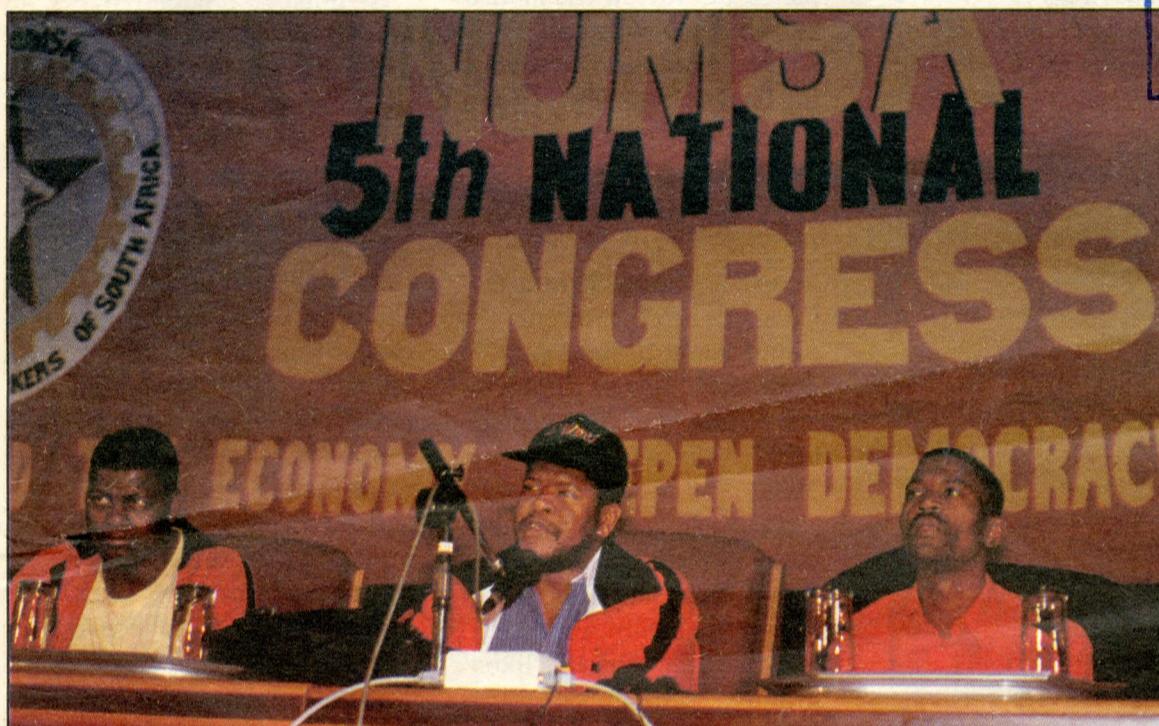


NUMSA Congress News

SPECIAL NUMSA 5TH NATIONAL CONGRESS NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 1996



Outgoing Vice President Cde Bokaba addresses the Congress delegates

"Let us work together as the family of metalworkers"

A message from NUMSA's President

From the 25 to the 29 September, NUMSA held its Fifth National Congress. Seven hundred and sixty-two delegates came from all our locals. They had prepared well. We saw from the debate.

I was afraid before the Congress. I was not happy. 80% of the shop stewards you elected in 1996 were new. I thought the level of debate at the Congress was not going to be high. But I was wrong – the level of debate was high. We must be proud of ourselves. Thank you for mandating your representatives to Congress – that is what we mean by worker control and democracy.

We are doing our work under different conditions compared to before April 27, 1994. We have a democratically elected government in place. It is not as hostile as its predecessor.

But the reality of the situation is that as workers in the workplace, nothing has changed. Management is coming to us with new ideas like

kaizen, team-work, etc. These are all about eliminating waste. They define waste as anything that is not absolutely essential to production.

They want to get to the lowest levels of inputs, equipment, material and workers. This means more and more control over workers' time and activities, a faster workplace, longer and more irregular hours. They standardise jobs and make the workplace more regimented.

So we have to focus our efforts collectively on our "core business" – to represent our members effectively. We have to fight for job security, training, technical skills and better increases.

We have to do all these under difficult conditions, for example, reduction of tariffs to conform with the requirements of the World Trade Organisation. We do not want the country's economy to be cushioned forever but the drastic restructuring results in job loss and factory closures.

We must have an alternative in place to ensure that people do not once more swell the swollen ranks of the unemployed.

Work organisation is taking place in different forms in different workplaces. We are involved in these processes. I know that when shop stewards give report backs and persuade members to accept certain things in exchange for job security, members tend to regard them as management stooges. We mustn't think like that. It is causing division amongst us.

Outside the workplace, the balance of forces is not in favour of the working class for reasons that we all know. We must work together as workers, shop stewards, administrators and organisers to build our Union into a coherent vehicle. Only a strong vehicle can play a leading role in freeing our people economically. *Let us work together as the family of metalworkers!*

Cde Mtutuzeli Tom. □

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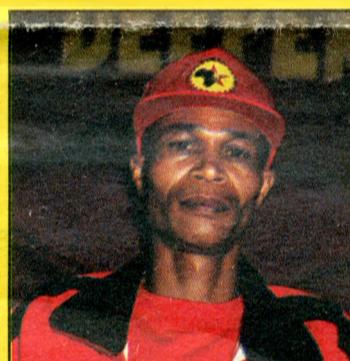
Your new
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Bearers



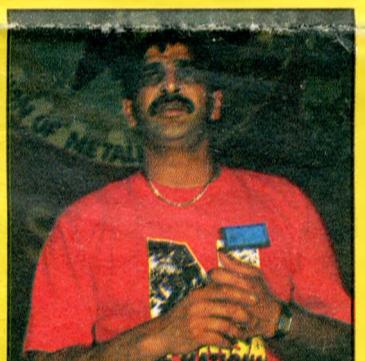
Cde Mtutuzeli Tom,
President, re-elected,
E Cape



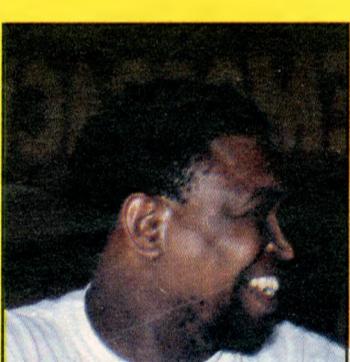
Cde Vincent Mabuya-khulu, First Vice President, KZN, re-elected



Cde Charlie
Bezuidenhout, 2nd Vice
President, Wits CW



Cde Omar Gire, National
Treasurer, W Cape



Cde Enoch Godongwana,
General secretary,
re-elected



Cde Mbuyi Ngwenda,
Assistant General
Secretary

We are sending this newsletter to each and every factory shop steward committee and every NUMSA office. If your shop steward committee doesn't receive one please write and tell us.

New Resolutions

Below we summarise the key debates and the new resolutions adopted. Go to your local office to find out the details of what your delegates said and to get a full text of the Resolutions.

Socio-Economic Policy

The proposed resolution on socio-economic policy was lengthy and complex. The thrust of the resolution says:

NUMSA agrees that our economic policies must support the working class and not just formally employed workers. It "disagrees" with government's GEAR document and "reserves the right to continue to argue against this strategy".

Instead NUMSA will negotiate with government around two principles. These are that government must:

- protect and restructure our existing formal sector industries and promote new employment.
- build a social welfare base that improves the standard of living of the poor, especially the unemployed. It must make sure that it provides basic social security for those who are retrenched by the restructuring process.

Government can promote and protect local industry by fixing the price of raw-materials like steel and assisting companies that are exporting.

To build a social welfare base, government must:

- shift expenditure to public transport - many workers live far from their places of work because of apartheid laws.
- provide health care for all. To fund this we agree that government can privatise certain state assets that do not provide essential services to the people. But government must put the proceeds of these sales into building up a social welfare net.

• make laws that say that every employed worker must pay money into a retirement fund. This would improve savings in the economy. This could help fund this social security net, provide for retired workers and reduce the state's payments on Old Age Pensions.

NUMSA will hold a policy conference next year to discuss other details like:



E Cape delegate, Cde Maxakato, rejecting a quota system for women

- fiscal policy (what the government spends its money on),
- the budget deficit (by how much the government should overspend),
- investment policy,
- monetary policy and the Reserve Bank.

Political Policy

... on our vision

NUMSA remains committed to a socialist society even though we realise that we are living in a social democratic society. Our economic programme can improve conditions for the majority but we must develop a long term vision of a socialist society.

"Capital and the state" will resist this vision so we must develop a coalition of forces to support us.

... on the Alliance

The major debate was over whether we should stay in the Alliance with the ANC and SACP or if we should pull out as per the decision of NUMSA's 1993 congress.

"The alliance is dead. If the ANC proposes something (the macro-economic policy) and says it is not up for negotiations, are we fulfilling our objectives? Are we doing the job our members entrusted us to perform (by staying in the Alliance)?" asked KwaZulu Natal.

"If the ANC is not doing its duty, it's this Alliance that's not doing its duty.. the time for the severing of ties is not yet ripe" replied W Transvaal.

Highveld, E Cape, Northern Cape, Wits East repeated W Transvaal's concerns.

But Western Cape, Wits CW and KwaZulu Natal continued to argue: "We don't want to become a transmis-

sion belt for any political party" (W Cape). "COSATU believes in political independence" Wits CW. "The Alliance is not delivering what it is supposed to deliver" added KZN.

But at last consensus was reached. Delegates resolved that we will stay in the alliance but the CC can review this on an ongoing basis. We will use the Alliance to mobilise a whole range of social forces around our programme but we must also rebuild and strengthen the mass democratic movement.

We will call on COSATU to convene a conference of the Alliance. This conference will debate strategy and tactics to promote our economic platform.

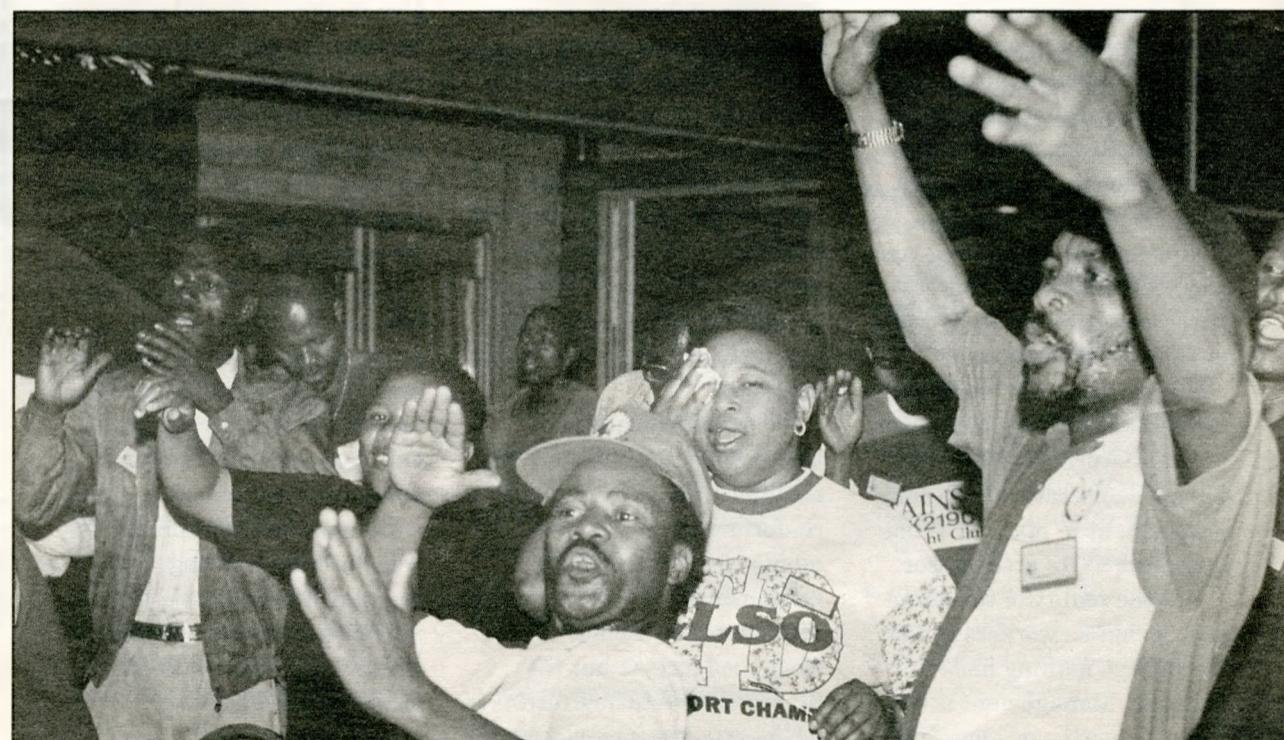
... on crime

For the first time, the congress discussed crime. "Hijacking, rapes, murders are by far the highest in black areas. We need to stress this. If we don't SAPS person power is going to be concentrated in areas where economic power is based. Disadvantaged areas will continue to be disadvantaged and unsafe" stated Cde Godongwana in his address to Congress.

"Crime is centred around the socio-economic problems experienced by our people. But criminals do not have the right to hold the country

Right: The "old guard", ex-NUMSA officials and worker leaders, listen in

Below: Congress delegates warm up



to ransom" responded Mpumalanga. "If we know the chop shops we must report them" (W Cape), "whether it's a simple mugging, or anything, we must become 'rotos' on crime" added W Transvaal.

Other key decisions made on crime were to:

- crack organised crime
- address socio-economic problems that lead to crime
- root out corruption in the police and review the justice system, especially bail
- beef up community policing forums.

Building a strong national union

... on Bargaining Strategy

Congress reaffirmed our commitment to the 3 year strategy. It agreed to step up our efforts to make sure we achieve our demands by 1998.

It decided that we will discuss detailed responses at a Bargaining Conference to take place before April 1997.

It will discuss issues like: grading, training, job security, levels of bargaining, disclosure of information, competitiveness, kaizen,

teamwork, wealth sharing.

... on competitiveness and productivity

"We must reject the notion of competitiveness. We should not fall into a trap where employers arrive in a plant and embark on a programme to take the market. If other comrades are on strike we must not agree to take their market share." E Cape

We must be productive and we must work out industrial policies that lead to job creation and the "development of our productive capacities".

...on workplace forums

Delegates agreed that the Central Committee decision earlier this year that we "should not trigger workplace forums" was correct.

But W Cape took the argument further: "instead of getting involved in co-determination structures (like workplace forums) we must fight for extended collective bargaining. We must fight to negotiate on issues that up to now have been management prerogative. And where workers are involved

in (co-determination) structures like these, we should encourage them to withdraw" motivated W Cape.

N Tvl questioned whether we had the capacity to negotiate these issues at plant level. The General Secretary urged delegates not to be "politically correct and forget what is happening on the ground... The reality is that some of our members want these things and in other plants we are in the minority and these forums are there in another name anyway".

Delegates agreed that:

- we should fight for extended collective bargaining instead of workplace forums and that we put this demand in the next round of negotiations
- the CC must empower members to be able to participate where they are forced to participate in these kinds of forums.
- the CC must persuade our members through education to withdraw from these kinds of forums if they are part of them.

...on labour brokers

Congress unanimously



agreed to run a campaign against labour brokers "because they undermine worker rights."

Organising Strategy

NUMSA must step up recruitment, especially of the unorganised and white collar workers.

The CC must investigate whether NMSA should have a bursary scheme for its members and so improve our benefits.

Financial self-sufficiency

Congress mapped out the new treasurer's job when it resolved that a proper financial system must be

developed to monitor subscriptions. Any fraudulent activity by union members or officials will result in expulsion or dismissal.

Training for the new Treasurers and the Finance Committees must be carried out during 1997.

... code of conduct

All donations accepted, whatever the size must be declared.

Staff

As in earlier congresses, delegates began to sound like management in their response to staff who were not performing well or who were not able to perform.

"Those who do not meet minimum requirements should be given a severance package, we are not a charity organisation" E Cape.

"If they are useless, they must get out, they must not get severance packages" Wits CW.

"Union should not be a dumping ground for dead goats" added KZN.

Highveld raised the level of debate by proposing that a task team be set up by the General Secretary. The task team will research and propose how the union could be fundamentally restructured in the areas of worker leadership, policy formulation and planning, management of NMSA, restructuring of local and regional offices.

Women's empowerment ...in the Union

Speaker after speaker (and most of them women) squashed a proposal for a flexible quota system to empower women.

"If we adopt quota system we are giving women the longest rope to hang themselves." Wits East

"We can't afford to have people for the sake of having them" N Transvaal.

"You can't address women's empowerment by electing a person. We must take gender back to the factory and establish gender committees. Discuss all these issues there and empower women and then elect them democratically not because they are women but because they are leaders." Wits CW

However, all delegates agreed that on the factory floor there was a need for wage equity, and practices that would assist women workers, e.g. childcare facilities, ABET and training during working hours, affirmative action.

Continued on page 4

Molao wa NMSA Bodulo le Moruo

NUMSA ha e dumellane le molao wa Moruo o motjha wa Mmuso. NMSA e bontsha hore Mmuso o lokela,

- ho tshireletsa le ho aha botsha di-idusteri tse teng ha jwale, e kgothaletse mesebetsi e metsha ka ho beha theko e tsepameng ya tshepe le thusaborakgwebo ba rekisetsang mafatshe a kantle.
- ho aha bodulo ka ho kenya letsoho ho ntlaatseng maemo a tsa bodulo ba bao base-nang hona, ka ho tiisetra tshireletso ya tsa maphelo ho bohle le ho ntlaatsa teransepoto ya sechaba.

Selemong se tlang NMSA e tla tshwara Konferense ya ho rala molao maelana le tsa moruo.

Dipolotiki tsa NMSA

NMSA dipolotiking e sentse e tsitiletsa bososhaleng. Ho fihlella pono enare lokela sebedisana le mekgatlo e meng. Setlamo sa rona sa (COSATU, SACP le ANC) re sa se anabela, komiti ya bohareng ya NMSA e lokela ho shebisa setlamo sena nako le nako. Setlamo sena re lokela ho se sebedisa ho ntshetsa pele leanola rona la moruo.

Ha ele boshodu, Mmuso o lokela shebisisa hore na sesosa sa boshodu ke eng. Re lokela ho Iwantsha boshodu le bomenemene bo teng sepoleseng re tiise mekgatlo e teng sech-

abeng e Iwantshang boshodu.

Ho aheng mokgatlo wa base-betsi wa sechaba o matla.

Konferenseng e kang dipatlo (demands) e tla teng ka Mesa (April) 1997 e tla qoqa ka botlalo dipatlo tse kenyelletsang grading, le training (kgobokanyo ya base-betsi ho ya ka boiphitlelo le thuto ya mesebetsi)

- Le ha re dumellana ka ho ba matjato, le ho sebetsa ka boiphitlelo bo phahameng, re kgatlanong le tlhodisano.
- Re tlameha ho hana le (WFs) di-workplace forum (komiti tse a kgang ka hare le bao e seng maloko a union mosebetsing).
- Re tlameha ho bontsha le ho rupella basebetsi bao ba saleng lefifing lebalo ba mesebetsing e phehameng, jwalo ka di-supervisor ledi foramane jwalojwalo.
- Re tlahemeha ho rupella le ho fa matla maloko a rona a bomme ho re bafihelle boetapele
- Re tlameha ho aha mafapha a kelediso ka bohloko ba AIDS le mafapha a tsa tshireletso le maphelo. Baetapele ba mekgatlo ya basebetsi (shop stewards) ba tlang ho nka karolo mafapheng a seng a boletswe ba tla kwetiswa. □

Izinquomo zenKongolo kaNMSA ezifinqiwe

Inqubomgomu yezenhlalakahle nomnotho:

- I-NMSA kayivumelani nenqubomgomu entsha yezomnotho ezanohulumeni. I-NMSA ifuna uhulumeni enze lezinto ezilandelayo:
- avikele futhi ahlele (restructure) kabusha izimboni ezikhona aphinde agqugquzele ukuvuleka kwamathuba emisebenzi izibonelo akube nenani elimile ezimpahleni ezinjengensimbi noma kusizwe abaqashi abadayisela amazwe angaphandle
- akhe isizinda sezenhlalakahle yomphakathi ukuze kuthuthukiswe izinga labampofu. Izibonelo ukuthuthukiswa ezokuthuthwa komphakathi kanye/noma nezempi kubo bonke abantu.
- I-NMSA izobamba inkomfa yenqubomgomu ngonyaka ozayo ukuzobonisana ngamanye amaphuzu ezomnotho.

Inqumomgomu yezombangazwe Sisazibophezele kusocialism. Sizosebenzisana nabanye ukuze sifeze lenhoso. Sisazoqhubeka sizihlanganise nombimbi Iwamabomvu (SACP) kanye nokhongolose (ANC). Isigungu esiphezulu singacubungula ukuzibophezela ombimbi ngokuqhubeka kwe-

sikhathi esizosebenzisa umbimbi ukulekelela ulelo Iwethu Iwezomnotho.

Ebugebengwini, uhulumeni akaxazulule izinkinga ezimayelana nezenhlalakahle nomnotho okuyiyona mbangela yobugebengu. Makukhishwe amaphoyisa onakele kwandiswe izakhiwo zamaphoyisa omphakathi.

Ukwakha inyunyana eqinile kazwelone

Inkomfa yokunikezelana yang April 1997 izobonisana ngeminingwane yokunikezelana izibonelo ukuqeqeshwa, ukunikwa amazinga (grading) kanye nokunye.

- asihambisani nokuqhudewanisa kepha siyavumelana.
- kumele sigqugquzele abasebenzi abangqugquzelwe kanye nabasebenzi abamhlophe abenza imisebenzi yepeni.
- kumele sinike amandla kwabesifazane ukuze babe ngabaholi, ukuze bangene ezikhundleni ngoba bengabaholi hayi ngoba bengabesifazane.
- kumele sazise ngenculazi
- kumele siqale izakhiwo zezempi nezokuphepha ezizonganyelwa ngabaholi (shopstewards) abaqeqeshekice. □

Extracts from speeches

Cde Mtutuzeli Tom, NUMSA President

... on problems facing us

The key problem facing NUMSA and COSATU today is the high rising degree of hopelessness, confusion and fear of our members, the emerging gap between shop stewards and members. The turn-out at our general meetings is not as good as it used to be."

Cde Shilowa, General Secretary, COSATU

... on the role of organised labour

"Men make history, but not under conditions of their own choosing" said Marx.

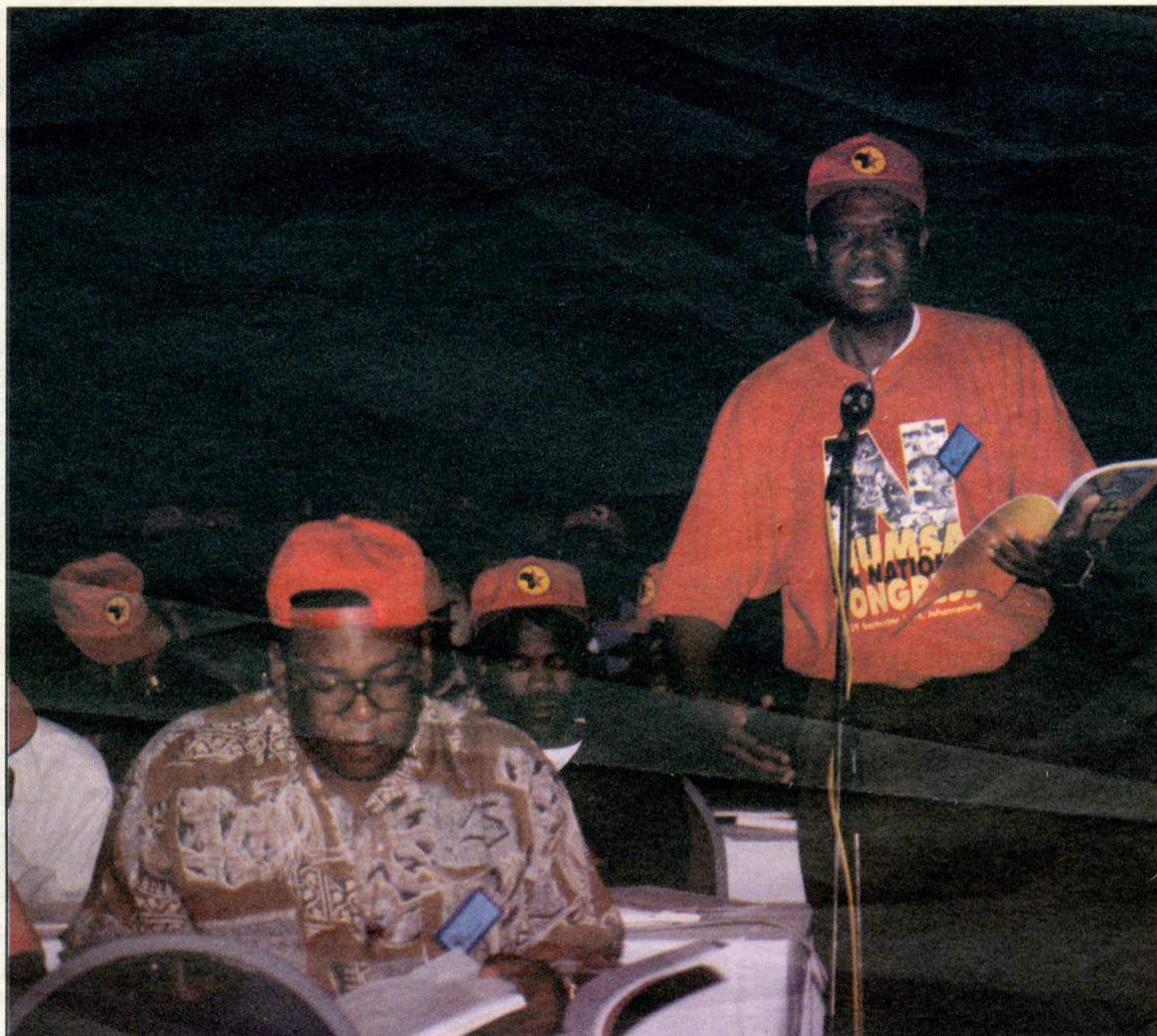
Organised labour in South Africa must develop strategies which both engage the state and capital for the improvement of the material conditions of the majority, while also developing a long-term vision of a socialist society."

Cde Mbeki, Deputy President, ANC

"The leadership of NUMSA, which is part of the democratic movement, must say, what are we doing to ensure that the people participate in governing themselves?

Without a strong NUMSA, a strong COSATU, strong and independent unions, without a strong ANC, SACP and SANCO, this great dream we share won't happen. No other force in South Africa will bring about a non-racial, non-sexist prosperous South Africa."

Cde Mbeki waits his turn



A Congress delegate makes his point

Cde Cardoso, from the Brazilian Metalworkers

... on the effects of globalisation in Brazil

"We can see the globalisation policy, the neo-liberal agenda, is deepening our social apartheid..... We are experiencing an increase in unemployment.

...this goes hand in hand with the withdrawal of the state to fulfill its social role to take care of the health, education and housing issues for the people. And they are now trying to priva-



Cde Cardoso, Brazilian Metalworkers

tise the health, education sector while in the past we had free health care and education.

Resolutions continued from page 3

NUMSA must also draw up a sexual harassment code for its members to follow.

Education in the union
Regions were concerned over the delivery of education in the Union. "education hasn't been consistent", "since Nedcom was dissolved, we don't have delivery, but we have 80% new shop stewards".

Congress resolved that the CC will form a sub-

structure of CC worker delegates to oversee education.

We will train educators (including ex-shop stewards and retrenched shop stewards) to provide education. We will pay ex-shop steward and retrenched shop steward educators a flat rate if they educate over week-ends.

Health and safety

NUMSA must step up AIDS awareness programmes, establish health and safety structures at all levels and train health and safety stewards.

(We cannot just) oppose the restructuring that is going on because of globalisation. We want to build alternatives and proposals to the neo-liberal agenda.

... the state should improve its support and care for the people. We don't want speculative capital, we want investment in the productive sector.

...We want to reduce working hours from 44 hours, we don't want workers to work overtime. We want to create jobs for others.

We are also against the government policy of high interest rates - these only bring in speculative capital, hot money. Government

Workers' Unity

... unity of workers

Delegates agreed that "as a stepping stone to realising our objective of one country, one federation, COSATU should initiate talks with NACTU and FEDSAL. We should aim to establish a loose confederation of trade unions." This structure should operate at all levels and meet at an annual worker summit to work out an agenda for the year.

... unity of metalworkers

NUMSA must use the IMF

Blade Nzimande, SACP

...on black economic empowerment

"We need to challenge the notion that black economic empowerment only means the development of a black bourgeoisie... Black economic empowerment should be rescued from this perspective and given concrete meaning directed at empowering the mass of the people of our country."

...on working class leadership

"To assert the leadership of the working class over the revolution also means developing ... the political consciousness of the working class so that it is able to act as a political force for its own interests and those of the widest possible sectors of South African society."

must reduce interest rates so we can have investment.

We are also defending a land reform policy for the country where government must lend money to small farmers so they can become productive.

We don't just want to bargain with capital and labour. We want a labour movement that is linked to the people. We want to improve the lives of the majority of our people.

But we understand that we cannot counterbalance forces of globalisation using only Brazilian workers. So today we are striving to go beyond the frontiers of Brazil."

to foster unity amongst metal unions. A Co-ordinating Council must be set up with national and regional arms to promote this unity.

... unity of international workers

NUMSA must work out a programme to:

- build stronger links with Southern African unions
- strengthen our international links through the ITS' and their affiliates
- push COSATU to hold an international week every year to raise the profile on international issues.