



South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU)

FORWARD TO ONE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

SECRETARIAL REPORT
SADTU WESTERN CAPE
THIRD ANNUAL GENERAL CONGRESS
23 - 24 APRIL 1993

INTRODUCTION

As the elected minute secretary, from the Second AGO 1992, I took over the portfolio as acting Regional Secretary when Mandisa Sinuka resigned in October 1992.

In SADTU, we can only have a successful union if all our branches are functioning effectively and our members are committed. Members on the ground have been demotivated and this makes our task all the more difficult. Branches tend to work during times of crisis and it should be borne in mind that SADTU is not a crisis union but is there to educate, build, protect and defend the rights of teachers.

RECOGNITION

SADTU campaigned for the past two years for its recognition. We can however say that we are presently a fully recognised teachers' union. The recognition agreements were signed with :-
1. DET in September 1992.
2. House of Delegates in October 1992.
3. House of Representatives in March 1993.

This was most welcome because it eased the financial constraints our union experienced and also provided security to our members who have been victimised by arrogant and opportunistic principals.

OUR OFFICE WORKER AND COMRADE

We must commend Kevin Gouvias for his work in our Regional Office. Without his assistance, we would not have made such progress. His willingness to assist at the eleventh hour has really helped our union survive this demanding year. He is a voluntary worker who started doing afternoon sessions but soon worked all day. Though, he is underpaid, he settled easily with SADTU's huge family. We hope to have him amongst us for many more years.

REGIONAL OFFICE-BEARERS

The office-bearers were left with a lot of work because the region did not have an elected organiser. This has left a lot of office people burnt out.

The regional office-bearers met regularly every fortnight and had fruitful discussions. Although our numbers are depleted towards the end of our term of office, our spirit in the union has not been dampened.

BRANCHES

The Western Cape Region has 20 branches including 5 rural branches. Twelve branches are active and eight are classified 'dead' or inactive. These eight branch executives lack commitment and they demoralise members on the ground. This has been proven by having individuals from different branches attending meetings. Some branches have been revived because of crisis in their branches and SADTU is not a crisis union. Some of the inactive branches have indicated that they requested the Regional Office to assist in convening their AGM, though they have not done so formally.

Six branches (ie. Grabouw, Athlone Central, Mitchells Plain, Khayelitsha, Bellville and Nyanga) of the 12 had their AGM. Paarl indicated that their AGM will be on 22 April 1993. Office-bearers have attempted to revive inactive branches. Langa Branch is back on its feet; Athlone East elected a working committee and Cape Town launched a few more sites.

MEMBERSHIP

SADTU has grown immensely especially amongst HOK schools and this is greatly welcomed. There are sites at various schools in the following rural areas (Ceres, Malmesbury and Vredenburg) but no branches have been established. They have however asked the office to assist in launching a branch.

Calvinia, Williston and Van Rhynsdorp called the office to provide speakers to address them.

We were also invited to speak at college meetings, to discuss the role of SADTU in education and the possibility of associate membership for students.

Teachers from the House of Assembly have telephoned our union requesting information and SADTU membership forms. The Southern Suburbs are looking at schools in their area while Athlone Central will respond to Rondebosch Boys High.

We have a number of members from the CIPA who joined SADTU.

It is hoped that membership statistics will be available by Friday, 23 April 1993.

OFFICE

A lease agreement was signed between SADTU and Elsie's River Dairies (ie. the company that owns the office block). Details will be available in the office report.

FIELDWORKER

The fieldworker has recruited a number of teachers from rival teacher bodies. Details will be available in his report.

OFFICE-BEARERS

Three office-bearers resigned. Mandisa Sinuka resigned in October 1992 due to ill-health. This posed serious problems for the union. However the minute secretary was keen to take on the task of regional secretary.

In January, Nonceba Ngetu, the Regional Gender Convenor also resigned due to ill health and other commitments. Mathilda Vantura was co-opted as Gender Committee convenor.

Fakier Jessa also resigned as convenor of Jobs For All. The reason was that he could not come to terms with his ideology and that of SADTU. Cde Thembeke, Fred and Selwyn volunteered to meet with Fakier Jessa.

Muavia Gallie, the Regional Treasurer, requested to be relieved of his duties until the AGC, due to personal commitments. These resignations pose serious problems to the efficient running of the union.

SUB-COMMITTEES

Presently, we have eight sub-committees and only four function successfully.

The CULTURAL COMMITTEE organised an Arts Festival for teachers in September 1992. It was very well supported by teachers and hopefully this will become an annual event of the SADTU W Cape diary.

A Student Festival is scheduled for May 1993. Teachers have been involved in running workshops for students which have been successful. This festival will be both for primary and high school pupils. It is hoped that this venture will be fruitful for all our students.

We commend the convenor, Cde Thembeke and her committee for the sterling work they are doing.

REDCOM, one of our most important committees, was not well supported by teachers. Some workshops have been run to prepare for the National Education Policy Conference in May. At the beginning, it was poorly attended but it improved.

The Redcom convenor, Mandy Sanger, played a crucial role in the strike committee. They ran workshops to prepare for strike action.

MEDCOM is one of the subcommittees that has made the union survive. They have provided news bulletins and pamphlets to keep our members informed. There is a lot of work to be done in media. Some subcommittees have taken it for granted that Media must provide for their committees. Meetings convened by media were not successful. Media will be hosting the film, Malcolm X, as a fundraiser on 4 May 1993.

Recommendation : Each subcommittee should have a media person who will attend all meetings called by the regional Medcom, to assist with preparation for that particular commission.

FINCOM held monthly meetings which were not well attended. Five branches at most, attended.

ORGANISING COMMITTEE : No one was elected.

SPORT. This committee never took off. A proposal was sent to national for them to convene a meeting, so that guidelines on sport issues could be adopted. There was no response. There was no regional activity for the past year.

GENDER COMMITTEE. After a successful launch, this commission collapsed. The convenor resigned and Cde. Matilda was asked to convene this committee in the interim. Swaziland teachers are to visit Cape Town from 26 April to 1 May 1993. It is hoped that this visit will revive the committee.

JOBS FOR ALL COMMITTEE never took off. Para-legal workshops were held. It was well attended but the JFA collapsed soon after. This should be our strongest commission because we should be recruiting thousands of unemployed teachers and securing jobs for temporary teachers, especially in during these times.

REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

- * The Arts Festival in September proved to be very successful. We made quite a profit.
- * The SADTU jam at the Groove and the function at Community House were social successes but not financially.
- * A Night at the Podium on 19 May 1993 promises to be a success.

The 21-22 May was SADTU's National Days of Action. Both days were successful as teachers flocked to the streets to demand the recognition of SADTU.

With the unilateral restructuring of Education by the State and the early retirement packages mooted in September 1992, SADTU reject this outright. This mainly affected the HoR schools but the campaign was supported by SADTU teachers. We seriously have to overcome the discrimination between the HoR, DET, HoD - because we are a non racial union.

A members meeting was held in Bonteheuvel in September '92 and another at the Samaj Centre on 27 Jan '93. At this meeting it was decided to march on parliament on the issue of cutbacks on 29 Jan '93. Towards the end of last year, teachers took to the streets at 7am and during peak hour (5pm) to picket and protest against rationalisation. Parent meeting and joint forums were formed to deal with the crisis in HoR schools.

After a National SADTU delegate deadlocked with the HoR on the question of rationalisation, last year, they held a sit-in at the HoR Offices over a weekend. Those who were engaged with the sit-in were well supported by western Cape comrades throughout the weekend. Some members, on the outside, were arrested, later discharged and the charges were dropped.

SADTU shared a joint platform with CTPA and TLSA at Songhe College and at Community House at the invitation from WOSA.

SADTU met with the student sector who wanted to discuss their relationship with the teachers union.

FRATERNAL ORGANISATIONS

SADTU supported a call in August by the Tri-partite alliance to stay away for 2 days. SADTU has observers status at the Western Cape COSATU meetings.

PUBLIC SECTOR

SADTU is part of the Public Sector Forum, together with FOTWA, NEHAWU, SAMWU, T&GWE, PSL and CTPA. This forum was formed to protest against rationalisation, privatisation and retrenchments which affects all public sector unions. The public sector unions are working towards forming one public sector union.

CAMPAIGNS

SADTU has been preparing its members for a strike. We have consulted with various fraternal organisations for guidance on what procedure to follow. Sites and branches were to meet with PTSA and PTA members. A Strike Council meeting was held on 21 April 1993, to discuss the final preparations for balloting which will start on 26 - 30 April. Ballot boxes will be made available at schools by the branch executives. Only SADTU members must be balloted.

RECOMMENDATIONS

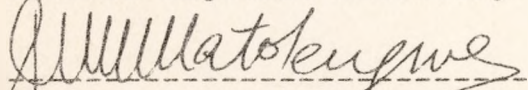
1. Inactive branches should be revived and those executive members who are unable to keep their positions must not hamper the progress of their respective branches.
2. Branches must adhere strictly to the correct channels for their grievances. The Regional Office will only deal with problems that have been exhausted at site and branch levels.
3. Members should visit the office regularly for updates on what is happening and not only during a crisis.
4. Only written reports will be accepted by the office for REC meetings. Only written apologies will be tabled at REC meetings.
5. Branches and sites, requesting speakers should do so, one week in advance.

IN CONCLUSION. the REC would like to thank all those comrades who assisted and supported the union, especially those who were and will also be prepared to work at the eleventh hour. We sincerely hope that we can rely on your assistance in the future.

We wish all the office-bearers for 1993 -1994 well and hope that they will build SADTU into an even stronger teachers' union.

VIVA SADTU !

Interim Regional Secretary


Ingrid Matolengwe