concepts related to civil disobedience by emphasising some of their similarities and differences.

3.   Related concepts

Civil disobedience has been used interchangeably with terms such as passive resistance and non-cooperation, among others. This tends to make civil disobedience a very broad concept.

3.1.   Passive or non-violent resistance

Ghandi is known as an exponent of *Satyagraha*, a form of passive resistance. He categorises passive resistance based on the motives of the resisters. Firstly passive resistance is often described as a weak strategy. In contrast to civil disobedience where non-violence is a major component, the main consideration for passive resistance is expedience. However, passive resistance is regarded as a sign of strength, where the resister is convinced that violence is wrong in all circumstances,

and rather depends on the strength of the force of the soul as against the force of the body as advocated by Gandhi in his *Satyagraha* (insistence on truth) (Kuper, 1960:74-78).

In terms of the development of passive resistance, the works of the English poet Shelley, appear to have had an impact on Gandhi's approach. Shelley is attributed with the first ever statement of the principle of non-violent resistance through his poem the *Mask of Anarchy* (Wikipedia, 2010).

Though civil disobedience also relies mainly on non-violence and a willingness to take direct action, it is dependent for the most part, on mass participation. This distinguishes it from Gandhi's *Satyagraha* which is in theory, independent of mass support (Kuper, 1960:77).

Civil disobedience has more of an active than passive connotation even though it is also fundamentally non-violent. The first real use of the term civil disobedience appeared in the works of Thoreau in 1849, who it is believed adopted versions of Shelley's ideas on non-violent resistance. This greatly popularised the concept of civil disobedience (Wikipedia, 2010).

Civil disobedience, though a form of *Satyagraha*, was not so much of a spiritual process as a political process. While most literature focuses on the law breaking and disobedience aspect, Gandhi saw the civil nature, particularly in terms of how polite and civilised the disobedience was, as equally important (Shepherd, 2002). In this regard, Gandhi notes that "civil disobedience…presupposes a scrupulous and willing observance of all laws which do not hurt the moral sense. Civil disobedience is not a state of lawlessness and licence, but pre-supposes a law-abiding spirit combined with self-restraint" (King, 2002:296).

3.2.   Conscientious objection

Though civil disobedience is often confused with conscientious objection, they differ mainly in the goals they aim at achieving. While civil disobedience intends to change a policy or the principle served or expressed by the law being disobeyed,

conscientious objection is focused more on preserving the disobeyer's conscience with regard to his principles, values and beliefs (Gans, 1992: 138). This kind of protest may be understood as a violation of the law motivated by the dissenter's belief that he or she is morally prohibited from following the law because the law is either bad or wrong, totally or in part (Brownlee, 2009). Many demonstrations protesting against a law or rule may not necessarily constitute acts of civil disobedience if they are done within the boundaries of the law. For example, demonstrations and protest marches for which permission has been obtained from the relevant authorities are not categorised as acts of civil disobedience. Shortcomings in certain laws create room for these laws to be seen as wrong or unjust and the laws may be broken out of the conviction that they are morally unacceptable. These actions are borne out of conscientious objection and are not deemed to be acts of civil disobedience. This is often seen during military conscription where religious or other kinds of conscientious pacifists apply for permission to be engaged in a non-combatant and non-military kind of service (Cohen, 1971: 41-42).

3.3.   Revolution

Revolutions primarily seek the violent overthrow of existing authority and do not accept the legitimacy of the government. However, the civil disobedient generally accepts the legitimacy of the existing government and has as major objective, ensuring a change in an existing law or policy. Measures promoted by individuals such as Gandhi whose movement was mainly aimed at the termination of British authority in India, however often reflect the thin line between revolution and civil disobedience (Cohen.1971:42-47).

3.4.   Radical protest

The difference between radical protest and revolutionary action is not absolute just as is the case with revolutionary action and civil disobedience. They differ mainly in terms of the nature of the objectives. Acts of civil disobedience often have focused and limited objectives. Acts of terrorism or large-scale coercive violence are typically associated with a general aim of generating fear and insecurity while keeping any

specific aims or demands oblique. Revolutionary action is typified by a comprehensive objective to bring about a regime change. In terms of their revolutionary nature, there are however points of convergence between acts of radical protest and acts of civil disobedience as in the sabotage strategies used by Nelson Mandela and the ANC, while at the same time employing civil disobedience strategies (Brownlee, 2009).

The next section focuses on the development of civil disobedience, the ideas of the major proponents who gave impetus to the concept, and some of the past significant usages of civil disobedience by some of the major civil disobedience movements.

4.   Brief historical overview of civil disobedience

From the 1800s, civil disobedience in the form of non-violent direct action continued to evolve. Starting with the ideas of Thoreau and Gandhi, where disobedience manifested more in forms such as refusal of conscription into armies and a refusal to pay rents and taxes, the nature of civil disobedience has evolved and assumed many dimensions. Thoreau dwelt on two main principles, namely that governments can only govern if they have the consent of the people and secondly that justice takes precedence over laws enacted by government. To him it was the right of the individual to judge whether a law was right or wrong, and based on that if an individual wanted to obey those laws or not. He judged that the laws upholding slavery and supporting the Mexican War (1846–1848) were unjust and chose to spend a night in jail rather than submit to the unjust laws (Thoreau, 1849).

Gandhi is noted for his contribution to the concept of civil disobedience through his campaign of *Satyagraha* or mass civil disobedience in defiance of a British monopoly on the selling and collection of salt in India. Citizens were forced to buy the vital mineral from the British, who, in addition to exercising a monopoly over the manufacture and sale of salt, also imposed a heavy salt tax. Although India's poor suffered most under the tax, Indians required salt. Defying the Salt Acts, Gandhi reasoned, would be an ingeniously simple way for many Indians to break a British law non-violently (This Day in History, 1930).

The Great Depression of the 1930s gave impetus to an increase in civil movements in the United States (US) but declined with increased support for the war. The formation of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), Peacemakers, and the Student Non-Violent Co-ordinating Committee (SNCC), all attested to the force of civil disobedience as the solution to many social and political issues of the time. Through techniques such as non-violent sit-ins and freedom rides during the 1940s, CORE established itself as a movement to reckon with. On its part, its dramatic style of protest which involved refusal of bail and sit-ins at lunch counters in 1960, put the SNCC in the forefront of formidable civil movements in the US (Epstein, 1991:24-29).

In contrast to current descriptions of civil disobedience as a form of political theory or doctrine, civil disobedience in the 19th century US, was described more as a movement. In most of the 19th century movements, the driving force was the abolition of slavery and not the desire to project some political thought or moral issues (Hall, 1971:13-14).

From Poland through to El Salvador, Guatemala and East Germany, civil disobedience played a major part in bringing about internal structural changes. Of particular mention are the Polish movements of 1956, 1970-1971 and 1976; the Polish Workers' movements of 1980 to 1989, the non-violent revolutions in El Salvador and Guatemala in 1944; and the 1954 East German uprising among others. With regard to external circumstances, non-violent struggles have been used against foreign invasions such as major aspects of the Dutch anti-Nazi resistance from 1940 to 1945, and parts of the Norwegian resistance to the Quisling regime, among others (Sharp, 1990:8-9).

1989 is noted as the year in which the history of Eastern Europe was rewritten. A wave of civil disobedience actions following a change in the foreign policy of Moscow, together with internal and external circumstances such as the high cost of the occupation of Afghanistan; the force of popular resistance; and internal disagreements on the justification of an expansionist programme, resulted in the collapse of the Warsaw Pact, the fall of the Soviet Union, and the redrawing of the map of Eastern Europe. As has been noted, non-violent resistance thrives on internal conflict in the adversary's camp. The regimes of the Warsaw Pact realised they could

no longer depend on the support of the troops and tanks which were sent to East Germany, Hungary and Czechoslovakia to suppress demonstrations. Also a change in power relations gave impetus to non-violent struggle. The fall of the Berlin wall, and the projection of the human rights provisions of the Helsinki Accords also provided impetus for popular resistance in Eastern Europe. These significant developments were however not confined to Eastern Europe as there was a global wave in this direction (King, 2002:371-372).

Using the primary tools of monitoring, investigation and denunciation, The Service for Peace and Justice (SERPAJ) movement in Argentina, showcased the power of non-violent protest. This power was also evident in the activities of the International Fellowship for Reconciliation (IFOR) in the Philippines, which was involved in seminars and workshops on non-violent resistance. Radio Veritas, the Philippine Catholic broadcasting station aired messages from Gandhi, Martin Luther King and the Sermon on the Mount which encouraged listeners to follow these examples, in a show of how powerful non-violent protest could be (King, 2002:378). Following the arrest of the Burmese leader, Suu Kyi, the spreading of messages on videotapes, cassettes and buttons, coupled with her many speeches, and the numerous student demonstrations in Burma, attested to the momentum of non-violent protests even in the late 1980s and 1990s (King, 2002:390-396).

The next section will outline the various categories of civil disobedience to further analyse the concept.

5.   Categories of civil disobedience

The diverse and varied forms of civil disobedience acts arise out of the different categories into which civil disobedience acts can be placed. These categories are based on the manifest characteristics of civil disobedience, or on the perceived notions of what civil disobedience should be, or on who the targets of civil disobedience acts are.

5.1. Direct and indirect civil disobedience

Civil disobedience can be categorised in terms of it being direct or indirect. When the civil disobedience act is targeted specifically at legislation it is intended to change or influence, it is known as direct civil disobedience. For example, when there is a refusal to enlist as a way to prevent a war declared by a state. Indirect civil disobedience on the other hand, is disobedience in which the law whose change is attempted and the laws disobeyed in order to bring about this change, are different ones. An example would be a night vigil in a public place for which no permission has been granted, as a form of protest against an intended war (Gans, 1992:143-144).

5.2. Positive and negative civil disobedience

Civil disobedience is further categorised on the basis of it being positive or negative. In the case of a positive civil disobedience, the illegal act takes on the form of a commission. Here a legal provision is contravened through a positive act such as participation in a public demonstration which is prohibited by law. A negative form of civil disobedience would be the performance of an illegal act through omission. Here a positive legal provision is contravened through a negative act or inaction such as refusal to pay taxes (Heyns, 1991: 24-25).

5.3. Persuasive and coercive civil disobedience

Persuasive civil disobedience recognises the authority of legislation to determine the community's conduct. Though it is by definition illegal, persuasive civil disobedience does not have the aim to bring about illegal changes. The idea is that there should be the intention to obey the law, in the event of an unsuccessful attempt to change the existing law. However, coercive civil disobedience, aims at making it difficult for legislation to be the regulator of the conduct of society. In this way, coercive civil disobedience rejects the role of the law as a regulator of society's conduct (Gans, 1992:140-142).

5.4. Disintegrative civil disobedience

When coercion is not likely to produce the desired effect, the mechanism of disintegration is applied. By disintegration, the sources of power are removed to such an extent that the system becomes unworkable. The majority of the population rejects the authority of the rulers, and those who were in power no longer have access to the resources which facilitated governance by them. In such extreme cases of civil disobedience, the security forces deny government their loyalty with the aim of eroding the power base of the government (Sharp, 1990:64).

The next section will identify the various methods employed by civil disobedients, to draw attention to what they often deem as morally wrong laws, rules and policies. The relationship between non-violent methods and violent methods will be addressed in terms of how non-violent methods are used to offset violent methods often used by the authorities.

6. Methods of civil disobedience

Civil disobedience includes a vast range of non-violent methods which can be categorised into protests and persuasion, non-cooperation, and non-violent intervention. These non-violent methods act as agents of change regarding the social, political and economic structures of any given state or society depending on the socio-political situation of the country, and other factors such as how much experience people have had with the method and the numbers of people involved among others (Sharp, 1973: 109-115).

6.1. Protest and persuasion

Methods which employ protest and persuasion include parades, picket lines, vigils, posters and protest meetings among others. They are used simply to register opposition to something. For example, the picketers at several G8 summits and Climate Change Summits use this to express their dissatisfaction at the action and inaction of world powers to reverse the decline in the global environmental situation. A vigil for lives lost for example, may be used to agitate for the trial of those who perpetuated the genocide. The use of these methods may simply register that

protesters are against or for something. These actions may be taken to communicate with the public or onlookers directly or indirectly to draw their attention. It may also be used to induce those directly affected by the situation to take action themselves. Examples of these are anti-Nazi pastoral letters which were read in German churches and during President Wilson's address to Congress on December 4 1916, five suffragists in the gallery had a banner which read "Mr. President, what will you do for woman suffrage" (Sharp, 1990: 40-41).

Specific forms of non-violent protest and persuasion are as follows (Sharp, 1973: Part Two, 117-119):

➢ Formal statements - These are normally written or oral statements by individuals or groups. They are verbal expressions of their views. However in certain cases such statements may assume greater importance and impact and thus fall into the realm of protests and persuasion. Some of these types of formal statements are public speeches, letters of opposition, declarations by organisations and institutions, signed public statements, declarations of indictments, group petitions.

➢ Communication with a wider audience - these may be in the form of slogans, caricatures and symbols, banners, posters, and displayed communication. They may also be in the form of leaflets, pamphlets and books, newspapers and journals, records, radio and television, sky writing and earth writing.

➢ Group representations – these come in the form of mock awards, deputisation, group lobbying, picketing, mock elections.

➢ Symbolic acts - these are in the form of displaying flags and symbolic colours, wearing of symbols, prayer and worship, delivering symbolic objects, protest disrobing, destruction of own property, symbolic lights, displaying of portraits paint as protest, new signs and names among others.

➢ Pressure on individual*s* - this is a method used to influence others to join a cause. This is done by haunting and taunting of officials in a bid to get others to influence officials to take sides with the civil disobedients rather than their own bosses. To make it easier for others to see their point, these civil disobedients may fraternise with these people.

➢ Drama and music- these may be in the form of humorous skits and pranks, singing and performances of plays and music.

➢ Processions – these are characterised by marches, parades, religious processions, pilgrimages, motorcades.

➢ Honouring the dead – these may come in the form of political mourning, mock funerals and homage at burial places.

➢ Public assemblies - examples here are assemblies of protest or support, protest meetings, camouflaged meetings of protest, and teach–ins.

6.2.   Non-cooperation

When conducted according to Gandhian principles, non-cooperation does not constitute a threat or coercion in a negative way. Rather it focuses on not cooperating with or assisting a particular policy, unless on honourable and just terms (Gregg, 1971: 33-34).

A doctrine of non-cooperation proposes that until justice has been ensured, there can be no cooperation. When governments deny their subjects justice and self-respect then equally there is non-cooperation from the people (King, 2002: 291).

Non-cooperation can be social, economic and political.

6.2.1 Social non-cooperation

These manifest in forms such as boycotts of social affairs or normal relations; student protests and strikes, and boycotts of social events. It also involves a refusal to behave in socially expected ways such as where women refuse to perform their traditionally held roles and the suspension of normal sporting activities. Excommunication is also another way in which people may refuse to behave in a normally expected manner by banning people from attending certain religious functions. At times, social non-cooperation may manifest as social boycotts where certain groups of people refuse to attend certain social functions, and religious leaders may suspend all religious activities to force a government to take heed of specific grievances (Sharp, 1973: Part Two, 183-211).

Social non-cooperation may also take the form of a withdrawal from the social system. Stay-at-homes are one form of this kind of civil disobedience, where the entire population could stay at home for a period. This is usually for political reasons. It may serve to indicate the degree of unity and self-discipline among the population as it is also often incident free. Total personal non-cooperation, for example hunger strikes and other individual shows of civil disobedience, are ways in which individuals make a personal commitment to protest what they deem as wrong or unjust such as embarking on a hunger strike. "Flight" of workers, is a situation which precedes strikes by workers who may leave their usual habitats and flee to another place without demands or conditions for their return. Sanctuary, is a method whereby persons or an individual, resort to reclusion in a place where the civil disobedient cannot obey laws without violating some religious, moral or social aspect of their lives. This puts the opponent in a difficult position (Sharp, 1973: Part Two, 193-204).

6.2.2 Economic non-cooperation

This can be divided into various types of economic boycotts and strike actions.

6.2.2.1.   *Economic boycotts*

Economic boycotts are organised actions aimed at encouraging withdrawal of economic cooperation in such a way that it will restrict the buying or selling market of an individual or group. These boycotts are practiced on local, regional and international levels. The motivation behind these can be economic, political, social and cultural and are often used in labour struggles. Economic boycotts can be divided into primary and secondary boycotts. Primary boycotts involve the direct suspension of dealings with the opponent or a refusal to buy, use or handle certain goods and services. Secondary boycotts involve the economic boycott of third parties to coerce them into joining the primary boycott against the opponent (Sharp, 1973: Part Two, 220).

Economic boycotts can further be classified on the basis and nature of the group responsible. The first type may be in the form of consumer boycotts where consumers refuse to buy specific goods and services. This may be for reasons such as high prices; inequitable distribution of goods and services; accessibility to all

persons; or the boycotted item may aggravate the grievances of the people. The specific item may also be considered immoral or there would be an objection to the conditions of labour under which the item was produced. Examples abound in South Africa during the pre-1994 era. In 1957, African residents of Alexandria outside Johannesburg engaged in a total boycott of bus lines due to an increase in bus fares. They rather chose to walk or obtain rides from friends (Sharp, 1973: Part Two, 221-223).

A policy of austerity is implemented when a person of group of people voluntarily give up luxuries as part of non-violent action. Rent withholding is when people renting land or property refuse to pay rent and use this method against their landlords when they feel they have a grievance against the landlord (Sharp, 1973: Part Two, 225).

Secondly, workers boycotts are used when workers refuse to work with tools or supplies which have been produced under objectionable manufacturing conditions. Another example of this are producer boycotts which involve a refusal to sell or deliver products. It could even involve a refusal to produce the commodity (Sharp, 1973: Part Two, 230-231). National consumer boycotts involve a refusal by a majority of the consumers of a single country to buy products or use the services from another country with whom they are in conflict (Sharp, 1973: Part Two, 228-229).

Thirdly, in suppliers' and handlers' boycotts, workers and middlemen refuse to handle certain goods due to the use to which the goods are put or the conditions under which the goods are produced (Sharp, 1973: Part Two, 232). This was exemplified in the action taken by American dockworkers in Alabama who with the support of the United Mineworkers Union of America refused in 1974 to offload South African coal. They argued that the coal contravened federal legislation regarding the importation of commodities produced by slave labour (Karis & Gerhart, 1997: 206).

6.2.2.2.   Strike actions

Another major category of economic boycotts are strike actions. These are often temporary restrictions which are designed to exert pressure on others. They are

often organised by collective masses and demands are made as a condition for work. (Sharp, 1990:43).

Of note are the Durban strikes of the 1970's where thousands of workers laid down their tools in demand for higher wages. With the exception of the white miners' strike of 1922 and the 1946 strike of black miners, the Durban strikes were of major significance as over the period over 61,410 workers had become involved in the strikes (Karis & Gerhart, 1997: 202).

There are various kinds of strikes with similar or different objectives. Under the general heading of symbolic strikes, some of these may be protest strikes; agricultural strikes; strikes by special groups and ordinary industrial strikes, among others (Sharp, 1973: Part Two, 259-271). These are briefly discussed below.

➢ Protest strikes - Work is stopped for a symbolic period, for example a minute, an hour or even a week. This is to convey the feelings of the workers about the social, political or economic situation. For example in 1923, the population of Ruhr and the occupied Rhineland conducted a thirty minute strike to protest the Franco-Belgian invasion of the Ruhr Lightening strikes are short, spontaneous protest strikes which are undertaken to convey the intensity of a case. It is used to protest comparatively minor issues. They only last a few hours and involve few people (Sharp, 1973: Part Two, 259-261).

➢ Rent strikes - This is also a common form of protest strikes. The Ann Arbor Tenants Union in Michigan made up of students who were dissatisfied with their living conditions and conditions of rent payment, embarked on an all-city rent strike between 1969 and 1971. The strike action achieved the aim of reaching its goal of 2000 signatures (Jones, 2008).

➢ Agricultural strikes - An example of agricultural strikes are peasant strikes. This happened often in feudal and semi feudal conditions when peasants collectively refused to work on the properties of their landlords. For example, in Russia in 1861, peasants in the department of Kazan were influenced by Anton Petrov, a peasant political prophet, to engage in a series of actions which included relying on themselves for their livelihood. Farm workers strikes assume the form of the

collective organisation of farm workers usually to demand higher wages (Sharp, 1973: Part Two, 261-263).

The grape boycott of the United Farm Workers Union was exemplary. Led by Cesar Chavez , they marched towards the Californian state capital demanding better wages and sanitary conditions among others. When this was not successful, they decided to boycott the Schenley Liquor Company which owned large vineyards in the San Joaquin Valley. This was a success and soon, other grape producers were forced to sign contracts. It brought about an end to the abusive system of labour contracting, which resulted to changes in the system of hiring, exposure of workers to dangerous pesticides, a rise in wages and the provision of amenities such as fresh water and toilets (Peterson & Diaz, 1996).

➢ Strikes by special groups - People who were forced to perform labour for others, occasionally refused to do this. Others included craft strikes which is the suspension by workers of a single craft in one or many shops in a region, nation or international setting.

➢ Professional strikes - this was performed by groups of people in a particular profession such as teachers; doctors among others who may go on strike for political, economic or social reasons or form part of a wider usually political struggle (Sharp, 1973: Part Two, 264-266). For example, in 2010, South Africa's Rea Vaya Bus Rapid Transport (BRT) system workers registered a victory, after a day of alleged strike action. BRT workers had embarked on a surprise strike action calling for the South African Municipal Workers Union (SAMWU) to act on their behalf, to finalise an organisational rights agreement and that they be given their democratic right to be part of the largest Local Government Union SAMWU (SAMWU Press Statement, 2010).

6.2.3. Political non-cooperation

This involves larger numbers of people in organised political disobedience acts. It is often designed to exert pressure on government or an illegitimate group which is attempting to seize power. Its significance is highly dependent on the numbers of

29

people involved. These may be in forms such as rejection of authority and a typical method is withholding or withdrawing allegiance.

Citizens non-cooperation may include a boycott of legislative bodies; boycotts of elections; boycotts of government employment and positions; and boycotts of government departments, agencies and other bodies. (Sharp, 1973: Part Two, 289-314).

6.3.   Non-violent intervention

These methods are more direct and immediate and they produce results quicker. This works through the mechanism of accommodation or of non-violent coercion where the opponent is not convinced that a policy change is needed. These methods of intervention may be used both defensively to ward off an opponent's attack and offensively in way as to carry out the struggle for the actionist's objectives into the opponent's camp. Non-violent intervention may be psychological such as fasts, or physical, which for example involves stand-ins where resisters stand in a quiet and orderly manner at places where they have been refused admission. Ride-ins were used widely in the US where Negroes insisted on sitting in sections of public transport where they were prohibited from sitting, and non-violent obstruction where human bodies are used as physical obstructions (Sharp, 1990:346).

Non-violent intervention may also be used in three ways. Social intervention may be in the form of overloading of facilities where people deliberately increase their demands for services in a way that the operation of the institutions or government involved is slowed down. Economic intervention may be in the form of stay-in strikes where workers may refuse to work but do not leave the premises until their demands are met. It may also manifest in the form of non-violent land seizure. Political intervention includes work-on-without collaboration, where civil servants, government officials and ordinary citizens may insist on carrying out the legally established policies and programmes of previous governments, without regard for example, to any other policies and programmes being put in place by a government which has come to power through a *coup d'etat* (Sharp, 1973: Part Two, 357-432).

Having outlined the various methods of civil disobedience, the next section will address the various mechanisms through which these methods function to bring about change in a non-violent way.

7.   Mechanisms of non-violent action

Non-violence does not necessarily seek to hurt, crush or humiliate the opponent. As an initial step, the aim is to convert the opponent with the ultimate aim of reaching an amicable settlement. It is also a method aimed at helping the opponent to regain his moral balance on a higher level than that at which the opponent first launched a violent assault (Gregg, 1971: 51).

An opponent can be influenced to act according to the wishes of the resister if certain conditions prevail within the framework of the non-violent action. As such, for an action to be successful, certain mechanisms are required. These have been identified as conversion, accommodation, and non-violent coercion.

➢ Conversion - The opponent is changed inwardly and shows a willingness to grant the wishes of the resister. This kind of change can be brought about by arguments, reason or other intellectual efforts. It may involve the emotions, beliefs, attitudes and moral system of the opponent (Sharp, 1990:60).

➢ Accommodation - This is a type of midway between conversion and non-violent coercion. Here, the opponent is not converted and neither is he or she non-violently coerced. Accommodation imbibes features of both conversion and non-violent coercion. In this case, the opponent decided to grant the wishes of the resister without necessarily having undergone a change of mind on the issue. Additionally, another factor which may have a bearing on the issue at stake may be considered more important for which reason the opponent may yield to the demands of the resisters (Sharp, 1990:61-62).

➢ Non-violent coercion - The opponent may not be converted or be accommodating to the demands of the resisters. In such a situation, the opponent may have to be non-violently coerced. This may take a number of forms. Firstly, the campaign or resistance may become widespread to the point of being uncontrollable. This may force the opponent to yield to the demands of the resisters. Secondly the social,

31

economic and political system may be rendered unworkable unless the resisters demands are met. Thirdly, the ability of the opponent to use repression may be undermined or crippled and this may force the opponent to give in (Sharp, 1990: 62-63).

Though there are three main mechanisms of non-violent action, there is sometimes a fourth one known as disintegration which represents non-violent change in its extreme form. Resources available to the government are eroded in a bid to collapse the state apparatus. There is a total rejection of the authority of the state and therefore there is no longer any need for coercion as only small power bases remain. The degree of paralysis of the state powers depends on factors such as the extent to which the government is dependent on the resisters for its power; the length of time over which the resistance can be sustained; how much sympathy comes from third parties; and the number of people involved in the resistance, among others (Sharp, 1990:64-65).

8. Conclusion

From the era of Socrates where there was the underlying idea that there is a law above the laws of the state, the concept of civil disobedience has gone through various phases. To some such as St. Thomas Aquinas, citizens were not bound to obey unjust laws. Thoreau on his part emphasised that government could only derive its authority from the people governed. Gandhi however drew international attention to the concept of civil disobedience with his campaign in South Africa against the disenfranchisement of Indian immigrants. Drawing inspiration from intellectual works such as those of Tolstoy in his Sermon on the Mount, Gandhi highlighted non-violence as a major ingredient of civil disobedience (Dear,2010).

Civil disobedience is a global phenomenon as has been shown in the various examples of such acts in this chapter. The various definitions and approaches adopted by different exponents and authors emphasise the complicated nature of this concept. One aspect which stands out though, is that there is a thin line between violence and non-violence and that these are relative terms depending on the circumstances; who is engaging in the acts; and how these acts are perceived.

The issue of the legality or illegality of civil disobedience acts also raises further discussion as it has been depicted as being dependent on the type of regime or government in place.

With South Africa and the UDF as a case study, the next chapter will trace the beginnings of civil disobedience from the era of the Defiance Campaign and focus on strategies and methods used as a prelude to the establishment of the UDF in South Africa.

CHAPTER THREE

AN OVERVIEW OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE IN SOUTH AFRICA UP TO THE BEGINNING OF THE 1980S

1.   Introduction

This chapter will discuss the origins of the Defiance Campaign in South Africa with a focus on political events particularly between the 1950s and 1960s, as background to the later campaign against the National Party government in South Africa led by the UDF. The roles played by some of the major stakeholders such as the ANC will be addressed. Official responses to some of these strategies played a major role in the success or failure of some of them and this will also be discussed. Factors which motivated the Defiance Campaign will be analysed as well as its impact and manifestations of civil disobedience.

2.   The build-up to the Defiance Campaign

This build–up to the Defiance Campaign was characterised by intense rivalry between blacks and whites in South Africa, following the change in strategy of black South Africans, in their approach towards changing apartheid in South Africa. Black South Africans adopted a strategy of civil disobedience after failing to make headway with the ruling white government on the issue of apartheid policies. The government did not take this lightly and met this approach with severe repression. This was characterised by several raids by the police, culminating in the arrest of 156 people in 1956. Some of the leaders of the ANC and its various allies, were charged with high treason. With the ANC continuously receiving recognition as the leading black liberation organisation at the time, the government was set on a collision course with the organisation. While provisions such as freedom of speech, assembly, press and movement had been in place before the National Party came to power, various amendments to existing laws and new legislation mainly served to give the ruling government more power (Karis & Gerhart, 1997:pp.47-48). The most notable of these laws were the Riotous Assemblies Act of 1930 as amended in 1956, which sought to ban the publication or other dissemination of any documentary information calculated to engender feelings of hostility between the European inhabitants of the

Union on the one hand and any other section of the inhabitants of the Union on the other hand (0'Malley, 1985-1996).

Another Act which was aimed at controlling opposition to the system of apartheid was the Suppression of Communism Act of 1950. This act sought to ban any communist activities, and communism and its propagation were declared unlawful in South Africa (SACP, 1962). Africans were also affected by the Urban Areas Act of 1923 which set boundaries between urban areas and the outskirts of the urban areas where African locations were established. Local authorities were given among others, powers to determine access of Africans to urban areas through the Urban Areas Act of 1923. Africans were also affected by the Black Labour Regulation Act of 1953 and the Industrial Conciliation Act of 1956 as well as by the withdrawal of injunctive relief (SAIRR, 1954:39-40).

2.1. Forms of official control

The introduction of the influx control system was one of the major symbols of repression for Africans. It was used to control the movement of Africans into urban areas by making it illegal for any African in the mid-1950s to be in an urban area for more than 72 hours without official permission. To be in an urban area, Africans had to meet conditions of continuous residence, employment, or relationship to an African who had permission to be in an urban area beyond the stipulated time. These controls were extended to tribes or individuals by banishing them from certain places if government deemed it as a threat to public interest. Further, anyone who used words which were deemed to cause others to commit offences through protest, was dealt with under the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1953 which was enacted after the Defiance Campaign. Incitement of civil disobedience was also made punishable under the Suppression of Communism Act of 1950 or the Riotous Assemblies Act of 1930. In the case of the press, freedom of the press could be denied under the Native Administration Act of 1927 or if the government considered that a publication was calculated to engender hostility, under the Riotous Assemblies Act of 1930 (Karis & Gerhart, 1997:pp.47-52).

Under the <u>Native Administration Act</u> No. 38 of I927, gatherings of more than ten people were controlled and permission from a 'native commissioner' or magistrate had to be sought for such an assembly of Africans except for church services, weddings, funerals, and sports meetings. After the <u>Riotous Assemblies Act</u> No. 27 of 1930 had been re-enacted in consolidated form in 1956, the Minister of Justice was empowered, or a magistrate acting under his authority, to prohibit public gatherings if he considered that they might endanger the public peace or cause hostility between whites and blacks. Previously, the legislative machinery for enforcing a clampdown on political resistance had been extended by the <u>Riotous Assemblies Act</u> and <u>Suppression of Communism Amendment Act</u> No.15 of 1954 (Du Pisani, 1990:581).

2.2. Labour action and civil disobedience as a reaction to official control

Civil disobedience, in the form of labour action, was a response to official controls which were deemed as harsh.

2.2.1 Civil Disobedience against repressive laws

Government's attempts to deny Coloureds in South Africa their voting rights, was met with resistance in the form of a one day strike on 7 May 1951 in Cape Town. Through the creation of a Coloured Affairs Department, Blacks and Coloureds in the Cape Province were to be disenfranchised. A 1951 <u>Separation of Voters' Bill</u> was challenged in court by a group of four voters. Though the Supreme Court upheld the Act, the Appeal Court reversed this. The government followed this up with the <u>High Court of Parliament Bill</u> in 1952, giving Parliament the power to overrule decisions of the Supreme Court. This was also declared invalid by the Supreme Court and the Appeal Court. Following an increase in the number of judges in the Appeal Court from five to eleven; the introduction of the <u>Senate Act</u> which resulted in an increase in Senate seats from 49 to 89 seats, and manipulation of affairs to increase the number of seats of the National Party to 77, the way was paved for government to pass the <u>Separate Representation of Voters Act</u> (Blurbwire, 2010).

Through the National Consultative Committee of the ANC, there was a campaign against the <u>Population Registration Act</u> of 1950 and the <u>Abolition of Passes and Co-</u>

ordination of Documents Act of 1952. Africans regarded the pass laws as a symbol of slavery. Influx control kept men and their wives apart, broke up families and made children orphans (Tambo, 1955).

2.2.2. Role of women in civil disobedience

Government first attempted to introduce the pass laws in 1913. Women at the time embarked on passive resistance by simply refusing to carry these passes. The protests were so widespread that when World War 1 broke out, government relaxed the rule only to replace it by reference books. In 1956, South African black women numbering over 20,000 staged a march through the streets of Pretoria to protest against the extension of the pass laws and systems to African women. This march was spearheaded by the Federation of South African Women and generated widespread protests. Through the Abolition of Passes and Co-ordination of Documents Act No.67 of 1952, African youth over sixteen and African women and professionals, for example teachers and clerics, who were previously exempted because of their profession, were required to carry these reference books at all times. Failure to produce these resulted in criminal penalties (Boddy-Evans, 2010).

2.2.3. Role of trade unions

The Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union (ICU) made notable gains for its members. The 1927 Native Administration Act which sought to clamp down on any attempt to incite racial hostility was largely a strategy to cripple the actions of ICU leader Clements Kadalie. In the 1930s however, there was some growth in industrial unions for Africans and significant growth was recorded for black unionism in the 1940s. The wave of strikes and the formation of the Council of Non-European trade unions which attracted a following of 150,000 in 119 affiliated unions, made the 1940s very significant indeed for black unionism (Lodge , 1983:123-124).

Significant as well in the 1940s, was the role of third parties in the campaign against repressive measures. The 1942 Sweets strike for example, was a case of soliciting the support of third parties. White workers were found to be fighting for the rights of black workers by insisting that black workers should be paid at the same levels as them. Through cooperation with white workers, marches were organised involving

both blacks and Europeans resulting in a significant wage increase in 1943 for black workers. The National Union of Distributive Workers (NUDW) which consisted of white shop workers, supported the demands of the black union which was the African Commercial and Distributive Workers' Union for a minimum wage of two pounds a week. The white workers' request for an increase was denied and this resulted in a strike action by the white workers. The strike was a success and most of the NUDW's demands were met with a substantial wage increase granted to both black and white workers. Craft workers also had their share of challenges and in line with normal reactions of the times, also had to embark on strike actions. This was highlighted in the 1947 craft workers' strike which lasted nine weeks. They were protesting a lack of increase in their basic wages for fourteen years; a threat of the dilution of their craft skills, and their continued employment on a casual basis (Fine & Davis, 1990:84-86).

This decade saw unionism increasing from 264,000 in 1939 to 410,000 by 1945. Government however continued to deny these unions their bargaining rights and though Africans were the backbone of industry in South Africa, many of them were wallowing in poverty. African workers resorted to a series of strikes to drive home their demands for equality and better working conditions. This was met with severe police repression and the instituting of penalties against anyone who embarked on strike action. African unions were prevented from operating legally with the reason being that Africans were irresponsible and that it was dangerous to allow Africans to manage their own affairs. This did not deter some white unions in the sweets, tobacco, tin, textiles, laundering and clothing industries, who went ahead to admit African unions. They were however threatened with deregistration (Lodge, 1983:121-122).

In the 1950s, the role and impact of the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) and the Federation of Free Trade Unions was very significant. Through the formation of trade unions, black workers gained negotiation rights, collective bargaining rights and participated indirectly in industry-wide industrial councils. The mobilisation ability of these unions came to the fore with the 1946 miners' strike in which about 74,000 workers supported the African Mineworkers' Union. This

approach became even more refined as SACTU gradually became a component of the Congress Alliance. It became part of a mass movement directing its energies to issues such as demands for higher wages, through mass campaigns (Lodge, 1983:123-124).

2.2.4. Role of township community movements

The role of community movements in the black townships and the sporadic protests of rural workers, pointed to the dependency by political leaders on the rural workers as pressure groups. During the Alexandra bus boycott of 1957, about 1500 residents of Alexandra walked to and from the factories and shops of Johannesburg, in protest against high bus fares. Following the report of the commission of enquiry established to look into the matter, government revised the fares. However seven months later, the bus fares were increased again and this resulted in a mass bus boycott. A new political party, the African Democratic Party which deemed the ANC and the CPSA as having failed the people was also established (Davie, 2003).

2.3. The 1952 Defiance Campaign

The ANC's quest to become a mass movement faced a number of challenges. It was not financially secure which also translated into the ANC not having a viable means of communication, such as its own newspaper. Coordination at the top level was problematic and there were internal squabbles. As a result, though the ANC adopted the strategy of mass struggle in 1950, it was not until the 1952 Defiance Campaign, that there was hope of a much needed recognition needed to win mass support under the banner of African nationalism. The campaign was seen as crucial turning point in the liberation struggle (Fine & Davis, 1990:118).

The major objective of the Defiance Campaign was to bring about the repeal of certain laws deemed to be unjust. These were namely the Pass Laws, the Group Areas Act of 1950, the Suppression of Communism Act of 1950, the Voters' Representation Act of 1951, the Bantu Authorities Act of 1951, and the Stock Limitation Policy of 1950. Civil disobedience was to characterise the first stage of the campaign and this was to be implemented by volunteers whose task was to refuse to carry passes; defy European-only signs in public places; and enter restricted areas

without a permit. In the second stage, the number of volunteers was to be increased to a point where the judicial and administrative machinery was frustrated in having to deal with the large numbers. The third stage was to involve mass participation during which industrial action would together with political protest, be used on a country-wide scale. Fashioned as a non-violent campaign and based on the tenets of Christian pacifism and *Satyagraha*, it aimed to bring about a change of heart of the rulers who it was expected, would be confronted by the power of moral argument and example. The campaign was mainly organised by the ANC and the South African Indian Congress (Fine & Davis, 1990:119).

The Defiance Campaign was preceded by a day of prayer in many areas throughout the Union. In a show of a commitment to the aims of the resistance movement, volunteers, under the supervision of trained leaders, committed acts of civil disobedience deliberately such as entering a location without permit; being out at night without a curfew pass; sitting on railway seats marked 'Europeans only'; travelling in railway coaches reserved for Europeans, and entering the European section of the Post Office. The months of August, September and October marked the peak periods of resistance. The last five days of June saw 146 people volunteering, while in July, over 1500 people volunteered. In August, September and October over 2000 people joined in each of the months. The first stage of the resistance was completed in October after which it began to scale down. Their activities were public with no intention to deceive the authorities. On the day of the commencement of the campaign, Nelson Mandela, a leader of the ANC, handed over a letter stating their intentions to the Boksburg Magistrate .The letter stated that "we have been directed by the Joint Action Committee of the African National Congress, Transvaal, and the Transvaal Indian Congress to advise you that in terms of the decision of the Congresses, the persons in the list attached herein, will defy the permit regulations and deliberately court imprisonment by entering Boksburg Location today at 2.30 p.m. without obtaining the necessary permits..." (Kuper, 1960:122-125).

This stating of intentions was greatly influenced by the principles of *Satyagraha* in which the courting of arrests and the willing submission to punishment, are the main

and essential methods to achieve conversion of the rulers. So in the spirit of *Satyagraha*, the resisters willingly lined up to be arrested but the police declined to arrest them and the resisters continued time and again to put themselves up for arrest. Of note is the attempt by the chairman of the ANC in Natal, Winston Conco who with his followers paraded the streets for two nights without being arrested. While the police gave reasons for this as having to deal with more important matters, over twenty African non-defiers were arrested and sentenced for breach of the same curfew regulations. However when Conco and his group entered an European-only railway cloak room they were arrested by the police. Through the principle of *Satyagraha*, the general idea was to minimise bitterness in their choice of defiance acts. For example the Berea Road railway station in Durban and the New Brighton railway station in Port Elizabeth were mainly used by non-whites and as such entering the cloak rooms reserved for Europeans only, would really affect very few Europeans. Defying curfew limits and walking the streets and going into African locations without a permit, are acts which are purely for the knowledge of Africans themselves. Police arrests and the media enabled the National Party to obtain insight into what was happening on the ground (Kuper, 1960:125-127).

2.3.1. Impact of the Defiance Campaign

The Defiance Campaign symbolised the ANC's first major effort at country-wide civil disobedience. African leaders proved their capability in organising and mobilising support from other groups which were not part of the Congress Tradition such as the Torch Commandos and also some members of the white parliamentary opposition forces (Williams, 2004:4).

The Public Safety Act No.3 of 1953 and the Criminal Laws Amendment Act No.8 of 1953, were enacted as a result of the Defiance Campaign. It also was responsible for the hurriedly formed Liberal Party of South Africa. The Defiance Campaign gave impetus to the talks on the need to hold a nation-wide National Conference to discuss Non-European Affairs, and also drew clear lines between political issues in the country. This is what led to the strife within the United Party and the labour groups. It opened the avenues for a reflection of the situation in the country and attracted more international attention to the issue of racial discrimination. It instilled

in Africans and other non-whites, a greater political awareness which also increased their resolve to fight apartheid (Luthuli, 1953).

2.3.2. The demise of the Defiance Campaign

As a result of the severe destruction and loss of lives which resulted from the series of riots which occurred at the peak of the Defiance Campaign, the campaign was weakened as government moved to bring the destruction to a halt through several arrests. Riots broke out in Port Elizabeth, New Brighton, Denver, Kimberley, and East London. The Port Elizabeth riots were the result of the shooting of an African by a railway policeman; the riots in Denver were a result of protest at an increase in rents at a Denver hostel; and in Kimberley it was alleged that three youths gave the Congress salute after drinking beer in a beer hall, resulting in their expulsion from the hall and the subsequent show of solidarity by other drinkers who stoned the building and were in turn fired on by the police. Thirteen people died and 78 were injured. These riots culminated in the loss of lives and destruction of property and saw black leaders shifting blame to the police, while the government also blamed anti-apartheid campaigners. Government was blamed for the series of riots and accused of using it to weaken the Defiance Campaign (Naicker, 1972).

Following these riots, the Criminal Law Amendment Act, which aimed at punishing people who engaged in activities such as advising, inciting, commanding, or using language which caused another person to commit an offence by way of protesting against the law among others, was adopted in 1953. Punishment was in the form of whipping and the imposition of fines or by imprisonment. For example there was a fine not exceeding three hundred pounds; imprisonment for a period not exceeding three years and whipping not exceeding ten strokes among others. This measure was one of the reasons for the demise of the Defiance Campaign (Naicker, 1972).

2.4.   Civil disobedience in the 1960s

The Sharpeville massacre in 1960 was the next major event in the resistance campaign. A peaceful march organised by the PAC turned into a massacre when police fired on the marchers claiming that they were under threat from attack by the marchers who they said were armed. 69 people died as a result, while 180 sustained

wounds. This was followed by the transformation in 1961, of the ANC's <u>Umkhonto We Sizwe</u> into a military wing, as their actions, till then was not producing results. This was also followed by the famous Rivonia Trial in which 11 people were charged with sabotage with seven of them alleged to be members of the high command of <u>Umkhonto We Sizwe</u>. They were also charged with attempting to violently overthrow the government (Davis, 1990:310-312).

Driven by the ideology of the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM), which sought to promote the idea of a South Africa for black South Africans, and also promoting a policy of non-confrontation, the South African Students Organisation (SASO) and the Black People's Convention (BPC) moved the agenda of the BCM forward. The 1960s were difficult times for student organisations. There were three main student organisations namely the African Students Association which leaned towards the ANC; the African Students Union which leaned towards the PAC; and the Progressive National Students Organisation. The main student organisation, the National Union of South African Students (NUSAS) which was led by white students sympathetic to the cause of black students , did not seem to the mainly black student organisations to be effectively promoting the aspirations of black students, especially in avoiding a dependency on white leadership (Houston, 1999:40-41).

2.5.   Civil disobedience in the 1970s

In 1973, what came to be known as the Durban strikes, spread to East London and Port Elizabeth and to Cape Town. Over 60,000 workers took part in the strikes which were initially started by workers on the diamond mines of Namibia. These worker strikes yielded some measure of positive action with government raising the minimum pay for unskilled workers, and also giving workers a limited right to strike (Houston, 1999:41).

The early 1970s saw another wave of protests with the Soweto uprising being the most prominent. In 1976, the Soweto Students' Representative Council planned a peaceful demonstration which ended up being fatal as police fired upon the students, killing two of them. This led to rioting and destruction of property in Soweto. Under the influence of the Black Consciousness ideology, the Soweto uprising was

43

fundamentally a protest against the government's insistence on Afrikaans as the medium of teaching. There was a boycott of schools, through 1976 and 1977 and the revolt against the Soweto incident generated a second round of stay-at-homes following that of May 1950. There were also campaigns against *shebeens* which were illegal drinking bars in homes. Deaths in police detention of several black activists including Steve Biko, and the banning of SASO and other Black Consciousness organisations and the Christian Institute among others, saw South Africa's deteriorating human rights record increasing the resolve of protestors, even if that meant adopting unconventional tactics (Riordan, 1988:8).

The ANC strategy of mass action will be addressed in the next section with an analysis of the various methods of civil disobedience employed by them and how these were implemented. The role of the PAC in civil disobedience will also be addressed.

3.   ANC strategy of mass action

The ANC's strategy of mass action manifested in the form of strikes and boycotts and these were already enshrined in the ANC's programme which was adopted in Bloemfontein in 1949. This was to be one of the most important events in the programme of the ANC. The victory of the National Party in 1948 and its determination to implement a policy of apartheid gave impetus to the adoption of the programme. The ANC, inspired by the desire to achieve national freedom, was transformed in the following decade. The Programme of Action encouraged mass action, involving strikes, boycotts and other forms of non-violent resistance (ANC, 1949).

Government's response to this development made little room for proper planning of the strategy by the ANC. The first significant act of civil disobedience was the call for a stay-away on May Day in 1950, which was to protest low wages offered to black workers and restrictions on various spheres of their life such as movement and assembly among others. The May Day strike was succeeded by a series of discussions between nationalist and left wing African leaders, which resulted in a call by the leaders of the ANC National Executive for a national stay-at-home in protest

against the shootings and the <u>Unlawful Organisation Bill</u> which later came to be known as the <u>Suppression of Communism Act</u>. The protest day was to be 26 June, 1950. In the second 1951 stay-at-home, people were encouraged to quietly stay at home and use the occasion as a time of reflection. It was very effective in Durban and Port Elizabeth. In Port Elizabeth, campaigning before the stay-away was focused as much on the <u>Native Urban Areas Bill</u> as on the upcoming restrictions on political organisations (Lodge, 1983:91-94).

It was the contention of the ANC that the <u>Unlawful Organisation Bill</u> was mainly aimed at thwarting the efforts of Africans and other oppressed people from protesting discrimination and other forms of oppression. Even though it was made to appear as primarily targeted at communism and the South African Communist Party, it was seen as a tool to further keep Africans in positions of subordination and so as a first step, a National Day of Protest was agreed upon. On this day, Africans and oppressed people as a sign of protest, were to stay away from work and rather observe a day of mourning for all those who lost their lives in the fight for freedom (ANC, 1950).

In 1954, the SAIC, the South African Peoples' Organisation and the South African Democrats, among others, had met to plan a national convention to create a <u>Freedom Charter</u>. The police descended on the Congress at which the charter was read, with the charge that they had reason to believe that the meeting was being held towards the commitment of treason against the state. This resulted in the treason trial of 156 members of the ANC. The <u>Freedom Charter</u> nevertheless became the main policy framework of the Congress tradition (Riordan, 1988:4).

The government portrayed the Congress Alliance as an organisation which was communist oriented and had "pledged to overthrow by violence all governments in non-communist countries where sections of the population did not have equal political and economic rights". The outcome of the 1956 treason trial was a not guilty verdict, in favour of the members of the Alliance. This weakened the government's use of the legal process to oppress various groups (Davis, 1990:309).

4. The role of the Pan African Congress

The PAC consisted of a group of African nationalists within the ANC who were in disagreement with some of the policies of the ANC. Formed in 1959, the PAC advocated African nationalism which is the reason for its acceptance of the 1949 Programme of Action of the ANC. For the PAC, democracy could only be achieved when white supremacy had ended. As a result, the adoption of the Freedom Charter was viewed by the PAC as a betrayal of their efforts in implementing the 1949 Programme of Action. At the time there were also rising tensions between the PAC and the ANC, and these culminated in the breakaway of the PAC from the ANC. It had three major objectives which were ensuring a government of Africans by Africans and for Africans; ensuring a policy of equitable distribution of wealth, and the full development of the human personality (Pogrund, 1990:87-89).

The first major role of the PAC in civil disobedience was its campaign against the Pass Laws. In this regard, it put in place a plan for mass civil disobedience and mass voluntary submission to arrests. The campaign against the pass laws commenced with the burning of pass books, one day strikes and the sending of petitions to government (Kgosana, 1988:51-52).

The arrest of the PAC's leader Sobukwe and others, caused the PAC to change its strategy and this culminated into an armed struggle through its armed wing, Poqo. Poqo carried out its first attacks on a police station in Paarl. This was a sign of further uprisings to come. General workers' strikes and insurrection characterised the PAC's plans. This was however met with swift reaction from government resulting in a number of PAC members being put in jail and others hanged. Despite this, the PAC remained active until the Soweto uprising (Cabral & Robeson, 1986).

The South African United Front (SAUF) which was jointly established in 1960 by the ANC and PAC, in conjunction with organisations such as the South African Indian Congress (SAIC) and the South West African National Union (SWANU), had the objective of providing a platform for better coordination of the activities of these organisations. They campaigned vigorously for the isolation of South Africa from the international political, economic and social arena. This was done through strategies

such as the sending of representations, petitions and memoranda to the United Nations and other international organisations. For example in 1955, the Congress Alliance sent a delegation to the Bandung Conference and also to the first All African People's Conference in 1958. The ANC and PAC were also instrumental in creating awareness of the situation on the ground through the celebration of days such as Sharpeville Day, Soweto Day, South African Freedom Day, and Women's Day among others (Houston, 2008:16-19).

5. The emergence of the United Democratic Front

The Sharpeville massacre in 1960, in which 69 people were murdered; the Rivonia Trial from 1963 to 1964 which resulted in life sentences for Nelson Mandela and seven others; the Soweto Uprising in 1976 following the shooting of Soweto students demonstrating against the imposition of Afrikaans as a language of tuition; the death of Steve Biko while in detention in 1977 among others, set the stage for the emergence of the UDF (Houston, 1999:22).

In the early 1970s, the ANC created an underground network to perform political duties. It however realised that to achieve its goals, armed struggle alone would not be enough. A review of this strategy led to the adoption in 1979 of a four pillar People's War Revolutionary Strategy, which consisted of the international isolation of the government; a sabotage campaign against state institutions which was intended to encourage active support of the armed struggle; the mobilisation of the masses to actively resist apartheid, and the establishment of people's power in black areas among others (Houston, 1999: 24-31).

The increase in schools in black areas, with an increase in access to tertiary education which had risen from less than 800 in 1960 to 20,000 in 1983 at university and with the formation of the South African Student Organisation, transformed black universities into strong sites of political struggles. Black workers in manufacturing increased from 308,000 in 1960 to 781,000 in 1980. These changes represented politically, new social categories of youth and students, skilled and semi-skilled workers, who possessed the capacity for organisation and action (Good, 2011).

Other factors such as the role played by the Azanian Students Organisation (AZASO) in mobilising students for boycotts of schools, were also instrumental in the emergence of the UDF. With a commitment to the <u>Freedom Charter</u>, AZASO brought to the fore the linkages between education and liberation. Spearheading riots and school boycotts such as the 1980 school boycott, AZASO fought on the student front against racism in schools, police invasions of tertiary institutions, and unfair administrative policies. AZASO also protested against the proposed tri-cameral parliament and Black Local Authorities; it took part in the 1984 Vaal Triangle Uprising; and was involved in the 1985 school boycotts. These Congress Tradition student groups set the stage for the youth congresses which played a major role in the activities of the UDF (SA History: AZASO / SANSCO, 2007).

The development of black trade unions such as the Federation of South African Trade Unions (FOSATU) and the establishment of civic organisations such as the Port Elizabeth Black Civic Organisation, provided a basis for the spread of Congress Tradition organisations which were to be affiliated to the UDF. The proposed new constitution of South Africa and the two <u>Koornhof Bills</u>, which set out to control the presence of Africans in the cities as well as the <u>Black Local Authorities Act</u> of 1982 which gave new wide ranging powers to township governments, laid the foundation for the emergence of the UDF (Riordan, 1988:10).

6.   Conclusion

The advanced capitalist system in South Africa required that the confinement of black workers to unskilled labour needed to be changed as there was the need for more clerical and junior executive workers. This resulted in an increase in black secondary and tertiary education which gave these students more of a voice politically, to demand changes in the ongoing apartheid system.

With the mobilisation of community groups in Eastern Cape, Soweto and later nationwide, around issues such as housing, rents, bus fares and education, a political culture which ensured non-collaboration with government institutions, non-racialism and democracy was promoted.

The emergence of the UDF was based the need for a strong and united force to oppose the injustices of the time. Events leading up to the UDF's establishment, made it possible for the leaders to mobilise rapidly throughout the entire country. The role played by trade unions, women, community organisations and political organisations such as the ANC and PAC, created a platform for the emergence of the UDF. The brevity of the 1952 Defiance Campaign, also served as a disincentive to the many activists who had pledged their commitment to the struggle, but it also served to strengthen the resolve of many to forge ahead. These factors among others, set the ground for the establishment of the UDF.

The next chapter will discuss the formation of the UDF; its objectives, as well as the links between the UDF, ANC and other protest movements in the 1980s.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE FORMATION AND OBJECTIVES OF THE UNITED DEMOCRATIC FRONT IN SOUTH AFRICA

1.   Introduction

This chapter will address the factors leading to the formation of the UDF and its links with other anti-apartheid protest movements such as certain student groups who identified with the cause of the UDF.

2.   Formation of the United Democratic Front

The South African Government's intention to obtain the participation of Coloured and Indian communities in a tricameral parliament was met with intense opposition culminating in the launch of the UDF in 1983. The UDF was fundamentally a stand–in organisation for the then banned ANC, however not all who were in favour of the ANC joined the UDF (Cronin, 2000).

The launch of the UDF followed a call for the formation of a front opposed to the government's tricameral constitutional proposals. Subsequently, the opposition by blacks extended to influx control measures and local government structures. Consisting of affiliates, over 600 organisations joined the UDF. These affiliates formed a complex network of local bodies, making the UDF a front which represented a broad sphere of oppressed people in South Africa (Swilling, 1987).

According to some black activists, the reform plans proposed by the government signalled the "coming of a darker night" and the Koornhof Bills in particular, were regarded as "a refinement of the pass laws" (Natal Witness, June 6: 1983).

The Koornhof Bills provided a basis for the Orderly Movement and Settlement of Black Persons Bill, the Black Community Development Bill, and the Black Local Authorities Act of 1982, which were part of the measures put in place to control the influx of blacks into the cities. Township administrations had their powers increased

through the <u>Black Local Authorities Act</u>. While Africans were excluded from the tricameral parliament, as a result of the new Constitution, Indians and Coloureds were included. The role of the youth and student groups, trade unions, township civic organisations, Indian politics, and the revival of the nationalist tradition linked with the ANC, cannot be underestimated as factors in the formation of the UDF (Lodge & Nasson, 1991:34-35).

2.1. Factors leading to the formation of the UDF

Politically, a number of factors were responsible for making the formation of the UDF a reality in 1983.

➢ Trade Unions - After their recognition by government in 1979, black trade unions grew rapidly from 808,053 members in 1979 to 1,406,302 members in 1984. This was given impetus by the economic recession of the early 1980s which resulted in numerous strike actions. From a total of 101 in 1979 to 342 in 1981, strike actions increased steadily. This steady increase was given impetus by the formation of FOSATU. There were also the community unions which rivaled FOSATU and differed on conceptions such as their social roles and whether they should register in terms of the <u>Industrial Conciliation Act.</u> However they had the same overall objective of ending apartheid. While FOSATU and its affiliates were advocating organisation on a shop floor basis and at factory level, highly professional leadership, democratic structures and a focus on workplace issues, the community unions adopted a more political approach. The community unions were encouraging the boycott of products made in the factories and the recruitment of members through mass meetings held in townships (Lodge & Nasson, 1991:34-40).

➢ Civic organizations-These organisations which were mainly developed in townships, focused on pointing out the worsening economic situation. The first modern civic organisation is said to have been formed in Soweto. Black townships around the townships Port Elizabeth and the Coloured areas of the Cape Peninsula in the Western Cape developed very broadly-based civic organisations. The civic organisations in the Cape Peninsula were worthy of note as they managed to establish thirty two civic groups between 1980 and 1982. These civics often began small, addressing problems such as inconvenient and expensive public

transportation, high rents, and poor recreational and child care facilities. In 1983, civics were established in most parts of South Africa. They were strong in the Transvaal, the Western Cape, and the Eastern Cape but were weak in Natal (Swilling, 1987:4-5).

➤ Youth and Student groups - AZASO and COSAS played a significant role in the struggle against apartheid and as a result were often targeted by the government. While COSAS had a non-racial character and was modelled on the "charterist" tradition of the ANC, AZASO championed black consciousness and was opposed to the inclusion of whites in the liberation struggle (South Africa History Online, 2007).

In addition to these groupings, there was a radical turn in Indian politics with the revival of the Natal Indian Congress which hitherto was not allowed membership of the Black Consciousness Movement but was readily accepted by the congress tradition (Riordan, 1988:10).

2.2.   Vision and principles of the UDF

The UDF at its launch committed itself to the vision of a united, democratic South Africa, and to the unity of all people through united action against all forms of oppression. According to the UDF it was guided by a number of principles to create a democracy in which all South Africans would participate in the governance of the country (UDF, National General Council 1985:2). It aimed to create a non-racial unitary socialist state which would be devoid of racial divisions, and to work together and in consultation with all who believed in democracy (Natal Mercury, November 25: 1983).

2.2.1 Broad principles of the UDF

As part of plans for the formation of the UDF, the Transvaal anti-SAIC conference tasked a commission to ascertain the practicality of a united front. The commission formulated a set of broad principles. Some of these principles were as follows (Houston, 1999:64):

➢ Upholding the principles of democracy;

➢ the formation of a unified state in South Africa which will not be based on race or ethnicity;

➢ the need for unity of all without regard to race religion or colour, in the struggle; and

➢ recognising the need to work in consultation with and towards addressing the demands of democratic people.

2.2.2. Working organisational principles of the UDF

The UDF also outlined a number of working principles. It was to be composed of regional bodies whose boundaries were to be determined by the National Executive Committee (NEC). It also established a number of objectives which it was to attempt to obtain. These included the voicing of opposition to the educational and political organisations which were deemed undemocratic; coordinating social community democracy; and voicing the desires and wishes of the affiliates of the UDF whether they are social or political. (UDF, National General Council, 1985:20).

2.2.3. The organisation of the UDF

The UDF was guided by a number of organisational principles. These were to ensure that solid structures were put in place towards the attainment of the goals of the UDF. These principles were as follows (UDF, 1987:26-29):

➢ Elected leadership - At all levels all leaders were to be elected and elections were to be held at regular intervals. This was to ensure that no one became indispensable. Measures were also put in place to discipline recalcitrant leaders.

➢ Collective leadership - All activities were to be undertaken collectively based on regular consultation. Team work was highly encouraged. In ths way, other members could learn from the skills of their leaders, thereby ensuring continuity in the event of the detention of leaders.

53

- ➢ Mandating - All members were to operate within their mandate and not take actions independently or out of personal choice. Where actions are personal, this must be differentiated clearly from what the actual mandate is.

- ➢ Reporting - This was to ensure a proper feedback system which was essential in every democratic process.

- ➢ Criticism and self-criticism - Constructive criticism was encouraged to facilitate improvement in areas where the organisation fell short. This, in addition to an acceptance of mistakes and a willingness to correct them, were viewed as a positive step in shaping the organisation towards the attainment of its goals.

The structure of the UDF was based on a hierarchical system and a chain of command in line with its democratic principles. The UDF was structured as follows (UDF, National General Council, 1985:21-24):

- ➢ Patron - The UDF had at the top of the hierarchy, patrons who were elected or reviewed by the National General Council (NGC). However, the NEC could nominate and or review a patron if there was unanimous approval by the Regional General Council. The patrons on their part had to perform functions as prescribed by the NEC and the National Secretariat.

- ➢ The National Executive Committee - This consisted of National Chairpersons; a National Publicity Secretary; a National General Secretary; a National Treasurer; one secretary each from the Regional Executive Committee (REC); and one member from each REC. The National Executive had powers to bring in persons from regions which were not properly organised; implement policies and programmes of the UDF; nominate and or review patrons of the UDF; conduct of affairs at the NGC; and appointed the chairperson of the NGC on an ad hoc basis.

- ➢ The National Secretariat - This consisted of the National Chairperson; the National General Secretary; the National Publicity Secretary; the National Treasurer; and a secretary in charge of administration and coordination of the activities of the NEC from each Regional Executive Committee.

- ➢ The National Working Committee – Under the direction of the NEC, this committee met at least biannually, with two other members from each structured region to discuss and decide on policy issues and guide national coordination.

- ➢ The National General Council - This was the overarching decision making body of the UDF comprising delegates from the regional councils. Under the auspices of the NEC, the NGC was to meet at least once every two years.

- ➢ The Regional General Council - It was composed of affiliates of the UDF in a particular region, and adopted subsidiary working principles which governed the functioning of the UDF. It was to convene an annual general meeting to elect a Regional Executive Committee.

- ➢ Regional Executive Committees – These comprised elected persons who represented their Regional General Councils.

- ➢ Affiliates - They consisted of organisations which had applied through any one or more of the UDF Regional General Councils, and which were required to abide by the declaration of the UDF as adopted in 1983; as well as the national and working principles; and to operate within the geographical area of the Regional General Council within which it sought membership.

- ➢ Rights of membership - Affiliates and regional groupings had independence as long as their actions and policies were consistent with that of the umbrella organisation. In the area of decision making, all decisions were to be based on consensus. Failing this, decisions were to be taken by a majority vote.

2.3.   Objectives of the UDF

The UDF had three broad objectives. These were the establishment of charterist hegemony; the creation of democratic organisations; and a more egalitarian society in socio-economic terms. The UDF vigorously pursued a strategy of creating a front which transcended all spheres of society. To the UDF, democracy meant a society in which particularly the working classes were in control over services they needed for their daily existence (Van Kessel, 2000:69).

Though the overriding objective of the UDF was to coordinate opposition to the government's reform, this changed considerably by 1985. In a report to the General Council, the UDF outlined the following objectives (UDF, Report of the Secretariat to the General Council, 1985):

➢ To ensure that the state did not have control over the ideological direction of the people;

➢ to unite all regardless of class, colour, ethnic and organisational lines so as to be able to strongly oppose apartheid;

➢ to streamline the activities of all anti-apartheid organisations;

➢ to work towards the mobilisation and strengthening the organisation of the people;

➢ to put up a stiff opposition to the implementation of the reforms by the state;

➢ to educate the people on how legislation such as the President's Council proposals and the Koornhof Bills , the Community Councils and Black Local Authorities, the Coloured Management Committees and the new housing policy, would affect their lives;

➢ to provide a platform which serves as a medium through which the people will be heard;

➢ to show how politics directly affects the daily lives of the people; and

➢ to ensure that groups which do not operate within government structures are drawn into the front.

2. 4.   Powers of the UDF

With regard to the powers of the organisation, the UDF extended its powers to borrowing, receiving or raising funds; issuing publications; being responsible for the recruitment of employees; determining their terms of employment, and also had the right to delegate its powers to any organ, committee, or official appointed by the NEC. With regard to its legal status, the UDF had the capacity to sue or be sued in its own name (UDF, National General Council, 1985:20).

The next section will analyse the links particularly between the UDF and the ANC, with a view to identifying similarities and differences between the two organisations and reasons for the perceived linkages between the two; as well as analysing the UDF's relationship with other groups.

3. The United Democratic Front and its links to the African National Congress and other groups

With the vision of being broad based, the UDF was connected to many other organisations. Its characteristics with regard to membership and organisational structure and its vision and principles, were often likened to that of the ANC. The ANC was a banned organisation and as such the emergence of the UDF gave rise to suspicions of it being the ANC revived under a different name.

3.1. UDF links with the ANC

The UDF was often criticised as being an offshoot of the ANC and operating under the guise of a new organisation, but in reality, was the ANC reorganised under a new name. Names of a number of people listed as patrons of the UDF, such as Nelson Mandela and Albertina Sisulu, who were leading members of the ANC, served as a basis for this criticism (Aida Parker Newsletter, September 1:1983). Calls from top ANC representatives to the international community to support the cause of the UDF also underlined this (Eastern Province Herald, December 1:1983).

Criticism did not only come from pro-apartheid supporters but also from anti-apartheid supporters such as Chief Buthelezi, the leader of the Inkatha Freedom Party. He was critical of what he saw as the ANC's discriminatory call for support and recognition of the UDF alone, and described this as "divisive and unconstructive" (Natal Mercury, December 6:1983).

The UDF shared similar visions of a mass organisation with the ANC, upheld the ideals and mandate of the ANC, and kept abreast with activities of the ANC even though the latter it had gone underground at the time. This was signified by many of its members and affiliates abiding by the annual 8 January Anniversary statements of the ANC, and implementing it in their spheres of authority according to their own

interpretation of these statements. However the ANC was not directly involved in the establishment of the UDF. The mass uprisings of the 1980s for example, were not organised by the ANC (Suttner, 2004:697-698).

The adoption of the <u>Freedom Charter</u> with many of its aims being accepted by the UDF, also gave room to allegations of the UDF being linked with the ANC. However it has been noted that one major difference between the ANC and the UDF was the issue of the use of violence. While the ANC advocated armed struggle, the UDF rejected violence. Many of its affiliates were middle class business groups, church groups, cultural and sporting bodies, and township bodies, which could not be described as revolutionary (Houston, 1999:69-70).

Following the banning of the ANC which resulted in many of its members going into exile, the ANC started operating from outside South Africa and waging attacks in the country. MK threatened attacks on the government and warned that its strategy would be one of engaging the security forces rather than urban bombings (The Star, November 27: 1987).

Formed in December 1961, as previously stated, MK vowed to achieve majority rule through whatever means and methods necessary. Following the Morogoro Conference of the ANC in 1969, and the arrest of some of the leaders of the ANC by the government, there was a realisation for the need for internal reorganisaton of the ANC and the development of underground activities. MK established some propaganda units in the late 1970s, which were responsible for the production and distribution of letter bombs, street broadcasts, and the reproduction of material and journals on the Congress Tradition (Ngculu, 2003: 240-244).

Through the activities of MK, the ANC played a contributory role in the UDF. For example, it facilitated the organisation of stay-aways through its sabotage of railway lines which made it difficult for those who would have wanted to go to work. These and a number of other attacks by MK, were seen as promoting the expression of grievances of the civil community. The underground groups were also active as propaganda machinery through their distribution of pamphlets within the communities. However, from their situation as an underground organisation, it would

58

have been a challenge for them to effectively operate a mass organisation such as the UDF on the ground (Suttner, 2004:698-700).

Comments by the leadership of the UDF sometimes gave credence to suspicions that the UDF had direct links with the ANC. For example, Archie Gumede one of the presidents of the UDF, is alleged to have made comments to the effect that the UDF declaration had the approval of the then ANC leader Nelson Mandela, and that though the declaration did not intend to replace the Freedom Charter, it embodied all the most important principles of the Charter (The Natal Mercury, November 25:1983).

3.2.   UDF links with other organisations

The UDF drew support from different groups in the country with the most unlikely being white organisations and student groups. However the UDF came up against challenges from other pro-anti-apartheid groups, resulting in intense rivalry and divisions within the anti-apartheid front which threatened to weaken the base of the UDF.

3.2.1   UDF links with white organisations and groups

The contribution of some segments of the white population and white student groups was symbolic in that it drew attention to the fact that though apartheid was a racially based policy, not all whites at the time were in favour of the policy and this helped to draw more support for the activities of anti-apartheid groups. In furtherance of its image as a non-racial organisation, the UDF sought to draw in whites who identified with the cause of the UDF, and individuals such as Helen Joseph and Braam Fischer among others, were seen as underpinning the UDF's assertion that "the enemy in the struggle is the system of minority rule and not the white population itself". The UDF solicited the contribution of whites on an individual level and also whites working within UDF structures. The objectives of the UDF in drawing in the white population were to "weaken the power base and morale of defenders of the minority rule; to develop a commitment among whites to a non-racial future so as to generate a positive feeling about being in South Africa; to garner massive support for the demands and objectives of the democratic movement in the white community; to

mobilise the broadest group of whites and to develop appropriate forms of action for the white community around democratic demands" (UDF, Paper by Area Committee in Cape Town, 1986).

Having identified weaknesses within the ruling party, and the emergence of groups such as the Progressive Federal Party (PFP) which was also faced with a number of resignations; the Institute for a Democratic Alternative in South Africa (IDASA) and its pilgrimage to the ANC in Dakar; and the National Democratic Movement and a number of independent Afrikaner movements, the UDF sought to capitalise on what it saw as the middle ground in which a sizeable number of Afrikaners were not convinced about the viability of the National Party in ensuring long term peace and stability, and those who opposed the National Party purely on moral grounds. Another factor was the deepening economic crisis which resulted in changing interests within the white community and generated conflict among white Afrikaners. Though many of these groups were described as anti-nationalist forces who were opposed to the nationalist government, they were not necessarily in agreement with the ideals of the democratic movement. The 1986 Call to Whites Campaign was therefore, the turning point in the UDF's quest to draw whites into its ranks (UDF, 1988:11-21).

The UDF called on white UDF supporters to go beyond simply refusing to participate in elections and go into homes, offices and educational institutions of white people and introduce the aims and objectives of the UDF (UDF Press Release, 1987).

As part of its strategy to draw in people of all groups and races, the UDF also identified the potential of NUSAS, the umbrella organisation of white students in advancing the cause of the UDF. The UDF hoped to capitalise on the privileged position of NUSAS in promoting unity as a prerequisite for a free South Africa. NUSAS on its part identified the important role played by the UDF in changing the face of extra-parliamentary politics in South Africa (The Star, November 29:1983).

3.2.2. UDF links with other anti-apartheid organisations

Despite the fact that the UDF aimed to be all-encompassing and embracing all spheres of society in building the front, it was often challenged by other anti-

apartheid groups who disagreed with some of its policies and strategies . The UDF differed on a number of issues with other anti-apartheid groups. The main bone of contention was the inclusion of the mainly white student organisation, NUSAS, and Coloured and Indian traders. There was the fear of betrayal of the working class by the UDF. Groups such as the Black Consciousness tradition, were excluded from the Front. The Inkatha Freedom Party which had also voiced its opposition to the new tricameral constitution was involved in intense rivalry with the ANC. Clashes between the members of Inkatha and the ANC which resulted in the death of five students, brought an end to any hopes of collaboration between the two (Van Kessel, 2000:21). A policy statement delivered by Chief Buthulezi indicated they were ready to go by the adage "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" (Financial Mail, November 25:1983).

Rivalry also existed between the UDF and the National Forum Committee (NFC) which differed with the UDF on the issue of the inclusion of whites into its ranks. The NFC was formed with the aim of bringing anti-apartheid organisations who embraced the concept of Black Consciousness, closer. At a point, they declared that unity between the two groups was highly unlikely (Natal Mercury, November 25: 1983). The NFC and the UDF also differed on the founding charters; the participation of liberal groups in the struggle; the role of ethnicity; mobilising communities against the constitutional proposals, and the term "Azania" (Sunday Times, June, 26:1983).

These developments resulted in calls from prominent clergymen such as Desmond Tutu for these organisations to unite. In an interview, Tutu stated that disunity was not justifiable as the differences were not that serious (City Press, July, 3:1983).

3.2.3. The UDF and its links with trade unions

Though the major trade unions and the black working class were not totally opposed to the ideas of the UDF, the unions, consisting of two main federations, namely FOSATU and the Council of Unions of South Africa (CUSA), were not part of the UDF for a long time. CUSA leaned towards Black Consciousness, while FOSATU adopted a non-racial and worker leadership position. Though FOSATU recognised the undeniable leadership role of the ANC in the struggle, it was cautious of worker

leadership being usurped by what it termed "populist politics." On its part, though it became an affiliate of the UDF by taking part in <u>ad hoc</u> alliances such as boycott campaigns against the tricameral parliament, this relationship ceased in 1985. Community unions such as the South Africa Allied Workers" Union (SAAWU) and the General and Allied workers Union (GAWU) did affiliate with the UDF. A merger between CUSA and FOSATU resulted in the formation of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) which was more charterist in approach and leaned more towards the UDF (Van Kessel, 2000:22).

The next section will analyse the various campaigns embarked on by the UDF and how these fitted into the concept of civil disobedience.

4.   Campaigns of the United Democratic Front

The UDF launched a number of campaigns to draw attention to issues of oppression and repression. The openness and wide publicity given to these campaigns and their non-violent nature among other characteristics, qualified them as civil disobedience acts. The following represent some of these. (UDF, National Working Committee Conference, 1987:22-26):

➢   Unban the ANC - this campaign was first launched in June 1986. It was one of the campaigns which led to the larger campaign for united action. In terms of demands by the UDF, this campaign was key to the two days of national protest which were held on June 5 and 6. It was widely publicised in the print media, and also attracted international attention.

➢   Campaign for National United Action - This campaign was launched by the UDF in conjunction with COSATU, the NECC and the SACC. It was launched in reaction to repressive measures instituted by the government with the declaration of a state of emergency which crippled the activities of the UDF. The UDF through this campaign, called for an end to the state of emergency. While calling for the release of Nelson Mandela, it also called for the unbanning of the ANC; the reopening of schools; an end to rent evictions, and freedom of expression and association, among others. The call for the

campaign was a call for the unity of all democratic forces and commenced with the Christmas Against the Emergency Campaign in 1986.

➢ Call to Whites - Through this campaign, the support of whites was solicited in the fight against apartheid. This was a strategy which sought alliances with perceived opponents and third parties.

➢ Solidarity with Frontline States - this was a call for solidarity with the Frontline States who supported the fight against apartheid.

➢ People's Education - This campaign sought to intensify and raise the standard of education for blacks by establishing research institutions in some universities which were engaged in developing material for subjects such as History, English, and Mathematics.

➢ Rent Boycotts - This gained prominence as it spread rapidly to many townships. These boycotts were also used as a weapon of resistance to apartheid and from this popular campaign came the formation of street committees.

➢ Release of Detainees - This campaign was characterised by the observance of Free the Children and Detainees Days. This was given further impetus by hunger strikes in prisons and police stations across the country.

The next section will analyse the life cycle of the UDF and address the various stages of the UDF.

5.   Stages of the United Democratic Front

The first stage of the UDF was a reactionary one as its formation was a direct reaction to the proposed new Constitution and Koornhof Bills. The UDF campaign commenced with a campaign against the Constitution and the Black Community Council Elections. This was followed by a Million Signature Campaign against the Constitution. With less than 30 per cent of voters voting in the Black Community elections, the government swiftly detained 14 UDF leaders under the Internal Security Act. In the second stage of the UDF, some affiliates and individuals engaged

in nationwide unrest, with widespread arson and destruction of government property as seen in the Port Elizabeth and Kimberly riots for example. Of note is the uprising in the Vaal Triangle which moved the focus away from the tricameral parliament to African townships. Most of these uprisings were in protest against school fees and rent payment, and developed into a direct challenge to local and central authorities. Most of these were spontaneous, often in reaction to the action of the security forces (Swilling, 1987).

The state of emergency in some parts of the Eastern Cape coupled with the banning of COSAS and the subsequent detention of several people, led to a decline in the activities of the UDF. However it also increased the popularity of the UDF. During the second state of emergency in 1988, townships were virtually under military rule and this period was characterised by intense rebellion by anti-apartheid organisations which was met with repression by the state. Fragmentation of the opposition led to low morale and saw the UDF tethering to its end, as it also appeared to have lost control over the youth. Despite all this, the UDF was still vibrant but in February 1988, the UDF and its affiliates were banned with the intention of terminating their activities. (Riordan, 1988:10-13).

Under a new organisation known as the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM), the UDF and COSATU cooperated. The MDM rekindled the spirit of popular protest. However when the ANC was unbanned and its leaders returned to South Africa, the role of the UDF was no longer clear and it was officially disbanded in 1991(Van Kessel, 2000: xviii).

6.   Conclusion

The UDF achieved its aim of becoming a mass organisation by drawing membership from almost every part of the country. With a focus on discipline and the practice of democratic principles within the front, it was able to launch a concerted effort. However, the sheer size of the UDF also meant that it was rather loosely organised in many respects, and sometimes lost control over the actions of its some of its affiliates. Nevertheless, the UDF's vision of a united democratic South Africa was effective in mobilising a sizeable number of white groups to the cause of the UDF.

The UDF's relationship with other organisations such as the ANC was responsible for both the success and failure of some of the UDF's activities. While it had a close relationship with the ANC and was often seen as an offshoot of the ANC, the UDF did not often have a cordial relationship with some anti-apartheid groups, the main bone of contention being the participation and inclusion of white groups in the activities of the UDF. Apart from the IFP with whom the UDF never resolved their differences, it somehow resolved differences with groups such as AZAPO.

The next chapter will analyse the various strategies used by the UDF, with a view to identifying any similarities and differences between the strategies used and the strategies of civil disobedience as identified in the context of the concept of civil disobedience. A brief analysis will also be done of civil disobedience activities in post-apartheid South Africa as well as a brief comparison with the methods used by the UDF in the 1980s.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE UNITED DEMOCRATIC FRONT AND CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE STRATEGIES

1.   Introduction

This chapter will compare the strategies and tactics used by the UDF and the strategies contained in the concept of civil disobedience, to identify to what extent the concept of civil disobedience was used during the UDF era. It will also briefly indicate to what extent some manifestations of civil disobedience currently seem to be present in South Africa, and to what extent they resemble or differ from the manifestations in the 1980s.

2. The United Democratic Front and civil disobedience strategies and tactics

The question of strategy and tactics was very central to the campaign of the UDF in view of its formation and organisational style. The success or failure of this campaign was linked to the strategies employed, and the UDF was therefore changing from one strategy to the other depending on the situation. Three main criteria formed the foundation for the strategies of the UDF. These were namely how to convince the maximum numbers of people, mainly Africans, to join the struggle as this would also determine the UDF's strength; how to win the support of whites into the fold of the UDF and also form alliances with them as this would assist the struggle; and how to solicit external international pressure on the South African government towards upholding the rights of all people in South Africa on an equal basis (Sharp,1980:163).

Through its existence, the UDF employed a myriad of strategies and tactics. These were dependent on which affiliate was embarking on which protest action. The UDF employed various strategies such as boycotts of institutions; mass mobilisation and organisation; the creation of alliances; creation of alternative administrative structures; withdrawal of support; and negotiations, among others (Houston, 1999: 70-85).

The concept of civil disobedience proposes that for an action to be labelled as a civil disobedience act, it must be an act of protest which is illegal, performed in the open, non-violent, motivated by conviction, and political in nature (Cohen, 1971:14-40). Three broad strategies of non-violent civil disobedience outlined in the concept are protests and persuasion, non-cooperation, and non-violent intervention (Sharp, 1973: Part Two, 109-115). Often, these strategies progress from one stage to the other, gaining momentum until demands are met.

2.1.   The three broad strategies of civil disobedience in the UDF era.

With three main strategies of protest and persuasion; non-cooperation; and non-violent intervention; the UDF embarked on its widespread campaign of civil disobedience.

2.1.1   Protest and persuasion

As discussed in the previous chapter, protest and persuasion are mainly for the purposes of registering dissatisfaction. They are basically non-violent and may be in the form of marches and pickets, amongst others.

The UDF Declaration, the production of the UDF journal, ISIZWE and the distribution of pamphlets, are all examples of how the UDF disseminated information about its activities. Drama and music were also used, for instance the performance of plays, chanting and singing. (Sharp, 1973: Part Two, 109-115). With regard to political mourning, flags of the ANC were openly displayed at political funerals (Smuts & Westcott, 1991:55).

2.1.2   Non-cooperation

This involves a deliberate refusal to cooperate with or assist a policy and an offer to cooperate on honourable and just terms. (Gregg, 1971: 33-34) Non-cooperation extends to various areas such as the political, social and economic. (Sharp, 1973. Part Two: 184).

2.1.2.1.   Social non-cooperation

Civil disobedience may manifest in the form of social boycotts or selective boycotts. Additionally, protestors may suspend social and sport activities; launch a boycott of social affairs, and students may boycott lectures and withdraw from social institutions. Where the intention is to withdraw from the social system, these may manifest in the form of non-participation in certain social events (Sharp, 1973: Part Two, 109-115). Some of these strategies manifested as follows in UDF activities:

➢ Boycott of social events – the UDF organised a boycott and stay-away from the Christmas celebrations of 1986 between the 16 and 26 of December. This took the form of people lighting candles in their homes amidst lights being switched off. The action was dubbed "Christmas Against the Emergency Campaign". This was in protest against the state of emergency which was imposed on 12 June 1986 (UDF, 1987.Fourth Anniversary of the UDF: 20 August: Four Fighting Years).

➢ Marking and observing specific days – the UDF for example set aside a day in March 1986 as National Detainees Day to protest the continued detention of their members (UDF, 1987. Fourth Anniversary of the UDF: 20 August: Four Fighting Years).

➢ School boycotts - Following the dismissal of Mathew Goniwe a leader of the UDF and a headmaster, schools were boycotted nationwide. There were several student struggles with the aim of gaining recognition for Student Representative Councils as well as demanding an end to corporal punishment (Khangela, 2008). There was also a boycott of schools in protest against government's lack of response to demands by students. The slogan "liberation before education" made boycotts even more attractive. The intensity of these boycotts resulted in the formation of Parents' Crisis Committees such as that in Soweto (Lodge & Nasson, 1991:83-84).

➢ Cultural boycotts – these were aimed at workers in the arts and culture industry who travelled outside South Africa and those who travelled to South Africa for cultural events. These travels were only supported if they had the approval of the democratic movement in South Africa and international

solidarity groups; and if the travel had a direct bearing on the struggle for liberation (UDF, National Working Committee Conference, 1987:37).

2.1.2.2.   *Economic non-cooperation*

➢   Consumer boycotts – Between 1985 and 1986, the role of consumer boycotts as a civil disobedience strategy became significant, particularly in the Eastern Cape where demands in respect of rent reductions; improved housing; better service provision; and removal of troops from townships and communities, were made. These consumer boycotts often quickly spread to other parts of the country. They served more as a form of political protest than achieving the demands they set out to achieve. Others took advantage of these boycotts to increase their sales and profit margins. Consumer boycotts organised on the basis of community demands were most successful. The UDF also adopted a strategy of presenting a common demand encompassing all sectors of the community and often solicited the support of white shopkeepers. This sometimes generated positive result from the business community, who fearing huge losses in business, often gave in to support these demands by arbitrating and negotiating the withdrawal of troops from townships, and also negotiating equal provision of services to all races (Global Non-Violent Action Database, 2012).

➢   Consumer boycotts were more successful in small towns where there was a high degree of consensus which led to the avoidance of violent acts by youth; a high level of participation; unity of leadership, and also assurance that during consumer boycotts business people in townships did not take advantage to increase their prices. Where there was a strong level of local organisation symbolised by the existence of street and area committees, consumer boycotts tended to be very successful (Swilling, 1987).

➢   Consumer boycotts were effective in for example Port Alfred, where they led to promises of employment by the local authority and an end to segregation in shops and businesses. Rent arrears were written off and charges for utilities were reduced. In the case of Port Elizabeth, the participation of blacks in central government was solicited in a manifesto drafted by white business people, as a result of the huge

decrease in sales. In East London, the negative effect of these consumer boycotts resulted in the lifting of a ban on street vendors by the local authorities (Lodge & Nasson, 1991: 79-80).

➤ Rent boycotts - The 20-month long rent boycott resulted in major financial loss to the local and central government. Spreading through Sebokeng, Sharpeville and Soweto to other provinces, these boycotts were also used to set demands such as an end to the state of emergency and the withdrawal of troops from townships (New York Times, 1988).

➤ Worker's strikes – These manifested in the form of sit-ins and factory occupations, amongst others. These sit-ins which also sometimes involved the community, often made it difficult for picket lines to be crossed and for the security agencies to end these protests. Some examples of these sit-ins and occupations were those organised by 2000 bakery workers in Durban, and 90 Printpak Gravure workers in Industria in Johannesburg (UDF, 1986:6-7).

➤ Stay-aways - On 5 November 1984, there was a call for a stay-away by black workers in the industrial areas of Witwatersrand and Vaal Triangle, to protest about rent, high utility rates and the arrest of black leaders. The call was made by the black unions and other civic groups. According to the Association of Chambers of Commerce, the call yielded a 75 to 100 per cent response (South Africa History Online, 1984).

2.1.2.3. *Political non-cooperation*

In response to the 1986 state of emergency, many township inhabitants reacted by taking over the administration of the townships, thereby defying the authority of the existing local government. Through the UDF, organisations based on the concept of "people's power" were established in the townships with the aim of strengthening the idea of a united front within all democratic organisations throughout the country. This resulted in the formation of street, area, and block committees in many townships. The establishment of people's courts and the creation of people's parks were also a reaction to the state of emergency. In Alexandra township, the formation of the Alex Civic Committee served as a platform for local grievances to be aired, and

was seen as a direct challenge to the authority of the State. Also in Alexandra township, the formation of people's courts saw youths sometimes going to the extreme. These people's courts initially encouraged the avoidance of crime through the formation of anti-crime groups, and engaged in confiscating dangerous weapons as well as arbitrating in disputes. However, they later engaged in placing people on trial, prosecuting them as well as sometimes "necklacing" them by burning tyres around their necks (RSA, 1996).

This development of alternative institutions resulted in a dual power structure where Africans took governance into their hands and civics performed roles such as the provision of health, education centres, crèches and pre-schools among others (Frederikse, 1987: 27). Boycotts of legislative bodies were also embarked on. The UDF declined to participate in the National Statutory Council, which was established by the Botha government, because though it was meant to give all races participation in elections, it was undemocratic, as it still promoted domination by whites. It also declined to participate because its demands for the release of political prisoners and the unbanning of organisations had not been met (UDF, Fourth Anniversary of the UDF: 20 August 1987: Four Fighting Years: 1987). In 1984, Africans called for a boycott of the first South African general election which was based on the new Constitution which proposed the formation of a tricameral parliament in which Indians and Coloureds were to have their own parliament while Africans were excluded from this process (Frederikse, 1987: 147).

The campaign against the election was implemented through mass mobilisation of Indian and Coloureds. This was done through a series of mass rallies, house to house campaigns, distribution of literature, and convening of public meetings. The UDF also sought alliances with every anti-apartheid group or organisation using trade unions, student groups, religious and civic groups amongst others (Houston, 1999: 72-73).

2.2   An analysis of UDF civil disobedience strategies

The strategies of anti-apartheid activists resulted in a vague distinction between violence and non-violence. The main participants involved in the use of these

71

strategies were blacks agitating for the abolishment of the apartheid system but often the real agitators behind violent protests hid behind the protestors to incite them. Women and children were also used in the front lines, making it difficult for the security forces to react. Protestors were often joined by their personal legal advisors and cameramen who were ready to capture any acts of harassment or reaction from the security forces (Wandrag, 1985:8-15).

The UDF largely employed non-violent strategies such as sit-ins, where workers would report to work but then sit down on the floor and lay down their tools; stay-aways where people were called upon to stay away from work; and protest marches and the circulation of petitions amongst others, as already outlined. However, anti-apartheid activists who strongly believed in non-violence were not very outspoken against violent protest actions. What was even more confusing, were the violent acts perpetrated by blacks on their fellow blacks who were deemed not to be heeding certain calls. Tactics such as "necklacing" which were a major feature during the UDF era, entailed hanging burning tyres around the necks of fellow blacks and burning them alive, and the forceful mobilisation of townships inhabitants to join consumer boycotts by forcing then to discard their wares or face attacks from their fellow activists, were acts which linked the UDF to systematic violence (Seidman, 2000:164-166). However the UDF largely opposed recourse to violence and many of the people involved in "necklacing" for example were said the be *amaqabane* or comrades who saw themselves as part of the UDF, but did not formally belong to any of the groups or structures. Despite some of these violent tactics black leaders were said to find non-violent actions such as mass protests including strikes and boycotts, more effective than violence (Karis 1983:405).

The violent acts however placed the UDF's civil disobedience strategies in conflict with the concept of civil disobedience, which insists on non-violence. Some strongly oppose the restrictions on violence in civil disobedience campaigns, arguing that a certain degree of violence does not deprive civil disobedience of its status. It is further argued that some forms of violations of civil liberties are justified if the perpetrators are convinced that there has been a gross injustice done to society (Moraro, 2007:6).

As indicated earlier, with regard to protests and persuasion, these according to the concept of civil disobedience, are mainly used for the purposes of registering dissatisfaction and not intended to be violent. Civil disobedience can be coercive or persuasive but this also raises disagreements. Some argue that persuasive civil disobedience appeals to the conscience of the public while coercive civil disobedience uses threats to achieve its aim (Rosenberg, 1981:41-62; Tella, 2004:61). Others also contend that since coercion uses threats it does not fall within the realm of civil disobedience (Rawls, 1999:322). On the required elements of illegality, non-violence, motivated by conviction, a political act and openness, the UDF to a large extent fulfilled these requirements through marches, statements, organisation of the people at the grassroots level, strike actions and boycotts of social and political and economic events, among, others as indicated in Chapter Two as part of its strategy of non-cooperation. However it was banned when these actions became violent with riots such as occurred in Port Elizabeth and other places (RSA, 1986).

The next section will discuss some of the manifestations of civil disobedience in post-1994 South Africa in order to assess to what extent campaigns initiated by the UDF specifically, were continued.

3. Some manifestations of civil disobedience in post-1994 South Africa

Despite the fact that in post-1994 South Africa, many of the opposition movements to government were absorbed into government structures, the 1994 election resulted in renewed violence and acts of civil disobedience. From opposition to government policies, to protests against government's inability to provide basic services and needs, several organisations such as the Landless People's Movement, the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) and COSATU among others, employed various civil disobedience strategies such as non-cooperation and protests and persuasion to pursue their demands. For example, following the death of an HIV positive prison inmate, the TAC embarked on a sit-in at the Human Rights Commissioner's office, demonstrations in many cities in South Africa and abroad were held by the TAC, as well as the circulation of petitions and pamphlets via the Internet and other channels. COSATU for example, focused its civil disobedience acts on government

policies which it disagreed with, such as the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) policy (Ballard, R., et al, 2006: 2-3).

Democracy in South Africa provided an opportunity for direct engagement with government. However, the economic situation resulted in the creation of social movements who sought to protest the worsening socio-economic conditions. Demands for higher salaries and demands for better service delivery often dictated the nature of civil disobedience. Protests in post-1994 South Africa tended to deviate from the concept of civil disobedience as they were often violent. For example, a survey conducted by the South African Institute for Race Relations (SAIIRR) showed that demands for better service delivery were accompanied by an increase in violent protests in 2007/8 and in 2008/9. In the Eastern Province, Gauteng, and Kwazulu-Natal violent gatherings increased (SAIIRR, January: 2011). Unlike during the previous era where support for protests was almost automatic, post-1994 activism required specific strategies to win support from the masses.

The culture of boycotts of rents and property rates persists in South Africa. For example in 1996, the Sandton Federation of Ratepayer's Associations declared a boycott of rates payments, and instead devised their own strategy of opening bank accounts into which rates commensurate with their old taxes with an addition of 20 per cent, would be paid. The boycott drew a large support base of about 80 per cent of members of the association. Elsewhere in Benoni, there was a year-long boycott of rates payments (Lodge, 1999: 48-51). The activities of the Anti-Eviction Campaign which was formed in Mandela Park in late 2000 to protest against high deposits on the payment of rents and poorly built units, resulted in a boycott of rents (Legassick, 2003).

In Khutsong township in the Merafong municipality South of Johannesburg, a good example of political non-cooperation was manifested through a nearly total voter boycott of the 2006 local elections in protest against the township's 'removal' from the Gauteng Province as a result of a re-demarcation of provincial boundaries. This was due to the widely held notion that Gauteng was better resourced and as such, falling under Gauteng would ensure better service provision to Khutsong. The

boycott of the elections was successful as the ANC eventually accepted the proposal and the whole of Merafong was incorporated into Gauteng. However this did not translate into a better situation for Khutsong in terms of service delivery. The strategy of boycotting was therefore replaced by the formation of civic associations to contest elections. This strategy is now being emulated by a number of civic associations in many communities (Shange, 2011).

In post-1994 South Africa, though a large number of civil movements were formed, they were not as organised as those of the apartheid era and specifically the UDF. These movements of the post-apartheid era have been described as "spontaneous and not formally organized". Alliance creation was also not strong as these movements were not linked to each other in an organised way (Hough, 2008: 6). It has also been stated that:

While the social movements of the apartheid era had been established as a deliberate anti-state counter power (popular civics, street committees, militia etc) the new social movements were often springing up in massive squatter camps where the state simply did not exist bar perhaps the odd police raid for illegal immigrants … it was the absence of any state structure in these areas that generated the development of mutual aid movements to address social concerns. (Anti-Repression Network (ARN) Report on the Social Movements Conference, 2004).

Unlike the UDF which had the overall goal of ending apartheid, social movements in post-1994 South Africa represent a more diverse range of objectives. These include land equity, racism, sexuality, education, environment gender, formal and informal labour and access to basic services such as housing, electricity, water, crime and safety. A number of them were also ideologically inclined with labels such as anti-neo-liberalism, anti-capitalism, anti-globalisation, pro-poor, pro-human rights, socialist and Trotskyist (Ballard, R., et al , 2006:1-17).

Another significant characteristic of post-apartheid movements and acts of civil disobedience, is that their actions progressed from being in-system tactics to more extra-institutional actions. This distinction is often blurred as post-apartheid movements involved in acts of civil disobedience employ a mix of strategies and then

later use each other's tactics as a supplement. An example is the TAC which has been successful in using the courts but has on other occasions had to engage in acts of civil disobedience (Ballard, R., et al, 2006:407).

The next section will analyse the similarities and differences in the use of civil disobedience in the pre-1994 and post-1994 eras in South Africa.

4. An analysis of the similarities and differences in the use of civil disobedience in the pre-1994 and post-1994 era

The concept of civil disobedience as previously discussed, is based on a number of principles namely that it must be an act of protest which is illegal; performed in the open; non-violent and motivated by conviction. Manifestations of civil disobedience in the pre-1994 and post-1994 eras show a number of similarities and differences. This is depicted in Table 1.

Table 1: Similarities and differences in the use of civil disobedience in the pre-1994 and post -1994 era in South Africa	
SIMILARITIES	**DIFFERENCES**
	The UDF protests were to a large extent characterised by illegality as in entering places closed to blacks and coloureds, rent boycotts, among others. Social movements in post-1994 South Africa also used the democratic structures in place to gain support for their actions. For example some movements will usually seek police permission for their gatherings or use the courts to support their actions.
Using strategies such as marches, protests, sit-ins and strike actions the UDF made its protest actions public. Social movement protests in post-1994 South Africa are also public in nature through the use of tactics such as picketing, marches and the carrying of placards with slogans depicting grievances. Media coverage of these activities also contributes to making these actions public.	The UDF protests were initially largely non-violent apart from the riots in Port Elizabeth and other places with necklacing and vigilantism. Post-1994 protests have been characterised by violence, looting and destruction of property on a regular basis. Examples are the xenophobic attacks of 2008 and numerous violent attacks on councillors who were deemed not to be satisfying the service delivery needs of their constituents.

	Social movements in post-1994 South Africa have all been protesting specific government policies such as rent, taxes, salary levels and service delivery. The UDF was largely ideologically motivated and linked to the ANC ideology of charterism and socialism. Social movements in post-1994 South Africa have a focus on immediate local issues such as service delivery and equitable distribution of resources etc.
	The UDF was political in nature as it primarily opposed the system of governance and the introduction of some bills such as the <u>Koornhof Bills</u> and the tricameral parliament. Social movements in post-1994 South Africa however were less motivated by political issues but rather by the quality of life; access to resources; equitable distribution of resources and rights of marginalised groups, among others.
A number of social movements such as the Landless Peoples Movement, the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) and Cosatu among others used strategies such as non-cooperation and protest and persuasion to demand change. For example, following the death of an HIV positive prison inmate, TAC embarked on a sit-in at the office of the Human Rights Commission; Cosatu for example focused its civil disobedience actions on government policies which it disagreed with such as the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) policy.	

From the above it is clear that although there are some resemblances, there are clear differences in the way that civil disobedience was conducted in South Africa in the pre-1994 and post-1994 periods.

5.   Conclusion

The UDF had one overall objective, namely, to promote democratic principles and an inclusive government. The post-1994 social movements have a range of objectives

depending on who is engaging in the act of protest, and often these issues are not coordinated.

Violent protests manifested in the pre-1994 and post-1994 eras, but it appears that in the UDF era violence was only resorted to later on, while the post-1994 era which is also the era of democracy, is often characterised by violent protest. It is ironic that acts of civil disobedience in the post-apartheid era are directed at the very democratic structures for which the UDF embarked on a civil disobedience campaign. It has been noted that some of the strategies used by the UDF which were successful in achieving their objectives at the time, are not necessarily appropriate for the current dispensation (SAHRC, 2002). Unlike the pre-1994 UDF era where laws had to be necessarily broken to implement civil disobedience actions, illegality is not necessarily a feature of post-1994 protests as the courts are at times used to provide permission for protest marches and gatherings, but the violence that follows is obviously illegal.

With the global economic recession and its attendant problems, the post-1994 era carries the risk of attaching a new meaning to the concept of civil disobedience as more strategies which may not necessarily be in accordance with the tenets of the concept of civil disobedience, will be adapted to situations that may arise. Issues such as unemployment, and lack of services delivery at local levels, are problems that continue to manifest in South Africa with violence increasingly characterising protests.

CHAPTER SIX

EVALUATION

1.   Introduction

This chapter will summarise the main aspects addressed in the text chapters. Subsequently, assumptions made in the study will be evaluated with an indication of whether they can be confirmed, not confirmed, or partially confirmed. This is followed by a brief conclusion.

2.   Summary

The main objective of the study as set out in chapter 1, was to discuss and analyse the concept of civil disobedience and to assess how this was used by the UDF in the pre-1994 era. The study also aimed at establishing how civil disobedience has evolved in the post-1994 era.

Chapter 2 of the study analysed the concept of civil disobedience in view of the fact that it overlaps with concepts such as revolutionary warfare, insurgency, and passive resistance. It drew on several examples of liberation struggles around the world to compare the differences and similarities between these strategies and the strategy of civil disobedience. It appears that the issue of non-violence was the major factor which separated civil disobedience from these other concepts.

In Chapter 3, the historical background of civil disobedience in South Africa was discussed. The activities of organisations such as the ANC and the PAC and the events which led to the Defiance Campaign were analysed. The various Acts and Bills which resulted in the intensification of the Defiance Campaign and the role of various groups in these campaigns, were addressed. The impact of the Defiance Campaign and events which led to its demise and the subsequent formation of the UDF, were also investigated.

Chapter 4 analysed the UDF as a political movement and the events that led to its formation. The organisational structure of the UDF sought to link all its loosely knit affiliates under a hierarchical system and chain of command. The objectives of the UDF were set out, with the main one being to coordinate opposition to the National Party government. The principles and vision of the UDF were also outlined.

In Chapter 5 the strategies and tactics used by the UDF in its campaign were discussed. An analysis of how these strategies and tactics corresponded to the concept of civil disobedience or how they differed, was included. Specific manifestations of protest actions by the UDF and protest actions in the post-1994 era, were also briefly compared to identify similarities and differences.

3. Testing of assumptions on which the study was based

In the first chapter, a number of assumptions were formulated to be assessed in the evaluation chapter. Assumptions are subsequently indicated as confirmed, not confirmed or partially confirmed.

3.1 The pervasiveness and expansion of the concept of civil disobedience.

Assumption: "Civil disobedience has developed into a more fully blown strategy than the original strategy of passive resistance".

Civil disobedience as a strategy was very widely used in the early 1970s and 1980s as a form of protest or advocacy towards achieving a specific goal. From Eastern Europe to the former Soviet Union, civil disobedience developed into a strategy used globally as a form of protest or showing dissent (Wikipedia, 2013). Original proponents of civil disobedience such as Mahatma Ghandi proposed a strategy of passive resistance which advocated non-violence and the willingness to suffer for a cause. Passive resistance was considered as a symbol of strength and the idea was to embarrass rulers or the authorities by not reacting violently to their actions (Kuper, 1960:74-75).

Passive resistance is more spiritual in nature, imbibing values such as chastity; celibacy; non-possession which promotes the idea of poverty and a non-materialistic

lifestyle and non-violence. It also did not explicitly contain an active intervention component.

From Gandhi and Thoreau, to proponents such as Martin Luther King, the concept of civil disobedience has expanded to include a range of strategies and tactics such as protest and persuasion and non-cooperation. Some of the tactics used are stay-aways; sit-ins; strikes; boycotts of social and economic activities; the creation of alliances and collaboration with organisations and groups which sympathise with a cause, and defiance campaigns, among others (Sharp, 2003:7-8).

Contemporarily, a civil disobedience strategy could have a variety of objectives including a wide range of issues and having different types of actors involved.

The assumption that civil disobedience has developed into a more fully blown strategy than the original strategy of passive resistance can be confirmed.

3.2.   The dynamism of civil disobedience as used by the UDF

Assumption: "The policies and strategies of the UDF initially resembled some aspects of civil disobedience but eventually deviated from this due to a change in strategy".

As indicated earlier, the UDF campaign commenced with a campaign against the South African Constitution and the Black Community Council Elections. This was followed by a Million Signature Campaign against the Constitution. With about less than 30 per cent of voters voting in the Black Community elections, the government swiftly detained 14 UDF leaders under the Internal Security Act (Riordan, 1988:10-13).

During the 1985 to 1988 era, the UDF was involved in violent acts such as those of conflicts between it and Inkatha which by 1987, saw deaths rising from 52 to 170. The UDF accused Inkatha of trying to destabilise progressive organisations while Inkatha insisted that the conflict was a result of attempts by the UDF to make South Africa ungovernable to the benefit of the ANC. Earlier, conflict in 1985 with the Azanian People's Organisation resulted in 21 deaths with 35 houses being damaged (Hough, 1989:394). From the Unban the ANC campaign; the campaign for National United Action; Call to the Whites; and Solidarity with Frontline States among others,

the UDF increasingly became more radical (UDF, National Working Committee Conference, 1987:22-26).

In the Transvaal, the focus moved away from the tricameral parliament to African townships, where the uprisings were in protest against school fees and rent increases and developed into a direct challenge of local and central authorities. Following rent increases in the Transvaal, a UDF affiliate called the Vaal Civic Association, mobilised and called for the reduction of these rents. There was more violence in Sebokeng and more protestors were killed and the crowd in turn killed Lekoa councillors and one Evaton councillor. Most of these were spontaneous, often in reaction to the action of the security forces (Jochelson, 1986:17).

Following what was known as the black weekend of 15 to 17 March with consumer boycott and stay-aways, violence escalated when police killed 20 people on their way to a funeral. The mourners were commemorating the death of those killed in the Sharpeville massacre in 1960. This resulted in increases in riots by UDF affiliates and the killing of a councillor and his family and mass action around funerals (South Africa History Online, 1985). In April 1985, conflict between the UDF and AZAPO had resulted in 21 people injured and 35 houses damaged (Hough, 1989:394).

During 1987, there was conflict between AmaAfrika and the UDF. AmaAfrika was led by the Reverend Ebenezer Maqina, who had been expelled from AZAPO in January 1986. It was formally established in Port Elizabeth in December 1987, although it had been in existence for some time before this. Its forerunner was the African Persons Concerned Committee (APCC). Conflict arose with the UDF, when AmaAfrika objected to the consumer boycotts and to the undisciplined actions of township youth aligned to the UDF following the detention of UDF leaders in June 1986. The violence which continued after January 1987 resulted in the deaths of many UDF and AmaAfrika followers (SABC, Truth Commission: Special Report, 2013).

In the Western Province, about seventy cases of "necklacing" were reported between 1985 and 1989. Cases of "necklacing" fell in two categories namely, of collaborators, who are killed and cases which formed part of broader conflicts within the squatter communities of the Cape. Four cases of necklacing in Paarl in 1986 related to the

conflict between AZAPO and the UDF. Other rural cases of necklacing or burning appeared to target people breaking the consumer boycott (two cases), black South African Police personnel (three cases); community councillors or their relatives (two cases); and a township administration clerk (O'Malley, Regional Profile of the Western Cape,1994-1999). Rivalry between political organisations such as the UDF and Inkatha also created concern. From September 1987 to November, a total of 170 lives had been lost as a result of clashes in Natal between the UDF and Inkatha (Hough, 1989:394).

The assumption that the policies and strategies of the UDF initially resembled some aspects of civil disobedience but eventually deviated from this due to a change in strategy, is thus confirmed.

3.3. Contemporary civil disobedience tends to give a new meaning to the concept of civil disobedience.

Assumption: "Some contemporary manifestations of civil disobedience in South Africa resemble certain methods used in the 1980s but the objectives differ".

Civil disobedience manifests in the mass mobilisation of people in protests, pickets, illegal marches, stay-aways, boycotts, sit-ins, strike actions and blockades and campaigns amongst others.

Civil disobedience acts in South Africa continue to employ many of the same strategies and tactics employed in the 1980s, but with different objectives. From the objectives of the TAC who sought to make Aids treatment available for all; to the Landless People's Movement who sought to reclaim land for those who in their view were the rightful owners; to the continuing service delivery protests by various communities and residents of various municipalities, civil disobedience has certainly evolved to acquire a varied range of objectives and in some cases also resulted in violence. The Landless People's Movement embarked on a campaign of "End Poverty: Land! Food! Jobs!" which attracted considerable media and international attention. It engaged in land occupations, and spontaneous mobilisation to resist forced removals (The Landless People's Movement & National Land Committee. 2002).

In January 2012 COSATU embarked on an "Occupy Rondebosch Common" campaign with the aim of "reclaiming the right to the city". According to some, the "spirit" of the UDF would return at Rondebosch Common. Participating organisations include Passop, Proudly Manenberg, the Gugulethu Anti-Eviction Campaign, the South African NGO Coalition and the South African Council of Churches. It was stated that "poor people will exercise their democratic right to gather….we're tired of the divide between rich and poor…their fear tactics are not working" (Babalo, 2012). In Kwazulu-Natal, amongst others, there were protests in January 2012 over poor service delivery with the protestors blocking roads and burning tyres (IoLNews, 2012).

From the above, the assumption that some contemporary manifestations of civil disobedience in South Africa resemble those of the 1980s, but that the objectives differ, is confirmed. Contemporary manifestations focus on issues such as service delivery, land reclamation, treatment of Aids for all, among others, as opposed to the pre-1994 objectives to ensure that the state did not control the ideological direction of the people; to unite all regardless of class, colour, ethnic and organisational lines in order to oppose apartheid; to streamline the activities of all anti-apartheid organisations, and to work towards the mobilisation and strengthening the organisation of the people among others. Also, what begins as civil disobedience for example protest marches, often tends to become violent in the contemporary era.

4.   Conclusion

Civil disobedience continues to be one of the major strategies of change in society. However civil disobedience itself is changing and is highly dependent on the situation.

From the protest actions in South Africa, to those during the so-called the Arab Spring, violence has become a major part of these protests. In South Africa, municipal service delivery protests; the protests over wages; the protests over working conditions; equal distribution of resources and Aids treatment for all, have also attested to the changing objectives of civil disobedience.

Although some of the original elements of passive resistance can still be identified in certain protest actions, such as a refusal to pay certain taxes, civil disobedience has become a more active concept. It has also become more difficult to prevent these actions from becoming violent whether as a result of indiscipline on the side of the protestors, or as a reaction to officially sanctioned violence to suppress an initially peaceful protest.

ABSTRACT

Topic: An Analysis of Civil Disobedience with specific reference to the role of the United Democratic Front in South Africa

By: Jacqueline Gyesiwa Daku–Mante

Supervisor: Professor M Hough

Department: Political Sciences, University of Pretoria

Degree: Master of Security Studies

The main objective of this study is to analyse the concept of civil disobedience by providing an overview of its historical development; its objectives and strategies, and how this was applied in South Africa by the United Democratic Front in the 1980s. The sub-objectives were to determine if civil disobedience as a concept is going through, or has gone through any notable changes since its inception; to assess the extent to which United Democratic Front policies and strategies were in accordance with civil disobedience; and to briefly compare manifestations of civil disobedience in South Africa in the pre-1994 period, with some manifestations in the post-1994 period.

The study included an assessment of the Defiance Campaign, analysing its impact and demise. It focused on the ANC strategy of mass action and assessed the role of the Pan African Congress. It outlined the formation of the UDF, assessing its vision, broad principles, organisation and objectives.

Certain assumptions were assessed in the concluding chapters, namely that civil disobedience has developed into a broader concept than the original concept of passive resistance; that the policies and strategies of the United Democratic Front initially resembled some aspects of civil disobedience but eventually deviated from this due to a change in strategy; and that some contemporary manifestations of civil disobedience in South Africa resemble certain methods used in the 1980s, but the objectives differ.

KEY TERMINOLOGY

Civil disobedience	Radical protest
Defiance campaign	Revolution
Non-violent action	Satyagraha
Passive resistance	Conscientious objection

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