

TRANSPORT AND GENERAL WORKERS' UNION

WORKERS' NEWS

July 1996

Congress Special



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TGWU 5th National Congress

UNITE AND FIGHT FOR
JOBS AND A LIVING WAGE!

TGWU is gearing up to influence and shape future transport policy with our *Transport for the People* policy document. A fresh perspective and preparedness to actively assert our vision for transport emerged at our 5th National Congress held in May at the Holiday Inn Garden Court in Johannesburg. More than 700 delegates representing 60 000 members countrywide gave concrete expression to our congress theme by adopting a call for a 24-hour general strike on 2 July in support of our demands around public transport policy.

Workers jobs under threat

The call to action is a demonstration of our rejection of the Minister of Transport's intention to restructure the public transport industry (buses and Rail) through privatisation, thereby placing the future employment of workers under direct threat. The immediate demands which gave rise to the action are:

- Nationalisation of public transport — owned and provided by the government;
- Stability of employment and job security for transport workers in the interim process towards the long-term policy framework;



Delegates at the TGWU national congress

- Implementation of the RDP for the provision of efficient, reliable, safe and affordable transport; and
- Higher user-directed subsidies to commuters for affordable services to our communities.

A New Approach

By rejecting privatisation, Congress rejected the approach of the past. We reject the proposed Con-

tract system which the Minister (of Transport) intends using as a transitional mechanism to provide public transport. The Contract system is simply a specific technique of privatisation — a clever means by which to sneak privatisation in through the back door — sometimes described as the *privatisation of labour*. Instead, congress emerged with a comprehensive policy based on a new long-term approach to transport. Our position is that transitional arrangements must be based on an underlying vision which is the long-term policy for public transport. Importantly, the policy document drew attention to the link between the RDP and our struggle for socialism, thus placing our immediate demand for a nationalised public transport system squarely on the agenda.

Socialism the Vision

Our vision for the future is a reliable, safe and affordable transport system owned and provided by the government in which job security is guaranteed. We have no illusions that our immediate demands — based on the burning needs of workers and commuters alike — can be met under the present transport system, nor on the privatised system envisaged by the new Green Paper on National Transport Policy produced by the Department of Transport. As our policy document points out:

"[Our] document is not a charter for a socialist transport system. It is our programme for transport in the transition. It sets out our key demands and policies consistent with the RDP on the road towards socialism."

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Socialism the Vision — RDP the Road

EDITORIAL

Socialism the Vision - RDP the Road

We emerged from our 5th national congress with a clear set of resolutions and a coherent transport policy document that must guide us towards our vision for transport. The document is pathbreaking in that it links immediate demands in the transition period to a long-term vision.

In presenting our demands to government and business, we must seek to regain influence among our partners in the alliance to advance our cause. Our congress theme must become a battle-cry to drive the reconstruction process, giving our vision substance each step of the way.

Essentially, this means forcing government to meet our demands through mass action, supported by our federation, COSATU, and our alliance partners. The July 2 action must send a clear signal to government and the Minister of Transport that we insist on nothing less than a nationalised transport system under government control and ownership.

For the first time, congress convened a televised public transport policy panel debate between the Minister of Transport, Mac Maharaj, Prof Jackie Walters from SABOA, and the T&GWU General Secretary Cde Randall Howard. The occasion provided a lively platform for debate around the divergent positions of government, business and our union on public transport policy. The contents of the debate are attached to the 5th National Congress Resolutions & Minutes document.

Also unprecedented was the contested positions of both the General and Deputy General Secretaries. In previous congresses, leadership positions were uncontested. This year, the contestation of elections reveals a growing maturity among branches and delegates, reflecting organisational unity, rather than division. We welcome this leap forward.

We now have a newly elected leadership with a clear mandate to implement resolutions adopted by congress. But strong leadership, while necessary, is in itself not sufficient to meet the challenges that lie before us. Unity of purpose and mass participation among members in all structures of the union are absolutely necessary for an organisation capable of pushing our struggle forward. A significant call by congress was to go back to basics. Old tried and tested methods of organisation must be revived with a view to rebuild and strengthen areas of weakness, and generate the necessary support and confidence among workers. Let us march together with a clear perspective and vision. The vision is socialism. The road is the RDP.

Amandla!

Malcolm Ray, Media Officer

Leadership elections

OUT

Cde Julius Matroos

Former Assistant General Secretary (1993-1996).

Cde Alfred Ndlovu

Longstanding president of the union.

Cde Abram Mthembu

Former Treasurer of the union.

We salute you comrades

IN

General Secretary

Cde Randall Howard was re-elected to the position of General Secretary.

Deputy General Secretary

Cde Harald Harvey was elected to the position of Deputy General Secretary. Cde Harald was previously the Branch Secretary of the Western Cape.

President

Cde June Dube was elected as President.

First Vice President

Cde Vivian Zungu, previous president of the union, was elected to the position of first vice president.

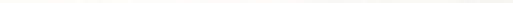
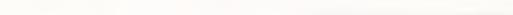
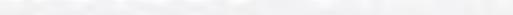
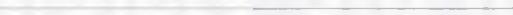
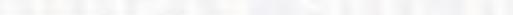
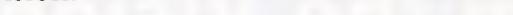
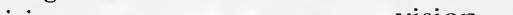
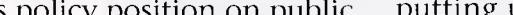
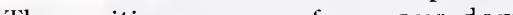
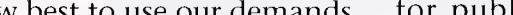
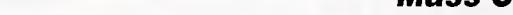
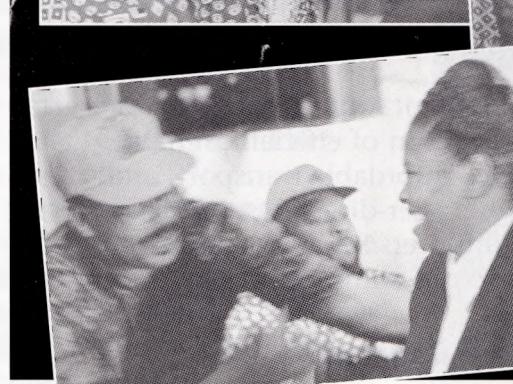
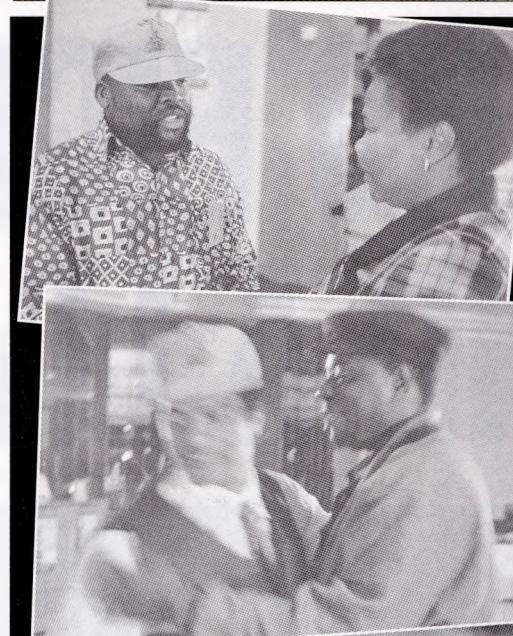
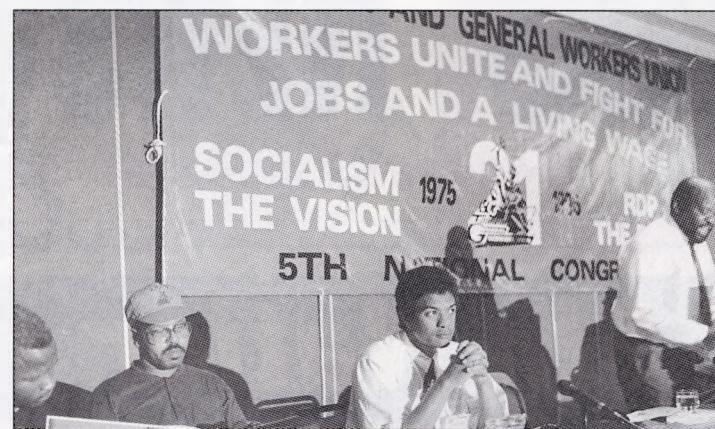
Second Vice President

Cde Andrew Motludi, former Chairperson of the Northern Transvaal Branch, was elected to the position of 2nd Vice President.

National Treasurer

Cde Mike Mofokeng, former Treasurer of the Southern Transvaal Branch, was elected to the position of National Treasurer.

We welcome you comrades



Summary of T&GWU Public Transport Policy

A Transitional Programme towards our Socialist Vision

1. Introduction

"We believe that South Africa needs an affordable, safe, efficient, integrated, clean and uncongested transport system supported by workers who earn a living wage and are granted their full rights so that all our people have access to work, education, health care, shops and other social services" (Quoted from the Preface to the T&GWU Draft Transport Policy document to the 5th National Congress, May 1996).

In May this year T&GWU produced a *Transport for the People* policy document in response to the government Green Paper on National Transport Policy. The 125-page document was launched in draft form at a press conference in Johannesburg and was subsequently heralded as unprecedented and pathbreaking. In what follows, we summarise the main thrust of the document, avoiding detail because of space limitations, to give comrades some insight into its contents. An Executive Summary is available at the Head Office on request for comrades interested in reading it.

2. The Nature of our Response to the Green Paper

The above extract captures the objectives of our transport policy. Our approach starts out from an understanding that the needs of people — irrespective of whether they are the users of transport or transport workers — can only be met if our vision for the future is based on the needs of people. The document therefore starts out by

Focus on Transport Policy

restating our vision of a socialist society designed to meet people's needs. But a socialist society is a long-term objective which is not attainable now. Recognising the constraints we face within the present transport system and the unlikely prospect of leap-frogging to our vision in the short-term, the document presents itself as a programme for transport in the transition. It sets out our key demands and policies, based on the principles of the RDP. It argues that the vehicle to drive us towards our socialist vision is the RDP.

3. The Structure of the Document

The document is divided into several sections, beginning with basic principles and Quality of Life objectives based on the needs of society (See Box). It examines a strategic framework for the long-term provision of public transport and identifies a list of criteria that would need to be addressed to meet our vision for transport. The document concludes with policy proposals for each sector, first looking at a broad framework for each sector, then examining the policy objectives listed in the Quality of Life objectives.

4. Summary of the Contents

• Transport as a Service to Society

Contrary to the position of govern-

ment, which sees transport as something disconnected from society, our position is that transport exists because society needs it, because people need to get to and from work and school. Transport is a social service. We therefore set out basic principles which must determine the shape of future transport policy. Among others, these include: transport as an integrating factor; transport to reduce economic inequalities in society; the efficient organisation of transport; and transport as an engine for the redistribution of wealth.

• Criteria for a Coherent Transport Policy

We put forward criteria to meet our policy objectives. We say, therefore, that future policy must be guided by the following: integrated planning; support for modernisation, and research and development; development of infrastructure; reduction of transport costs to the industry and the passenger; regulated wages and working conditions for workers; and human resource development.

• The Role of Government in Transport

We say that transport is a social service and is therefore the business of government, not the private sector. We reject government's removal from the provision of public transport through privatisation, tendering out and sub-contracting. We say that the role of

government is:

- To make integrated policy for an integrated transport system;
- To regulate transport to ensure that it is safe and efficient, and to make sure that it meets the needs of society;
- To invest in transport by building infrastructure, including efficient intermodal terminals and to subsidise those who need it; and
- To provide a mass-transit transport system as a foundation for the entire national transport system.

• Meeting the Needs of Society

This section looks at a broad framework for each transport sector; namely, Land Passenger Transport; Land Freight Transport; Civil Aviation; and Maritime Transport. This is followed by our policy objectives based on the needs of society.

1. Providing an overarching Framework for Transport

Presently, transport is fragmented across the various transport modes and sectors on the one hand, and the different levels of government on the other. The crisis in transport has its roots in the structure of ownership, control and organisation of the system as a whole. We say that the strategy to integrate and plan transport properly must start with addressing the questions of ownership, control and integrated planning. Our vision for the ownership and control framework is for a publicly-owned and democratically-controlled public transport system across all sectors and levels of government oper-

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Meeting the Needs of Society

We reproduce the full text of the 13 Quality of Life Objectives below; essentially guiding principles which underpin our approach to Transport Policy.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Our people and our commodities and possessions must be safe from accidents, the effects of pollution and hazards, and from crime.

RELIABILITY

We need to know that our buses, trains, planes, trucks and ships will arrive and leave on time and according to schedules and routes that we expect.

EFFICIENCY

We need a transport system that keeps waste to a minimum and maximises the use of resources and capital so that prices are minimised and service is maximised.

IMPROVED SERVICE

We need to know that transport will look after us and our possessions and commodities. We need to know that transport is meeting our needs as users.

AFFORDABLE PRICES

Prices must not be determined only by the suppliers'

needs. Prices for transport must reflect our ability to pay, and ensure that no-one, not even the unemployed are denied access to transport.

ACCESS

The transport system must ensure that no matter where we live, no matter where we work, no matter how rich or poor we are, we all have access to transport to work, to school, to information and to family and friends.

FAIRNESS

The transport system must ensure that access, prices and services are set at levels where no person or industry is discriminated against and denied access.

ACCOUNTABILITY

The transport system must continue to provide for the needs of all our people. It must respond to our concerns, and it must change when our needs change. In short all stakeholders, users, providers and workers must have real access to decision-making.

FLEXIBILITY

The transport system must be able to change as our needs change. Our choices in life, where we work, when we work and what schools or hospitals we go to must not be limited by the ability of the transport system to meet our needs.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND SUSTAINABILITY

The transport system must be designed to ensure that transport does not destroy our environment through pollution and the like. And it must ensure that the system does not do things to the environment that in the long-term will destroy transport itself.

ENERGY CONSERVATION

The transport system must work in a way that saves energy. It must not burn fuel or other forms of energy in a way that will contribute through waste to shortages in the future.

SOCIAL PROTECTION AND SUSTAINABILITY

The transport system must work in a way where those who are employed to provide the service can live decent lives, feed their children, learn and grow as normal human beings. The people who work in the industry must be trained with skills, and they and the industry must know that those skills can be used and developed through a long-term future and commitment to the industry.

SUPPORT FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The transport system must operate in a way which supports our vision for a new South Africa. It must not only support, but it must also make a direct contribution to the principles of the RDP.

Forward to a nationalised public transport system!

WORKERS' NEWS

July 1996**Congress Special**

Key Congress Resolutions

The following resolutions were adopted by Congress. We reproduce each resolution point-by-point.

Future of the Alliance

1. We remain committed to the Alliance until the 1999 elections, after which we shall review the Alliance
2. We therefore commit ourselves to maintaining the Alliance and strengthening it at all levels
3. All COSATU members should actively participate at all Alliance levels for the voice of the workers to be heard
4. Industrial and Residential COSATU locals should be revived
5. We re-affirm the autonomy and independence of T&GWU and COSATU

Capacity Building

1. The previous Congress resolution on the employment of regional educators should be implemented with immediate effect
2. Monitoring mechanisms be should be created to ensure that the employment of educators is effectively done
3. Regional Education Secretaries be employed on a full-time basis and be stationed in the Regional Offices
4. The 3% budget allocation for education be increased to 5%
5. The education account should be scrutinised by Fincom to ensure the accountability of funds in the department
6. Signatures to the account should never be left to officials alone
7. The resolution to employ a gender co-ordinator should be implemented with immediate effect
8. Branches should appoint an official to co-ordinate Gender Forums
9. The Education Department together with NEDCOM should run workshops aimed specifically at developing women
10. A three year programme worked out by NEDCOM together with Gender structures, which will be rectified by the NEC after Congress.

Adult Basic Education and training

1. We commit ourselves to work for a single non-racial and non-sexist education and training system geared to meet the needs and aspirations of our members and society as a whole.
2. Education and training is not purely academic but is geared to providing scientific and technological skills which can contribute to the development of workers and the country.
3. We need to develop and increase workers skills to control industries to shape and develop economic policies to build a democratic

4. A major training and retraining programme must be geared towards career-pathing in order to promote opportunities for workers.
5. The above programme must be geared to relocate workers to other jobs rather than placing them on the unemployment market.
6. All employers should contribute 5% of turnover to education, training and development.
7. Through the Industry Training Boards, education and training should be made accessible and financed to the unemployed.

Health, Safety, the Environment and Education

1. All workplaces should have full-time health, safety and environment representatives elected and trained to full capacity.
2. The national co-ordinator should be well placed to run health and safety education in the organisation.
3. All branches should elect a consistent co-ordinator to liaise with the national co-ordinator.

Self-sufficiency

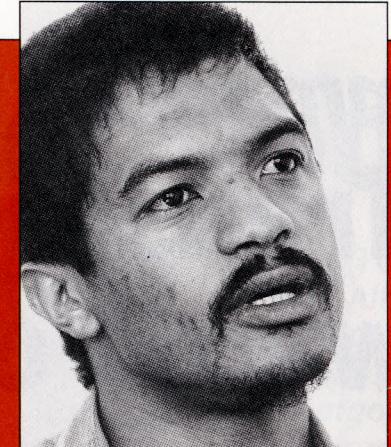
1. The ceiling be removed from our percentage subscriptions
2. Subscriptions be 1% for those earning above R800,00 per month, and R8,00 for those earning below R8,00 per month.
3. A new subscriptions system should be implemented by September 1996.
4. The first NEC meeting after Congress should decide mechanisms that would make the National Provident Fund benefit the union financially. The National Trustees meeting be convened to implement decisions.

Operation 100 000 members

1. Branches immediately form/appoint recruitment committees to oversee the above and strengthen sector councils.
2. Membership growth should be monitored by the membership department who should report back to branches.
3. Organisers must be involved in recruitment.
4. We reaffirm the growth strategy as adopted by the NEC, and the implementation of this resolution shall be in terms of that strategy.

Sexual harassment

1. The panel on Sexual Harassment be constituted with immediate effect.
2. The above panel should be gender balanced in terms of its composition. ■



Message from the TGWU General Secretary Cde Randall Howard

There will be many serious challenges and struggles to confront in the next three years and we must prepare ourselves accordingly. The time of adopting resolutions and not implementing them is over. Unless we act decisively in support of our resolutions, we stand very little chance of ensuring victory on very critical issues which affect our lives and the lives of communities as a whole.

Let us work hard to build strong vibrant democratic structures and effective leadership to ensure that disastrous, shortsighted policies do not win the day.

Let the struggle for real reconstruction begin to win economic freedom and transform the lives of our disadvantaged, homeless and unemployed brothers and sisters in our country!

Phambili Reconstruction! Phansi Deconstruction!

Phansi Privatisation and Tenders! Phambili public ownership and affordable services!

WRITE TO WORKERS' NEWS

Workers' News is published by the Transport and General Workers' Union. We welcome contributions and/or critical comments on any relevant issue. Write to:

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ing through local authorities to address the crisis in public transport.

2. Meeting our Quality of Life objectives We put forward the following key demands as instruments to meet our Quality of Life objectives: support for economic and social development; social protection and sustainability; safety and security; service reliability; efficiency; improved service; affordable prices; access; fairness; accountability; flexibility; environmental protection and sustainability; and energy conservation.

5. Conclusion and Way Forward

The policies and demands set out in our document are weapons which we must use to fight for our vision for public transport. As commendable as they are, they merely provide us with a vision and a way forward. The programme of action for July 2, endorsed by our 5th National Congress, must herald the beginning of a mass initiative to force government to meet our demands. ■