

# Cape Town Municipal Workers' Association

## FACT SHEET NO. 2

THE CAPE TOWN  
TRADE UNION  
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THE FACTS!  
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### THE COUNCIL IGNORES THE WORKERS' WISHES:

Although the City Council and the Union are locked in a wage dispute which is to be settled by the Industrial Court, the Council implemented its own wage offer with effect from 1 July 1984.

The Council paid increases decided upon by itself. *It did not pay what CTMWA members have demanded as a living wage.*

This was done against the wishes of CTMWA members who had asked, through their Union, that payment of increases be held over until the Industrial Court had decided how much workers were to be paid.

### THE UNION TAKES THE COUNCIL TO COURT

When the Union applied to the Industrial Court to stop the arbitrary pay-out, Council opposed it, saying that the Court had no jurisdiction (no right) to hear the matter because the Minister of Manpower had by then not referred the dispute to the Court. Therefore, Council said, it refused to file any papers at that stage.

But the Court ruled that the Council must file its papers which Council was therefore forced to do. On the day of the hearing, the Union's lawyers told the Court that the Minister had still not acted and therefore the Union's application had to wait.

In view of the above, the Union was forced to apply for the case to be postponed and this is what the Court did. This means that once the Minister refers the dispute to the Industrial Court - and he must do this at one or other time - then the Union will have the right to bring the application again.

### THE MEMBERS OF CTMWA RALLY

On 10 July 1984 thousands of CTMWA members gathered in Cape Town in a great demonstration of unity.

*The members reaffirmed their demand for a living wage and their rejection of the pittance offered by Council.*

They reaffirmed their demand that higher wages be paid from 1 July 1984 but said that pay-out should wait until after the Industrial Court had considered the Union's just and reasonable demand of R116,38 minimum per week.

They said that the Union should do everything possible to stop Council from implementing its own proposals.

They instructed the Union's Executive to go all the way in its demand for a living wage and threatened to consider stronger action if Council should ignore their wishes.

### COUNCIL'S PROPAGANDA

In a letter to all workers the Council says that it paid out its own increases because it wanted to treat all workers the same.

But the Council is fooling nobody. All workers know that -

- ★ Council's policy of equal opportunity is to a large extent on paper only. In practice it is the Union's members who fill the lower paid jobs. Council's policy of equal pay for equal work is therefore a sham in many respects.
- ★ The best jobs are generally not given to the Union's members.
- ★ In practice Council's labour policy is not based on equality but on the colour bar.

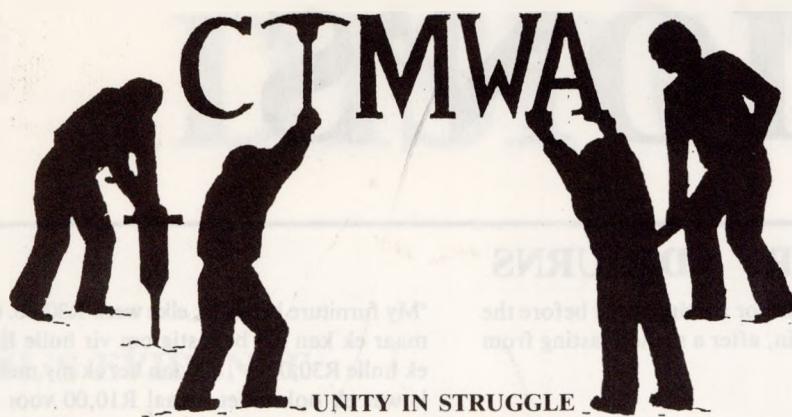
### THE UNION SAYS...

Council is attempting to create industrial unrest

- ★ By acting against the letter and spirit of the system of collective bargaining.
- ★ By trying to undermine the Union and sow division amongst its members.

Do not be fooled by Council's delaying tactics. The Union will always be guided by decisions taken by its members. The struggle for better wages and conditions must continue. Only *Unity in Struggle* can bring victory.

Watch out for the next Wages Fact Sheet which will inform you of further developments.



SPECIAL ISSUE

THE CAPE TOWN  
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JANUARY, 1985

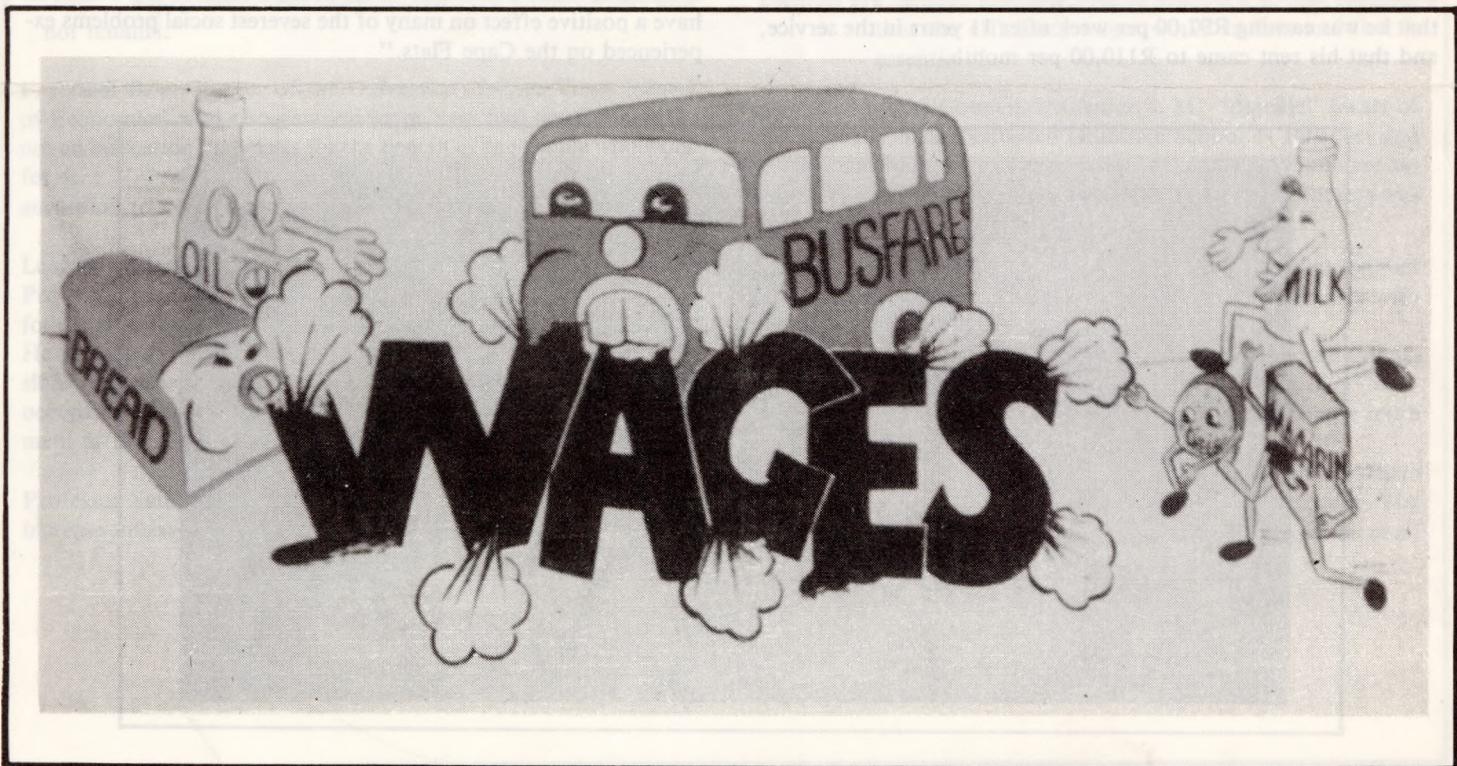
CAPE TOWN MUNICIPAL WORKERS ASSOCIATION

# WORKER NEWS

## SPECIAL ISSUE

Members have shown tremendous interest in the Industrial Court Hearing relating to the Wage Dispute with the City Council. In addition to personal enquiries, we have received hundreds of telephone calls asking for progress reports. The calls are still coming in.

It is in response to this clamour for information, *as well as the Union's commitment to keep members informed*, that it was decided to bring out this SPECIAL ISSUE of WORKER NEWS. We hope that members will now be better informed on the latest developments.



# UNION'S WAGE DISPUTE:

## INDUSTRIAL COURT ADJOURS

The Hearing of the CTWA's demand for a living wage before the Industrial Court was adjourned again, after a session lasting from 3—20 December 1984.

The Hearing is due to continue on 1 April 1985. On this day evidence and cross-examination will be continued. It is also possible that the two parties will then begin argument.

The Union's Wage Dispute is indeed proving to be a marathon case. The first Hearing began on 17 October 1984 and ran for two weeks.

## COURT MUST MAKE AWARD

After completion of evidence and argument the Court will most likely adjourn once again to allow its President to make its finding. The President of the Court may either completely reject the demand of members for a living wage, or may grant a wage increase. The President of the Court may make any increase granted, retrospective for a maximum period of six months. This means that members will then receive back pay.

There is the possibility that any award made in our favour may be binding for fifteen months.

The President of the Court has to consider a huge volume of evidence before arriving at a finding. It is nevertheless hoped that he will not take too long after April 1985 to make an award.

## UNION PRESSES ITS DEMAND

When the Industrial Court resumed, the Union continued to press its demand for the payment of a living wage to Labourers which it said should be based on the actual needs and expenses of a five member household.

The Union led further evidence in support of its case and called a member who is a Ganger in the Cleansing Branch. He testified that he was earning R97,00 per week after 11 years in the service, and that his rent came to R110,00 per month.

'My furniture betaal ek elke week R30,00. Ek moet hulle gee R40,00 maar ek kan nie bekostig om vir hulle R40,00 te gee nie nou gee ek hulle R30,00. . . En dan het ek my meisie kind wat in die creche is wat ek ook moet betaal R10,00 voor. My vrou werk — haar wages wat sy bring daai is vir die kos vir ons.'

Transport "kos vir my vyf bob in die oggende. Ek betaal my lig R17,00 'n maand. En as my water kom is dit ook R15,00 elke drie maande. Nou as my lig kom en my water kom dan kan ek nie my furniture betaal nie. Die kinders moet ons by my skoonma in Manenberg toe neem."

A school principal gave evidence for the Union and he explained that education was not "free" — as is often claimed. He listed the cost involved in various items such school uniforms, equipment, stationery and transport.

Called by the Union, Professor Pieter le Roux, gave evidence supporting the demand of workers for a living wage. Focusing on the cost of housing he said, "Indeed, it is precisely the younger workers, who have the lowest incomes, that will be forced to take homes in the more expensive newer areas such as Mitchell's Plain. This would also imply that they are most likely to have higher transport costs."

Professor Le Roux stressed the problems of high food and transport costs. "It is precisely the poorest who, because of problems of transport and the lack of refrigeration, have to buy dearly at the local small shops rather than at the larger supermarkets frequented by the better off." He continued, "By paying a wage below the basic living level, one may well condemn a family to an insufficient diet and to living circumstances which are bound to lead to severe social and health problems."

He argued that the City Council has a social responsibility as an employer, and said, "I trust that the Cape Town City Council will not oppose this type of wage increase in principle, for many of the most severe problems that it has to deal with on the Cape Flats are bound to be alleviated if a decent minimum wage is paid. Not only will it find that the high percentage arrears in rent payments is likely to come down, but better living standards are bound to have a positive effect on many of the severest social problems experienced on the Cape Flats."

## CITY COUNCIL'S EVIDENCE

In reply to the Union's case, the City Council stated in Court that it takes into account amongst other things the official cost of living index.

It said that it also "affords employees additional benefits", that its salary and wage scales "compare favourably" with those for "job types in other organisations" and added that in the "present economic situation in the country" the Court should not grant the demand for a living wage.

The first witness for the Council was Mr A. M. Brand who is a Senior Lecturer at the University of Stellenbosch Business School. Opposing the Union's evidence Mr Brand said in Court.

- \* ". . . it is impractical and economically unfeasible to subscribe to the concept of a general minimum living wage."
- \* ". . . to one man the living wage can be an ideal, something very high up in the sky, and that could be his perception of a living wage, where to the next man he can have a totally different perception of the living wage."
- \* ". . . the overall average household size in J903 and J904 is 2,4. . ."
- \* ". . . it is ill-considered to base any argument solely on the five member household, as has been done by the Union."
- \* "The issue of multi-households living together, working children living with parents and ordinary boarders constitutes a source of income insofar as these individuals do make a contribution to rent, alleviating the financial situation to some extent."
- \* "It is wrong to use the higher rent in Mitchell's Plain to warrant a rent requirement of R80,00 as demanded by the CTMWA as the minority surely cannot serve as justification to determine the requirements of the majority."
- \* "Regarding rent as an expenditure, it must be taken into account that. . . a large section of the employees are home owners and not tenants."

Professor Brian Kantor of the University of Cape Town School of Economics, who also gave evidence, said that the Council "is not an institution that exists for the benefit of the people who work for it. . ." Professor Kantor concluded that "in short, paying according to needs is an economic nonsense."

Lengthy evidence was also given by Professor J. L. Sadie, a former Professor of Economics at the University of Stellenbosch, and former Director of the Stellenbosch Bureau for Economic Research. He also acted previously in an advisory capacity on various commissions on matters such as the development of homelands, White occupancy of rural areas as well as Advisor on Economic Development to the Rhodesian Government.

Professor Sadie stressed that no worker was entitled to a wage increase unless he "increased productivity" (worked harder).

Professor Sadie said in Court

- \* "The wage is a reward, not for being a human being, but a factor of production in accordance with the efficiency, competence, skill, initiative, talent and similar non-abundant attributes displayed. Those who, in this scheme of things, do not earn enough to provide them with an adequate level of living, as defined by themselves, while claiming they have a right to such level, have to address their pleas to the central government to rectify the perceived injustice. . ."
- \* "The community cannot subsist on money, but on the amount of goods and services produced by it."
- \* "The successful establishment and implementation of the principle of paying this kind of "living wage" to the lowest skilled workers will wreak havoc upon this country's economy and its unskilled labour force."
- \* "The Cape Town Municipality would have acted with gross irresponsibility had it acceded to the demand of the Applicant."
- \* "He (the worker) has the opportunity, he has the option not to work or to do something else for himself, to become an employer himself. Become self employed."

Mr Kuny: "If (buying) less means to reduce his standard of living below what might be a living standard?"

Prof Sadie: "Then just too bad, but there it is."

Mr Kuny: "So according to your evidence then, the key to prosperity lies in low wages ultimately."

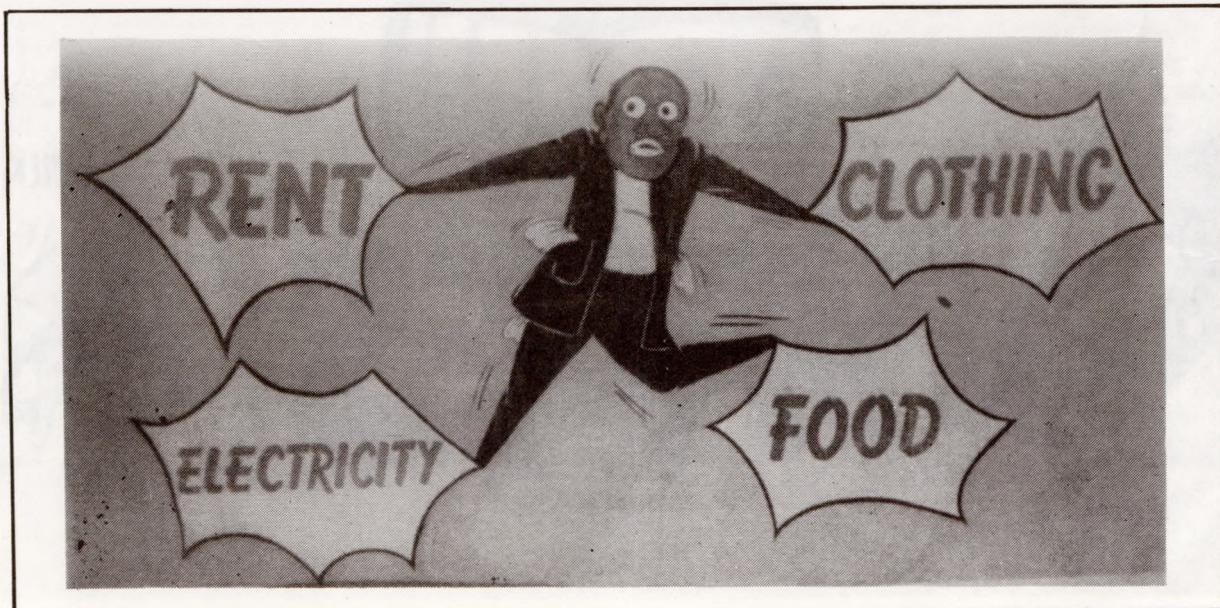
Prof Sadie: "Yes, low wages compared to low productivity wages. Low wages compared to the productivity. That is so. If productivity is high enough, of course then it means that the efficiency wages would be low and that is essential."

Also called by the Council, Professor S. M. "Blackie" Swart of the University of Stellenbosch Graduate School of Business and the National Manpower Commission's Standing Committee on Industrial Relations, said that a further increase for Labourers was "not warranted".

Comparing the Council wage with that paid by other municipalities and undertakings he concluded that it compares favourably with the wages for equivalent work. . ."

The City Treasurer stated in evidence that the City could not afford to pay the wage increases demanded by the Union. The Council would have to levy increased rates on property, charge more for services and steeply increase rents.

The City Administrator and Deputy Town Clerk said in evidence that the Union showed no willingness to lower its demands. The Council offered a very fair total employment package, he said.



## DELAY AND SACRIFICE

The lengthy delay has not taken the Union by surprise at all. We know that the delay is not in the interest of members. We also know that the delay is not in the interest of Council because the uncertainty creates a workforce that is not contented. When the decision

was taken to demand a living wage, members knew they had to be prepared to sacrifice. At meetings member after member emphasised the need to sacrifice. This is still the position at present.



*Mrs Abrahams, a member's wife: "Ek was amper elke dag in die hof. Ek het na alles geluister maar ons sukkel nou nog meer as van tevore."*

## WHAT THE MEMBERS' SAY

One member who attended the Hearing said "Ek sal nooit vergeet wat hulle van ons gesê het." Another member said that the Union must continue the fight because all the members are behind the Union, win or lose.

A gang of workers also commented – "Kyk hoe hard werk ons. Die Council moet op kom met die pitte. Wat baat dit, ons werk so hard?"

A member's wife who also attended the Hearing said, "Die Union is reg om die Council Hof toe te neem. Ons vroue moet saam met ons mans staan want die Unie veg vir almal van ons."

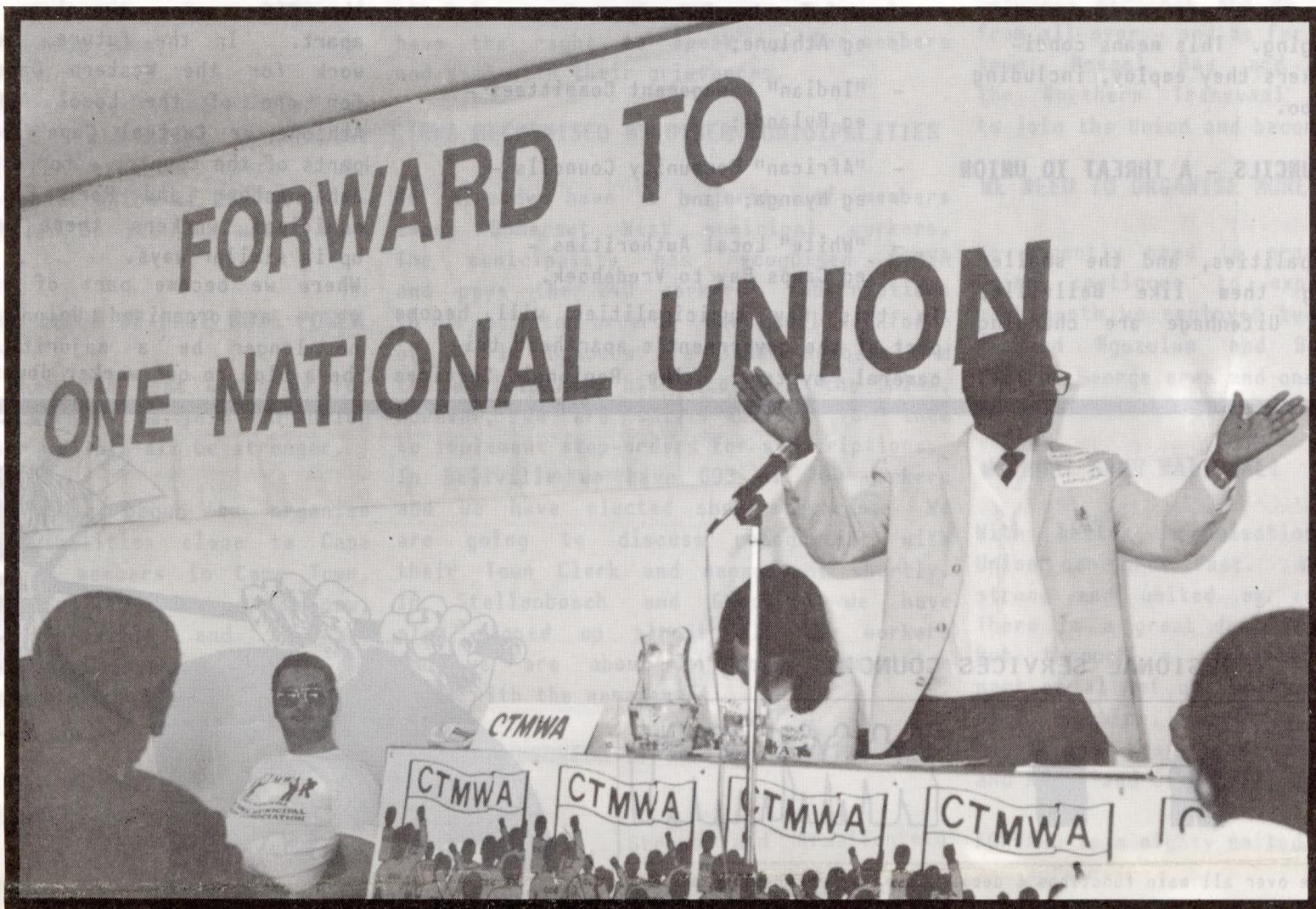
Another member referred to the dispute concerning PUTCO workers and said, "Hulle het ook lank gewag. Ons moet bereid wees om van ander werkers ook te leer."

And so the fight goes on.

## SPECIAL BULLETIN

SEPTMBER  
1987

## Forward to the National Union!



Over the last few years the CTMWA has played an important role in paving the way for a National Union. From our experiences, we have learnt why workers must stand together and unite. Because united, we become stronger. Divided we are weaker.

But we also learnt another lesson, which is, that **members** must control the Union. **Members** must take all important decisions. With member or worker control, our strength will be so much greater.

During the last wage struggle, there was greater member participation. But not enough. Now we are discussing a very important issue - the formation of a National Union. The matter has been discussed for some time. The National Union is going to be born soon. The time has come for our members to assert themselves and be heard. It is not enough that the Executive Committee and General Council think we must go ahead. **IT IS YOU, THE MEMBER, WHO MUST DECIDE.** If you say "yes" it is "yes". If you say "no", it is "no".

To come to a final decision, we appeal to all members to think about the matter.

Talk to other members!  
Discuss with shop stewards!

Formulate your point of view so that when our members' meeting is held, you the members, can tell the Executive Committee and General Council what they must do. Let us continue to build democracy in our Union now. This newsletter is designed to help members to discuss the issue and come to a considered decision.

#### MEMBERS' GENERAL MEETING

13 October 1987 marks an important date for CTMWA - a Special General Meeting of **members** will decide whether to join in the formation of the National Union or not.

Since the Union started to organise other municipal workers and held talks with fellow COSATU affiliates in the municipal sector, the **FORMATION OF THE**

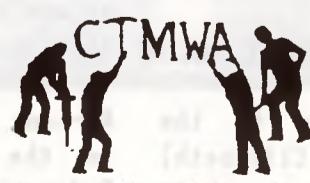
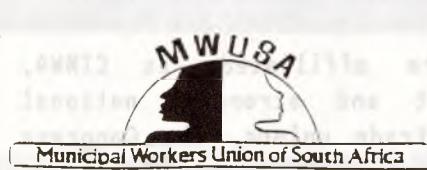
**NATIONAL UNION** has become a bubbling topic of discussion among shop stewards and members. The Union's newsletters, bulletins and annual reports have kept members up to date with all the main developments. In the meantime, shop stewards have been grappling with the finer details of the significant move to GO NATIONAL. Analysing the financial implications, formulating a solid structure, drafting a constitution and examining the effect of the RSC system are some of the important areas addressed by shop stewards at numerous meetings, workshops and seminars. The latest step in the **NATIONAL UNION CAMPAIGN** has been a series of department, branch, depot and area meetings around the details of the National Union.

After years of groundwork among members, CTMWA now stands at the threshold of taking an important decision - are we going to form part of the launching of the National Union or not.

**Every member MUST ATTEND** the General Meeting - be sure that **YOU** are there.



GWUSA



Cape Town Municipal Workers Association



# Regional Services Councils

In the Council, CTWMA members do many different kinds of work, but we have always seen ourselves as workers working for one City Council. It is the same for those who work for municipalities like Johannesburg, Bloemfontein and Port Elizabeth.

But now the situation in all these municipalities are changing. This means conditions for the workers they employ, including us, will change too.

## SPLITTING OF COUNCILS - A THREAT TO UNION UNITY!

These big municipalities, and the smaller ones surrounding them like Bellville, Stellenbosch and Uitenhage are changing into:

\* bigger "general affairs" **REGIONAL SERVICES COUNCILS** - eg the Western Cape Regional Services Council (WCRSC); and

\* smaller racially based "own affairs" **LOCAL AUTHORITIES** like

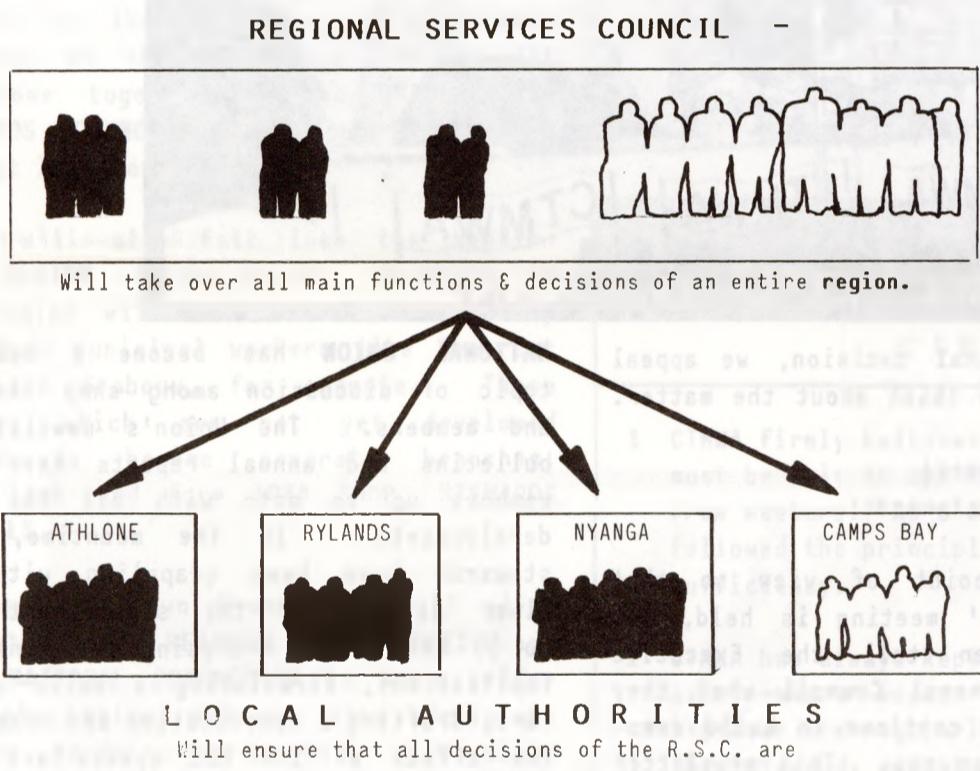
- "Coloured" Management Committees and Boards of Management - eg Athlone;
- "Indian" Management Committees - eg Rylands;
- "African" Community Councils - eg Nyanga; and
- "White" Local Authorities - eg Camps Bay to Vrededorp.

In this way municipalities will become part of the government's apartheid tri-cameral system. The Regional Services

Councils in Cape Town, Bloemfontein, Johannesburg, Pretoria, Port Elizabeth and Walvis Bay have already started to operate from 1 July this year.

## ARE WORKERS TO BE DIVIDED?

As workers, united together in CTWMA, the RSC system threatens to **split us apart**. In the future, some of us may work for the Western Cape RSC, others for one of the Local Authorities like Athlone or Central Cape Town. In other parts of the country - for example Johannesburg and Port Elizabeth - the municipal workers there will be split up in similar ways. Where we become part of new workforces, we - as organised Union members - may no longer be a majority. This will be a blow to our worker power.



## A THREAT TO WORKER UNITY

### MUNICIPAL WORKERS HAVE THEIR OWN PLAN

But we do not have to accept the government's plan to split us. From each new Local Authority or RSC, we can **combine as municipal workers** throughout the country into one strong National Union. Then there is no way that we can be split. In fact, then we can speak with one voice for all Local Authority workers in South Africa, with branches and regions of the Union in each province.

### MUNICIPAL WORKERS UNITE IN NATIONAL UNION

Then for example, if workers in the Athlone area or Algoa (Port Elizabeth) RSC, deadlock with the local managements in wage negotiations, we can come together to support them in united action under

the banner of a **national living wage for municipal workers** - from Soweto to Cape Point!

### ONE UNION FOR ALL MUNICIPAL WORKERS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Together we can be strong. If all the municipal workers already organised into Unions come together in one Union, there will be over 27 000 of us. The power of workers lies in taking action together. Alone we are weak. But together we are a force to fight for better conditions and for workers' democratic rights.

Already we are affiliated, as CTWMA, to the biggest and strongest national federation of trade unions, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). If we unite with the other organised

municipal workers in other COSATU Unions to form one National Municipal Workers' Union, we will be part of a **national force of over 1 million organised workers**.

### LET US UNITE

By uniting we can tackle the RSCs and organise a majority of Local Authority workers in the region of every big city.

Divided along RSC lines our bargaining power and therefore living standards will drop. United in one National Union we will be stronger in our fight for a living wage for all workers.

### FORWARD TO WORKER UNITY.

### FORWARD TO THE LIVING WAGE CAMPAIGN.

# Organising Other Municipal Workers

In CTMWA we are already moving towards a National Union.

For a long time now, we have noticed that if municipal workers around us in nearby Councils remain unorganised, we ourselves are weakened. This keeps our wages down. Fellow municipal workers from these surrounding municipalities appealed to us to help them.

First they wanted to start their own Unions. But in small Local Authorities like Goodwood, for example, there could only be a very small Union of 250 workers. Such a small Union on its own would have little power.

## TOGETHER IN ONE UNION WE HAVE MORE POWER

So we agreed that the best would be for those municipal workers to join our Union and then together we will all be stronger.

Since 1984 we have begun to organise workers in municipalities close to Cape Town. CTMWA has members in Cape Town, Somerset West, Bellville, Goodwood, Grabouw, Stellenbosch, Durbanville and we are building up meaningful contact with municipal workers from many other areas.

## OUR NET IS WIDE - WE HAVE MEMBERS FROM GRABOUW TO BELLVILLE

Unlike the Cape Town Municipality where

workers join a Union as a condition of employment, workers from other municipalities join the Union as they get to know what a Union is and what a Union can do for them. When the majority of workers from the municipality are members of the Union, they elect shop stewards and struggle to get their municipality to recognise the Union so that shop stewards & organisers have the right to speak up for members and deal with their grievances.

## CTMWA RECOGNISED BY OTHER MUNICIPALITIES

We already have a majority of members among Somerset West municipal workers. The municipality has recognised CTMWA and pays the 240 workers' subscriptions to us by stop-order. The total workforce of 72 in Grabouw are CTMWA members and the municipality has recognised the Union. However, we are still waiting for them to implement stop-orders for subscriptions. In Bellville we have 693 of 700 workers and we have elected shop stewards. We are going to discuss recognition with their Town Clerk and management shortly. In Stellenbosch and Goodwood we have also signed up almost all the workers and we are about to hold recognition talks with the management.

## WE HAVE HUNDREDS OF MEMBERS OUTSIDE CAPE TOWN

In Durbanville, Strand and Kraaifontein we have several hundreds of members and

we are trying to get the majorities of these municipal workforces also to join.

To organise workers into our Union we respond positively to their requests to join CTMWA. The Union's organisers are out in the field, house-visiting and holding meetings almost every evening. Saturday mornings and on Sundays. Workers from all over - and as far away as Grahams-town, Mossel Bay and Potgietersrus in the Northern Transvaal - are appealing to join the Union and become unionised.

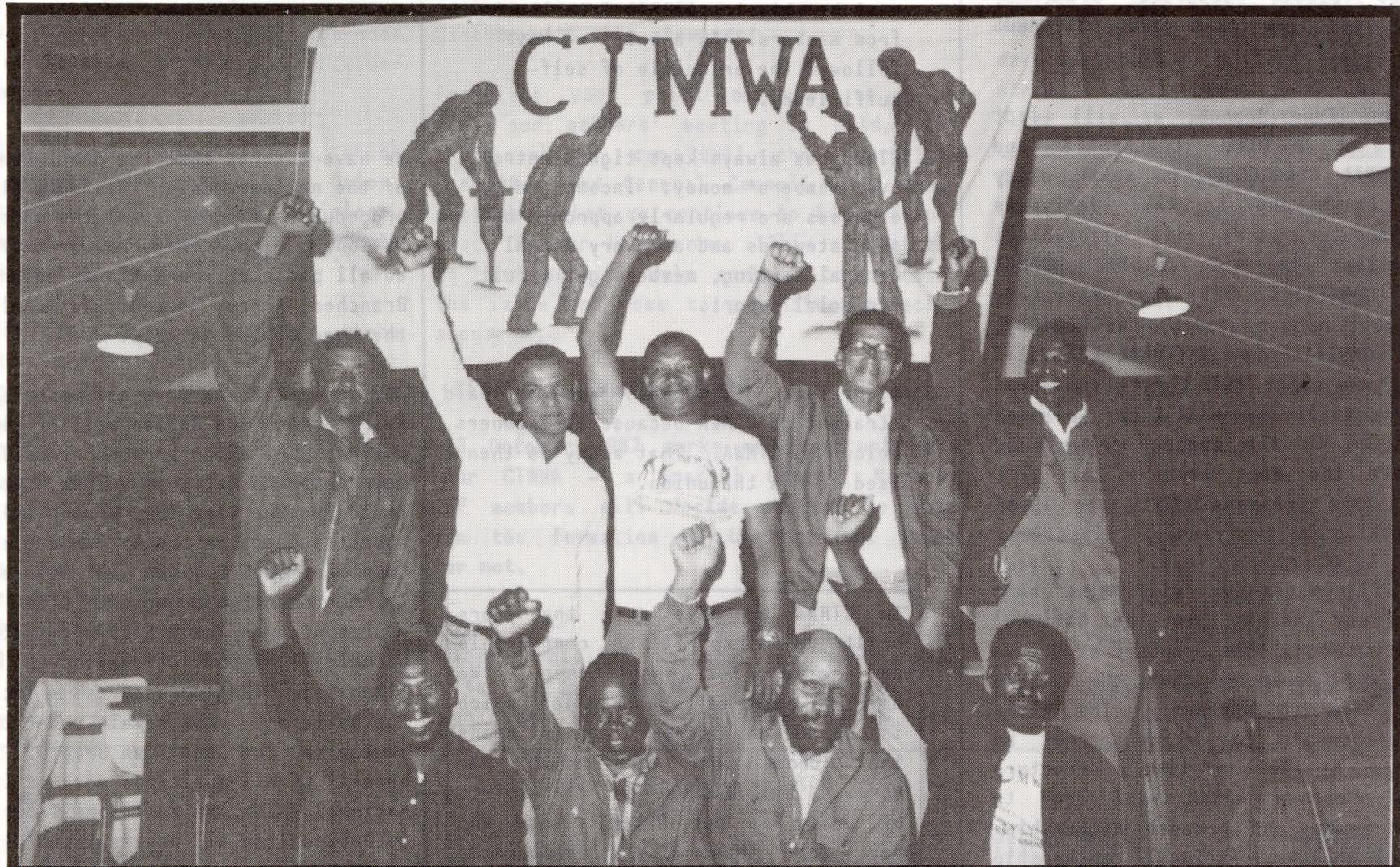
## WE NEED TO ORGANISE MORE

We urgently need to organise more. Our Union continues to expand and in the past month we employed two more organisers. Richard Mguzulwa and Brian Don - one for the George area and one in the Vredenburg/Saldanha area.

## WE MUST GROW NATIONAL!

With better organisation, the National Union can grow fast. We need to become strong and united as municipal workers. There is a great deal of work to be done. But through a concerted effort on the part of all of us, workers in major cities will combine, workers along the East coast and West coast will link together and North and South will unite.

FORWARD to a mighty united force of municipal workers!



ONE OF THE MANY CTMWA SHOP STEWARD COMMITTEES REPRESENTING WORKERS FROM SURROUNDING MUNICIPALITIES.

# Proposed Structure

## NATIONAL UNION: PROPOSED STRUCTURE

If we decide with other municipal workers' unions to form one National Union, our members will still have the right to control their own affairs and to take decisions affecting them. Even though a National Union will mean that adjustments will have to be made, the underlying idea is that members must control their Union. But because it is a National Union, our structures will be changed to fit into a national pattern.

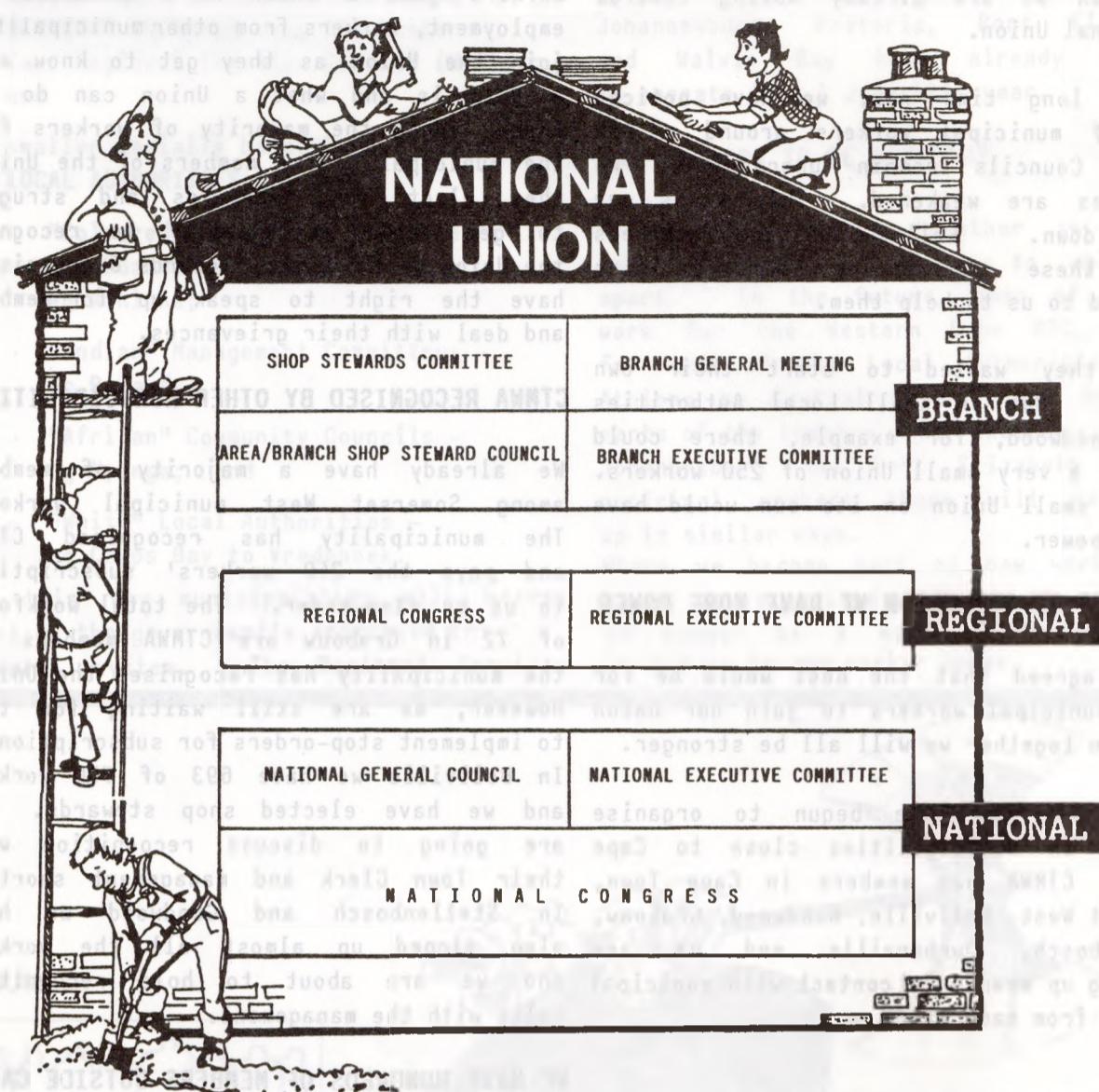
## HOW WILL THE STRUCTURE OF OUR UNION BE AFFECTED?

CTMWA will become a **BRANCH** of the new Union, the Cape Town Branch. Shop stewards will meet in their departments - e.g. Roads, Parks & Forests, Cleansing - at least once a month and with the members they represent at least once a month. These new **Shop Stewards Committees** meetings will be to discuss workers' grievances and plan how to challenge unfair discipline penalties; or health and safety, maternity rights, and other issues that affect workers in their workplaces. All shop stewards in the Cape Town Branch will all come together in the **BRANCH SHOP STEWARDS COUNCIL** (like our G.C.) and meet at least once a month.

CTMWA will also fall into the Western Cape **REGION** of the Union. With us in the region will be all the other newly organised municipal workers like Somerset West and Grabouw, for example. Those places, which are not yet developed enough to become separate branches, will link and form **AREA SHOP STEWARDS COUNCILS**.

As the Cape Town Branch, we will elect delegates to **REGIONAL CONGRESSES** and also **NATIONAL CONGRESSES** to make policy for the Union and to take decisions on our mandates. We will also elect representatives to sit on the **BRANCH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**, like our Executive Committee but bigger, and on the **REGIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE** and **NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**, to carry out these decisions. All representatives will be elected in proportion to the number of members. As we have the most members, we will have to take responsibility to lead the new Union a progressive direction.

Because of numbers we will also have the most say as to how the National Union must be run. The proposed structure has been so arranged that one branch cannot dictate to another. The right of our membership to decide cannot be taken away. At the same time a structure has been proposed which will lead to a broader unity and broader membership. For this broader national membership of which we will be a part, there will be National Congresses where issues will be debated and discussed in a democratic manner and in the interests of workers.



## Finances

CTMWA	NATIONAL UNION
<p>1 CTMWA firmly believes that the Union must be able to operate from the money from members. As a union we have followed the principle of self-sufficiency.</p> <p>2 CTMWA has always kept tight control over members' money. Income and expenses are regularly approved by shop stewards and at every Annual General Meeting, members get a full financial report.</p> <p>3 At present, all members' subs are paid straight to CTMWA because all members belong to CTMWA. That money is then used to run the union.</p>	<p>CTMWA believes that the National Union must strive to be self-sufficient.</p> <p>We have ensured that the draft constitution of the national Union lays down strict procedures to control all the money of the National Union. These requirements apply to all parts of the National Union - Branches, Areas, Regions, Nationally and the Head Office as well.</p> <p>All subscriptions from all members in every Branch and Region will be paid to the National Union because we will all belong to the National Union. Each Branch including the Cape Town Branch (CTMWA) will submit budgets to the National Executive Committee (N.E.C.) who will allocate money to each Branch and Region. CTMWA will be represented on the N.E.C. and in this way be able to be part of the control of the finances. CTMWA's resources - including the building - will remain under the control of the Cape Town Branch. For the benefit of all municipal workers in the National Union, we must commit ourselves to nationalise all assets in the long term.</p> <p>Benefits such as medical, pension and savings will continue to be administered by the Cape Town Branch of the National Union.</p>
<p>In CTMWA we have over the years built up a spirit of comradeship and caring for each other. We have a rate of subscription which is based on income. This means that those who earn more, pay more. But because of the spirit of unity in our Union, those who pay more have not complained. The subscriptions are used for the common good of all members. And that is the spirit in which we must enter the National Union.</p>	