

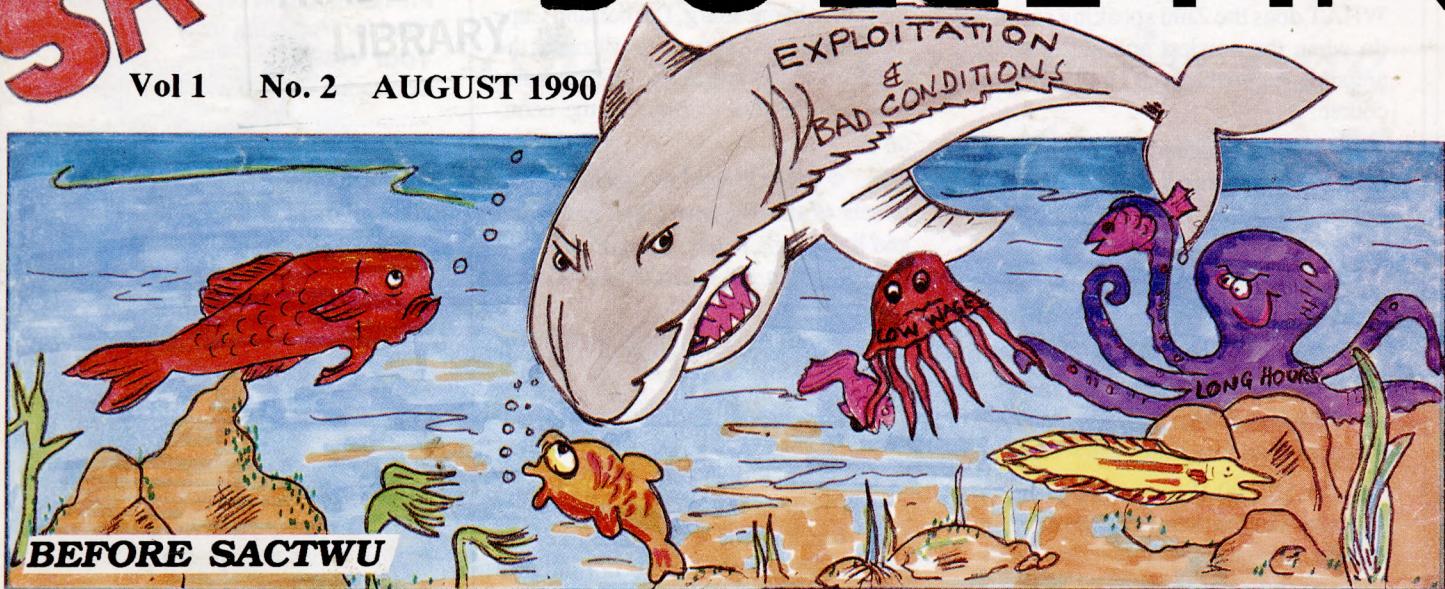
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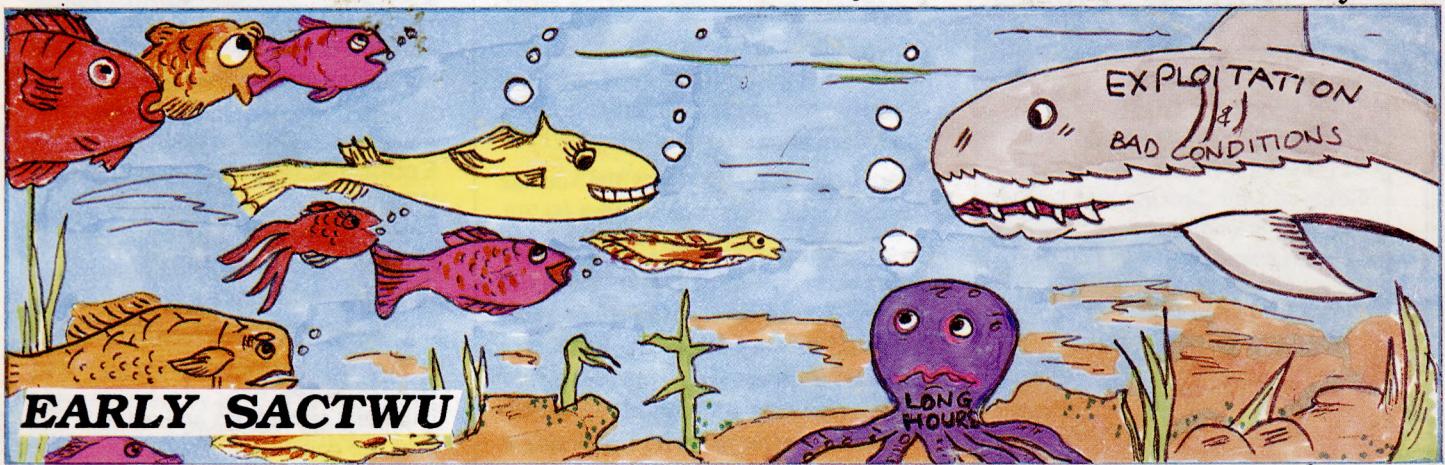
Shop Stewards

BULLETIN

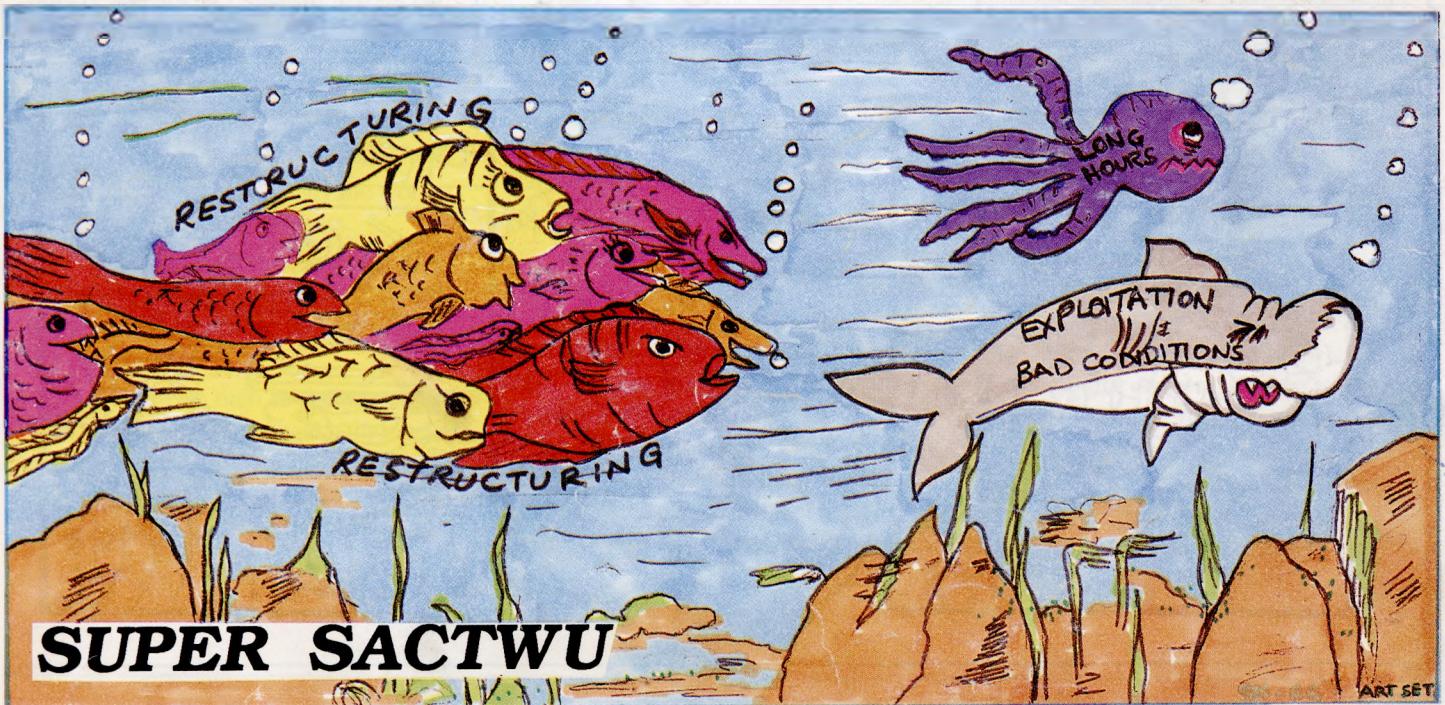
Vol 1 No. 2 AUGUST 1990



- every worker is divided and nobody wins



- workers started to overcome their exploitation



- 200 000 workers unite to win!

ART SET

INTRODUCTION

EDITORIAL

LIFE AND ENERGY! SACTWU INTO THE '90's!

WHAT does the Zulu speaking steward do when the noisiest and nicest songs are sung in Afrikaans? Hum along, of course!

And so indeed, through song, debate and elections a new unity was born at SACTWU's National Congress.

But the congress - the highest policy making body - was about more than songs and elections. It confirmed that workers need a union of energy and life.

Consider these recent developments:

- ❖ 10 000 Frame workers go on strike to win for their families a decent income.
- ❖ Two hundred shop stewards

SACTWU SHOP STEWARDS BULLETIN

Vol 1 No. 2 August 1990

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P.O. BOX 194
SALT RIVER
7925

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KEKO Media (031) 3011229

meet in Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town, at workshops, to discuss the country's economy and to plan a greater role for workers in running the economy.

❖ 50 000 workers gather in the streets of the Western Cape and Natal and link hands in a huge chain, to build the campaign for a Charter of Worker rights

❖ 50 000 workers nationally celebrate *Samson Cele Day* on 18 July

❖ And 600 shop stewards shout "RESTRUCTURE!" at our national congress in Durban.

Proof of life and energy!

But it needs to be taken to every part of the union's work - not only its campaigns, but also its daily work on each shop floor.

The challenge is to build SACTWU into a stronger and powerful protector of workers. Restructuring is the foundation stones of this plan.

This Bulletin opens the debate and discussion on restructuring.

■ Many stewards have written after the last Bulletin. Our thanks to them. You must write in now and take forward the big debate - *how to turn SACTWU into a powerful force in your factory, and how to make our worker leadership at the factories better able to speak of the concerns of workers.*

Ebrahim Patel
EDUCATION SECRETARY

SACTWU SALLY



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KEKO



PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS



**SACTWU NATIONAL
PRESIDENT AMON NTULI
GAVE AN INSPIRATIONAL
SPEECH TO THE
NATIONAL CONGRESS
ON JULY 28, 1990.
HERE IS AN EXTRACT:**

WE meet at an interesting and exciting time for all the people of the world. The last 10 months has seen major political, economic and social changes in different parts of the world.

Namibia has become independent and free of colonialism. Many governments in Eastern Europe have collapsed under the pressure of the ordinary people of that region, who strive for greater freedom and control over their own lives. Germany is becoming a united country again and Europe is powering others to become the world's biggest market by 1992. The *perestroika* programme of President Gorbachev has been extended to opening up the economy of the Soviet Union to market reforms and to opening up the political process to other political parties. Trade unions in all these countries are struggling and searching for ways to show their independence. Those who are unable, are being rejected by the workers on the world's shop floors.

We have seen thus the start of a major restructuring of the world as we know it. The lessons of this restructuring is obvious.

- Ordinary men and women are asserting their right to choose their rulers and decide their way of life.

- Representatives of people who do not speak on the concerns of the

“As we are in SACTWU let us treat one another as in one family.”

people are being pushed aside.

- There is a greater openness and discussion about politics.

South Africa, too, is starting on the road to restructuring. On the 2nd February our country's political process started to open. Organisations were unbanned. The start of negotiations is in sight. Prisoners and detainees are being released.

At this time, SACTWU too needs to restructure. We need to restructure for two reasons.

Firstly, big and important changes are taking place around us and we need to chart a new direction.

Secondly, we have successfully merged the membership, leadership and structures of the two founding unions, and now need to direct the energy and needs of workers into clear campaigns and activity.

But the most important goal of restructuring must be to make SACTWU more responsive to the needs of its 200 000 members.

The restructuring process, if it is to work, must be conducted in a manner that will build unity. Without unity and discipline, no programme can work.

For this reason therefore, let us in a good spirit, in a comradely way and in a united way, plan the future of our organisation. We seek a new way forward. In order to pave our way forward we need unity. Unity among SACTWU/COSATU shop stewards is very important. Our members lives are in your hands. You have been elected democratically to represent workers. You

need to guide them. You need to look after their interest. Comrades, you need to read your constitution which will remind what your function is as a steward.

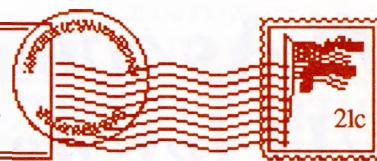
In our industry we are faced with mass retrenchments. Industry shrinks, we need to plan our response properly. As SACTWU leaders in this Congress we can come up with action which will be taken care of by our allies.

We call on workers in all industries to demand job security and to lead the entire working class in a Workers Charter, Living Wage and Labour Relation Act Campaigns. We call on our COSATU members in the countryside to demand decrease on unemployment. We call on each and every one of our comrades to join hands in the struggle with us against retrenchment - closure of factories - starvation wages and all other forms of repression.

At this Congress let us resolve to build a united front of all anti-apartheid forces for the establishment of true democracy and lasting peace. Let us implement democracy, let us implement peace. Please comrades, let us stop fighting each other. As we are in SACTWU let us treat one another as in one family.

In conclusion the unity of organised workers under the banner of COSATU is a priority for our victory. We hope that workers who are still out of COSATU will be merging or integrating with existing affiliates in COSATU. One Federation In Our Country is vitally important to us in order to fight with unity for our rights. ■

Letters to the Editor



Write to: SACTWU SHOP STEWARDS BULLETIN
P.O.Box 194
7925 SALT RIVER

Its safe to go into the water!

I was very surprised at the article on Aids. I always thought that you can get Aids from swimming or using the public toilets. Some workers were worried about using the factory toilet because of all the television stories about Aids. Now, thanks to our Shop Stewards Bulletin I know that I cannot get Aids from using toilets or swimming.

Theophylis Smith Boland Branch
Hextex

Do bosses need disciplinary action?

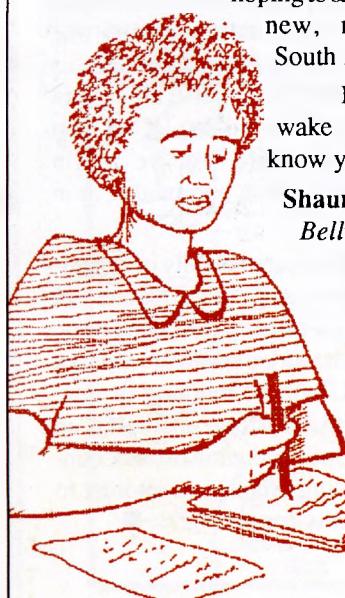
I see from your article that the bosses are on strike. They are investing less money today compared to what they used to do. They are on an "investment strike", even without following procedures! This is an unprocedural strike, and we should "dismiss" them (ie, take away their factories!)

But seriously, why are bosses investing less money just as apartheid is ending? Are they worried that South Africa will no longer be a land of milk and honey of exploitation? Or are they

hoping to sabotage the new, non-racial South Africa?

Bosses, wake up - we know your tricks.

Shaun January
Bellville Local
Table Bay
Spinners



Education - the key

UNTIL the political situation is sorted and cleared up, there's still going to be confusion and darkness in our country. There is so much misinterpreting politics and trade unions.

When I got my Vol. 1 of Shop Steward Bulletin recently - *Introduction by E. Patel* - says our union (SACTWU) has set up Education Department whereby workers will be educated (more especially those in leadership).

There has been more fights in places where people gather because some people belong to ANC, and another to PAC and so on. I only mention these two groups as they are the only ones in our area. What actually surprises me is that the people who usually fight - it happens they belong to one structure of trade unions. They always fight at union meetings because of their different political ideas. I personally feel this should not happen thanks to SACTWU for this Educ. Dept - I hope it will help us with current information so that we SACTWU's may know where we stand regarding our union policies. And I also encourage my fellow shop stewards to read our Bulletin and pass info to our fellow workers.

Stanley Majikela
Beier Industries Transkei

J.I.T.

WHEN I started working here in Butterworth in 1978, I was earning R22 a week which was maximum wage. Some industries paid as little as R8 maximum wage. That was bad time. When we started organising SACTWU in our factory, it was a tough time - bosses became angry. I remember one worker who brought us union application forms, got into trouble because it was said he shouldn't have brought those papers inside the factory premises. He

nearly got fired.

When the company decided to retrench 54 employees, it was too late for the bosses because our union was prepared to fight for those workers. So their jobs were saved.

We are so greatful to our organisers - **Com. Gwala** and **Com Ngcubetsha** who did not only make it possible for these workers to get their jobs back, but also taught us as shop stewards how to fight for our rights.

SACTWU came "J.I.T." (Just In Time)

Stanley Majikela
Beier Ind
Transkei

Where's mine?

I have heard about the new Shop Stewards Bulletin, and saw the photo of it in SACTWU's newspaper. Why did I not get a copy, even though I am a shop steward in Atlantis?

Elsie Thomas Atlantis Branch
Desiree Quilted Products

Discuss the Workers Charter

THE article on the Workers Charter is really important. I have started discussions at my factory on our charter, and we all agree: without proper rights for workers, the whole struggle, all the sacrifices of the last many years will be wasted.

But together with our rights, our unions must be strong and independent. We must make our own decisions and no movement or group can tell us what to do: only our members can.

Build the shop stewards bulletin in this tradition, comrades.

Wilton Loro Port Elizabeth Branch.
Veldspun

YOUR VIEWS

Quick Views on our Bulletin

Fantastic - very educational. May it grow from strength to strength.

Margaret Lincks, Heriswell, Salt River

I liked the Bulletin - more articles on the leather industry please.

Paul Fouchee, Jordans Shoes, Elsies River

My best articles were on the Workers Charter, collective bargaining and dismissals.

Charlotte Daniels, Sweet Orr, Elsies River

I liked SACTWU Sally and the leadership profile. Please carry an article on *investments*, and how one can invest his small income in a financial house.

Alex Akim, West Rand Local
Send my next Bulletin soon.

Jabu Ximba, Cleo Manufacturing, Tongaat Branch

I loved the documents, the article on skills and the dismissals one. I would like to see more articles on improving worker skills. Thank you for giving us the Bulletin.

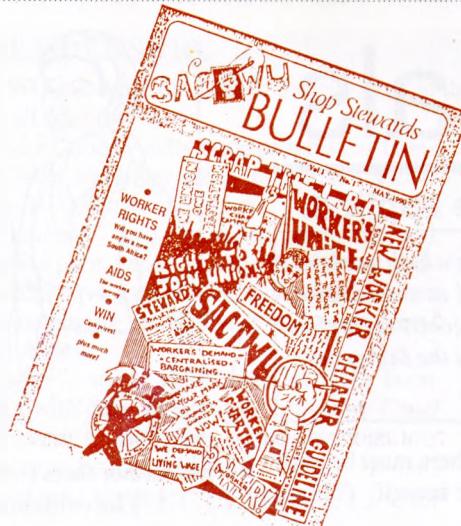
N. Delport, Sherleys Products, George Branch

My best article were about Aids, dismissals and the document section. Every article however was educational. More articles on SATWU's constitution and a sport or chatter page, please. I hope its not a one edition bulletin.

Riedwaan Momberg, Cape Underwear, Epping Local.

I am a shop steward at Watson Shoes in Great Brak River - a place near to George in the Cape Province.

I first took notice of your Shop Stewards Bulletin in July and really enjoyed reading it. I want to be part of the team and would like a Bulletin every month. My best articles were how a person gets aids, my duty as a shop steward and the dismissals article. I would like an article on the



Labour Relations Act.

Thank you for what you are doing.

Peter Cornelius, Watson Shoes, George

Great bulletin.

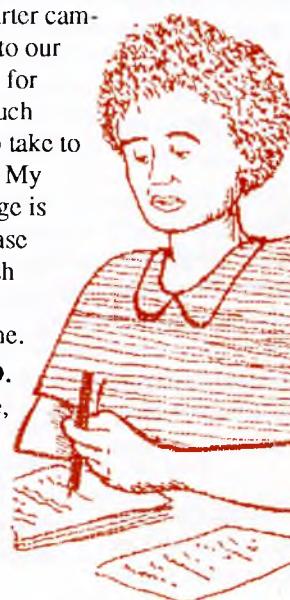
Nonye Lennox, Afman Bedding, Epping

The bulletin is a good learning process for shop stewards. I have an idea. Shop stewards should take one article, and discuss it fully in their shop stewards committees at all factories. Then, the shop stewards can pass the information to the workers on the different shifts and departments, during tea times. My favourite article was on the Workers Charter.

Ronnie Eiman, SA Nylon Spinners, Northern Suburbs Local.

I loved your article "Ten Ways to build your future," which was on the mass action for the Workers Charter campaign. Viva to our union's NEC for thinking of such good ideas to take to the workers. My home language is Pedi, but please use an English language bulletin for me.

Phyllisters D. Mathunyane, Silverton Sagteware, Pretoria Branch.



NOTICE BOARD

Forthcoming union meeting dates:

SACTWU

1. **National Co-ordinating Committee**
7 September 1990
2. **National Executive Committee**
6-7 October 1990
3. **National Co-ordinating Committee**
23 November 1990

COSATU

1. **COSATU Workers Charter Day**
28 August 1990
2. **COSATU Campaigns Conference**
8-9 September 1990
3. **COSATU Economics Workshop**
18-19 September 1990
4. **COSATU Central Executive Committee**
13-14 October 1990
5. **Workers Charter Conference**
17-18 November 1990

DO YOU HAVE ANY DATES FOR THE NOTICE BOARD?

Dismissals

A fair procedure must be applied.

This article is part of a series on the rights which workers have in law. In the last issue, we looked at **substantive fairness** (that is, that a boss must have a good reason for dismissing a worker). This article looks at the **fair procedure** which must be applied in dismissals.

BEFORE a manager may dismiss a worker, there must be a fair opportunity for the worker to defend him or herself. (This is called procedural fairness).

The elements of procedural fairness include the following:

* **The worker has the right to a fair hearing (or enquiry) before being dismissed.** Even if Jabu is caught with fabric, he is allowed to explain his side of the case - not there in front of everyone outside the factory, but at a proper meeting. Such a meeting is called a *disciplinary hearing* or *enquiry*.

* **The worker must know what he or she is being charged with.** It is not good enough for the boss to give a vague and general charge. It is good to ask the boss to write down the charge and give it to the worker *before* the hearing. They must say that Jabu is charged with stealing, or with being in possession of company property without permission.

* **The worker must have enough time to prepare him/herself to face the charge.** A worker should not just be called to the office, told what the charge is, and asked to plead guilty or not. If a worker is told to come to a hearing at a certain time, and does not have enough time to prepare properly, he/she may ask for the hearing to be postponed (held later).

* **The worker must have the right to be represented by a shop steward.** No company can refuse to allow the worker's shop steward from defending the worker, at all stages of a hearing. They cannot say "Let us first talk to you - if you are guilty, then only call for shop stewards."

* **The worker and shop steward have the right to call witnesses.** The boss cannot say: "That will just waste time" or "I don't want you to involve other people in this hearing."

You can call anyone who has seen what has happened, or has some information that can help the enquiry. Jabu, for example can call a witness who sold the fabric to him, or who can testify that Jabu received the fabric from the manager - or whatever the actual facts may be.

* **The worker and steward can cross-question witnesses of the company.** The company cannot stop you from asking their witness questions. The witness must answer all questions related to the charge against the worker.

Also, the company cannot submit a written statement from the witness. The witness must come in person, so that we can cross-question him, and find out if he is telling the truth, and to



get further facts from him.

* **The evidence against the worker must be presented openly at the hearing.** Shop stewards should not agree to hear secret or private evidence without the worker being present. Only evidence that is produced at the hearing can be considered against the worker.

It is not first the shop steward's job to prove the worker is innocent. The company must first read the charge and bring the evidence. Then only do we put our defence.

* **The chairperson of the hearing must be fair and unbiased.**

First, the chairperson must not take sides against the worker *during* the hearing. Second, the chairperson must not be involved in the facts of the case. For example, if the worker smacked his manager, the same manager cannot be the chairperson of the hearing. Third, the chairperson should not make a decision on the charge until after the shop steward has had an opportunity to defend the worker.

* **Before the chairperson of the hearing makes a decision on the action to be taken against the worker (if found guilty), the steward must be allowed to give arguments in mitigation.** For example, even if Jabu is found guilty, the

shop steward could point out

- his long service at the company
- his clean record
- his personal circumstances (wife/kids)
- other workers found guilty of the same offence received only written warnings.

* **The worker must have the right to appeal to a more senior manager against the decision.** If found guilty, the worker must be allowed to challenge the findings of the chairperson of the hearing. This can be done through an appeal hearing, where we say why we do not accept the outcome of the hearing.

Remember:

If the company breaks any of the above guidelines of a fair hearing, point it out, and ask that it be written down in the minutes.

Use it as one argument to challenge the outcome of the hearing, but do not base your whole case on only one procedural mistake. It may not be enough.

SECRETARIAT REPORT

A detailed report was presented by the Secretariat to the National Congress on 28-29 July 1990.

This is a summary of this important report which gives us an indication of how we are performing as a union and the direction we need to go if our objectives are to be achieved.

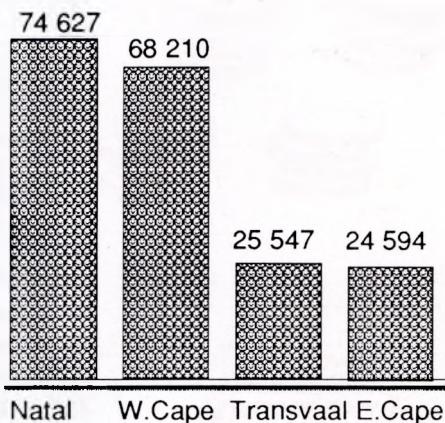
1. MEMBERSHIP:

SACTWU is one of the largest three unions in the country. It is racially mixed and spread across all four provinces.

● **Eastern Cape** - Really good progress in Transkei, Ciskei and other areas in Border - added close to 10 000 new members

● **Botshabelo** - two organisers are employed plus office phone and the like. While hundreds of workers have joined this has *not* been translated into paying membership and needs continuing review.

● **Leather** - some 5000 workers have been enrolled with good campaigns in Eastern Cape and Western Cape. More leather workers are beginning to be a part of SACTWU.



2. UNION STRUCTURES:

● Establishment of Structures

Following Congress resolutions the National Office Bearers made a huge effort to get all structures established in time to allow a National Executive Committee meeting to be called in February 1990.

● Development of Regional Structures

(i) The **Natal** Region - Since this is the largest region in our union it is a key task of restructuring that this region be strengthened even more by greater unity.

(ii) The **Eastern Cape** - The really hard work which has been done at local and branch level will soon transform this region to 4 or 5 branches. Congress will be asked to approve the establishment of further branches in this project which have been stabilised.

(iii) In both **Transvaal** and the **Western Cape** - a lot of progress which is seriously deepening the unity of all members.

● Development of Branches and Locals

Out of some 35 locals and branches nationally we are short of organisers in almost half of them. In the long term this will only be resolved by a serious organiser training programme to upgrade the skills of organisers and worker leaders who could develop into organisers in the future. A promising start in this area have been in Natal where National officials have been developing the idea of a Worker College.

In the short term, however we have to find other ways of developing local and branch leadership further. One important development in this area has been the decision to broaden the participation of shop stewards in the local executive committee.

3. COLLECTIVE BARGAINING:

The main collective bargaining units of SACTWU are as follows:

● Clothing

SACTWU bargains in 5 Industrial Councils, an area agreement in Isithebe and factory bargaining in a few areas in Natal like Hammersdale, Escourt, Ladysmith and Newcastle. The key clothing negotiations are commencing in virtually all these bargaining units for January 1991. In addition serious exploratory discussions have been initiated in the Natal and Western

Cape regions to promote the idea with employers that we should form one National Industrial Council. Since more than half of SACTWU membership is directly affected by these negotiations it will be a useful opportunity for a broad discussion on clothing to take place at Congress.

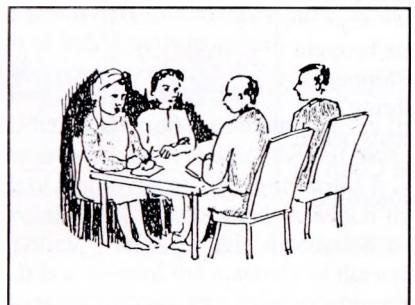
3.2 Leather

The negotiations for the leather industry have almost been concluded with a recommendation for a 19 percent increase in July 1990 plus 2.5% for Transvaal in January 1991. The tanning negotiations have been more successful with SACTWU playing the dominant role for the first time in the history of the industry. Of central importance in the leather industry is the question of the NULW. This union has lost several thousands of members to us and it is obvious that several thousands more members are keen to defect. Congress ought to give a clear direction to SACTWU structures as to how we should approach this issue.

3.3 Textile

The key bargaining in this sector has been:

- (i) The National Industrial Council for the Textile Industry (NICTEX) where we have just concluded a wage agreement of about 19.5%
- (ii) The Cape Cotton Industrial Council where employers have collapsed the Council and



forced a reversion to factory bargaining.

(iii) The Romatex group where SACTWU has been strongly pushing the issue of centralised bargaining as part of the COSATU Barlow Campaign. Our union is the most highly organised industry in Barlows operations and has undoubtedly played an important part in this campaign.

(iv) SACTWU has concluded wage agreements at S.A. Fine Worsteds and Hextex where non-union members are to receive smaller increases than union members. This is the first time we have succeeded in attacking the "free riders" directly in their wage increases.

(v) There are also a number of important recognition agreements being negotiated especially in the Eastern Cape. Of these the most difficult has undoubtedly been Da Gama where the Company has been completely intransigent on several issues. All these agreements are however at the last stages and should be finalised in the next few weeks.

● *The Collective Bargaining Department*

SACTWU has developed this department of the Head Office as a service to negotiation. It has been directly involved in many negotiations and in addition has initiated research to assist negotiation as well as monitoring agreements which are only signed after approval by the department.

4. EDUCATION:

● The education department has begun operating effectively all around the country with a series of seminars, intermediate shop stewards seminars and special seminars centred around issues.

One thousand shop stewards have been through Basic and Industry training. Special seminars have been held on the Workers Charter, Co-operatives and the Economy..

● In addition the education department has commenced production of a Shop Stewards Bulletin which should develop into an important tool of encouraging detailed information on SACTWU and the worker struggle around the world.

● Finally the department has also been active in COSATU Nedcom where we have been involved particularly in the worker charter campaign.

5. LEGAL:

● This department has had a number of difficulties. It has proven very expensive to continue running the legal department in the Western Cape where over R50 000 per month has been spent on Lawyers. This sum is in addition to wages and other costs of running the department itself. We need to substantively trim expenses on lawyers if we are to stop making losses.

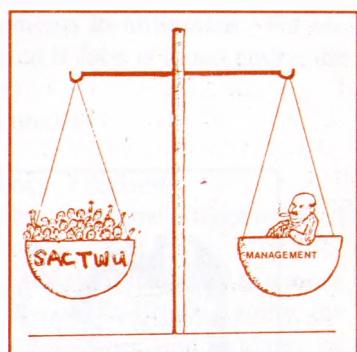
● There have however been a number of important victories in the Courts. Of these the following should be mentioned:

■ The courts rejected an attempt by **Veldspun** to avoid granting an agency shop which had been won by SACTWU during arbitration at the factory.

■ The Free and Independent Workers's Association was ordered to pay over R30 000 for defaming SACTWU and two of its officials. SACTWU is in the process of attaching the stop order dues of FIWA members in order to recover the money.

■ SACTWU's previous Vice-President Comrade Bert Pitts was reinstated after an unfair dismissal and remains on the Company payroll pending their appeal next year.

■ There was a decline in the number of interdicts brought against SACTWU in consequence of unlawful stoppages. One company (Table Bay Spinners) however did bring such an interdict but was forced to abandon it with costs when hundreds of union members packed the Supreme Court in Cape Town during SACTWU's challenge to the interdict.



Number of workshops conducted



	Basic	Industry	Economy	Workers Charter	
Natal	291	185	60	166	1160
W Cape	210	80	73	379	976
Transvaal	72	—	65	35	540
E Cape	163	—	—	39	280
Total	763	265	198	619	2956

6. FINANCE:

- SACTWU's finances have been combined into an effective national structure. This has allowed us to develop a clear picture of the total income and expenses of the union and to make the necessary recommendations to ensure SACTWU does not overspend.
- SACTWU's executive committee has decided to terminate long standing relationships with Metropolitan Homes Trust. The reasons for this is that it was costing SACTWU some R600 000 per year more than the claims made and it is hoped this saving will allow us to control our benefits in the coming years. Obviously SACTWU will have to build up its own reserves if we are to safely insure our own members. The executive is confident that having such reserves under our own control will prove much more beneficial than the past arrangements.
- A key item of expense which needs to be mentioned more closely is the cost of the union newspaper. We are spending between R40 000 and R60 000 per month on the newspaper and large amounts of waste are included in this.
- A further item is obviously the legal expenses mentioned above.



7. INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS:

Since SACTWU was launched there have been a number of international activities in which SACTWU has been involved.

- Our President was elected to the Presidium of the **International Textile Garment and Leather Workers Federation (ITGLWF)**. This is the first time any unionist from Africa has been included in the central committee of 12 people in this body and it is a tribute to both our President and to our union that we have emerged as one of the most significant unions in our industry in the world.
- SACTWU has continued to develop ties with the **Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union in U.S.A. and Canada**. Leadership exchange with this union have taken place both ways in the last six months and our Vice-President Comrade **Bubbles Beaumont** and Comrade **Freddie Magugu** attended their National Congress recently.
- In addition Comrade **John Eagles** will shortly be going to U.S.A. to participate in a Blitz campaign of ACTWU.
- We have arranged study tours for 8 union comrades to Scandinavia and the U.K. in October.
- The executive of the ITGLWF will meet in Caracas (South America) and SACTWU will send three delegates to this meeting.
- An area of concern is that no progress has been made in establishing better contact with unions in neighbouring territories.



8 CO-OPERATIVES

SACTWU has been at the forefront of attempts by the union movement to establish co-operatives. Our co-op, Zenzeleni, has experienced much difficulty in raising funding to make it viable. Our problems started when the Frame Group backed out of their commitment to pay R1,1 million.

Congress is requested to discuss the issue of capital funding of union co-ops in principal. In particular Congress is requested to discuss whether we should launch a campaign among members to raise money for such projects.

- Despite the difficulties our factory has experienced it remains the leading co-op experiment in the whole of Africa and certainly its survival has guaranteed not only the 300 workers employed there with a livelihood but has kept open the option that black ownership of a bigger part of the South African economy can be achieved through a co-operative sector rather than the promotion of individuals to wealth.

9. N.E.C. POLICIES:

SACTWU has addressed four main areas in its policy discussions since our last Congress:

- The first area has been to unite the full time staff or our union into a single force on common conditions of employment. There are still a few differences left but these are being investigated.
- A Special N.E.C. was called in which there was substantial discussion on SACTWU's political policy. Through this discussion a **political policy resolution** was unanimously adopted. It is a mark of the maturity of the national leadership of our union that we all had the patience to work through this issue to a point where everyone was satisfied.

While our resolution was unique in its efforts to promote independence for the trade union movement in an environment which was growingly sceptical of union independence nothing has happened since then which gives cause for regrets. Quite the contrary, major international unions such as the Italian Comrades from CGIL, unions such as ACTWU in U.S.A. and several other Western European unions have congratulated us on the stand taken.

Clearly the future development of SACTWU's political policy will be to chart a course based

on experience that will allow us to seriously co-operate with others in our common efforts to replace apartheid with a more democratic system while at the same time maintain the right and the duty of SACTWU to truly represent its members' views.

● The third area has been the adoption of a policy resolution on the Worker Charter. Besides leading discussion in COSATU on the substance of the Charter, SACTWU has clearly been spear-heading the Charter Campaign in COSATU. The red headband day was a big success throughout SACTWU as was the Human Chain in the Western Cape on 18th July 1990. This date was the 10th anniversary of the assassination of Samson Cele following the 1980 Frame Wage strike.

No doubt Congress will further discuss the Worker Charter campaign in its debates on resolutions submitted to Congress.

● Finally the NEC approved two amendments to SACTWU's constitution:

■ The first was to **broaden the number of workers who sit on Local Executive Committees**. This change was designed to ensure that worker leaders in locals have an equal opportunity to participate in the affairs of SACTWU as do workers in Branches.

■ The second amendment was designed to **free the National Office Bearers of the union from being tied to Branch/Local mandates**. The change allows any delegate to National Congress to stand for National Office. The change allows more people to be drawn into leadership positions in SACTWU rather than encouraging a system where only four people tend to dominate all meetings from Branch up through regions to National structures. This amendment was adopted with approval of 32 of the 33 branches of SACTWU.

10. COSATU

● SACTWU is one of the three largest affiliates of the federation. In addition we make up half or more of all COSATU Workers in Natal and the Cape which gives us a really important role in ensuring unity within COSATU.

■ Natal

Nevertheless SACTWU has experienced some difficulties in COSATU. The peace initiative spear-headed by SACTWU last year disintegrated and violence in Natal is as serious a problem now as it was two years ago.

■ Eastern Cape

Our union has been prominent in pursuing an initiative by COSATU nationally to intervene in the problems of the area which were threatening to seriously undermine unions as a force in the entire region.

■ Western Cape

The Western Cape has made great strides in improving the COSATU region and they are to be congratulated on their successes. They have effectively demonstrated SACTWU is a major force in the region and have drawn other unions in with it to run campaigns there.

■ Transvaal

The Transvaal region has continued as a small but coherent force in the main centre of COSATU activity. To a certain extent their role has been neutralised by administrative inefficiencies of COSATU which tends to regard a few hours as sufficient notice for many important meetings. This problem is being tackled by the National Officers and we will be having a meeting in the near future with National Office Bearers of COSATU to discuss these weaknesses of COSATU's dealings with its affiliates.

● NATIONAL CAMPAIGNS:

The key campaigns of COSATU have been the following:

■ L.R.A. Campaign:

This campaign has been a partial success in that it has forced employers to abandon their very aggressive stance of changing the labour every time they feel a pinch from unions.

■ The Worker Charter Campaign:

Discussed above.

■ Barlow Campaign:

As mentioned our union is the only industry in which Barlows' workers are substantially organised. This has forced us to take a significant lead in dealing with the group.

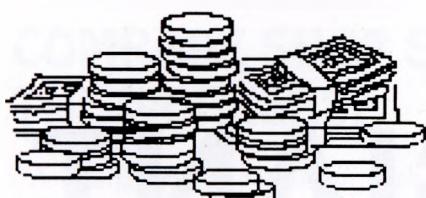
Forward with worker participation!

Forward with worker control!

Forward with the spirit of openness and debate!

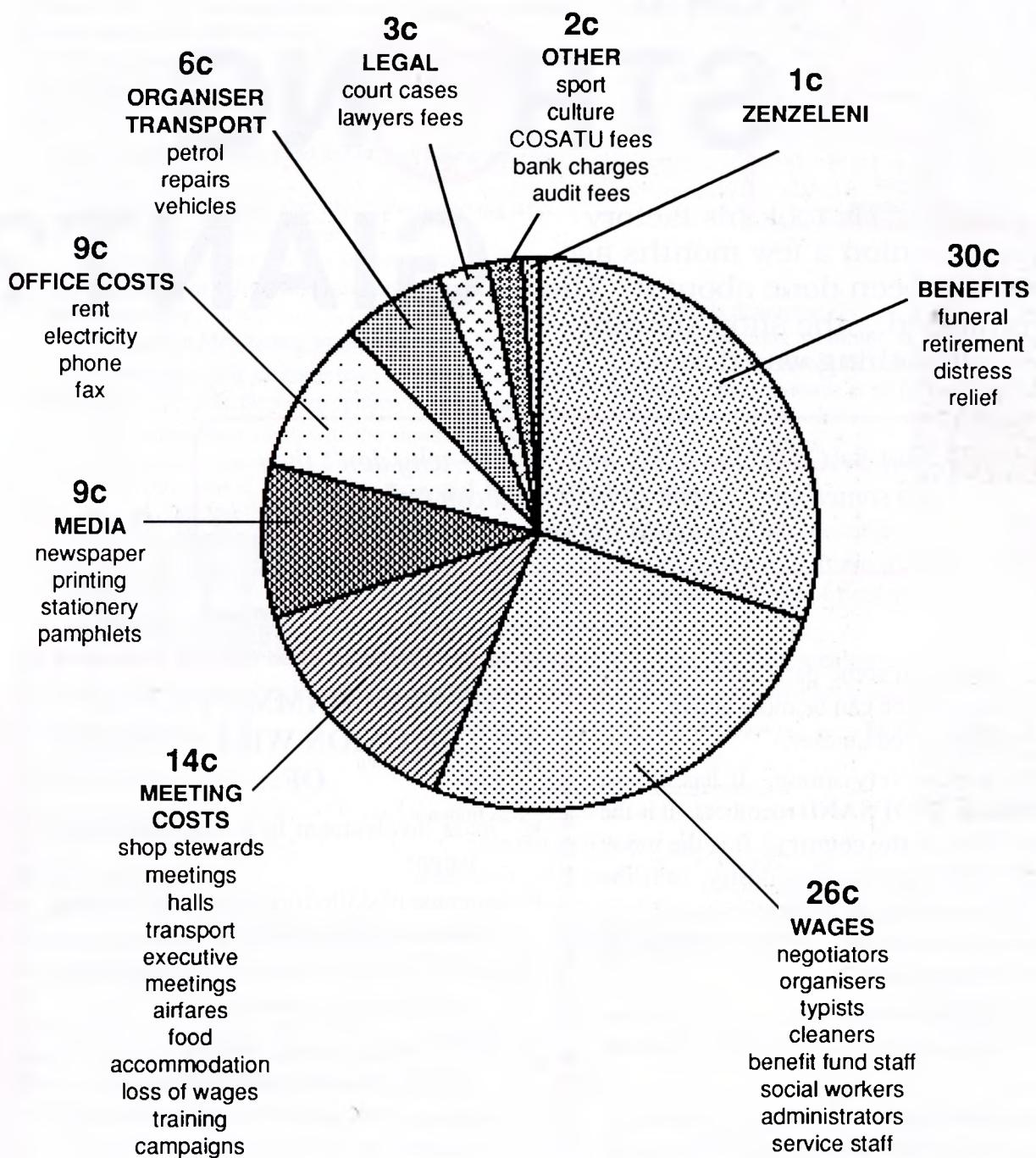


Where does your money go?

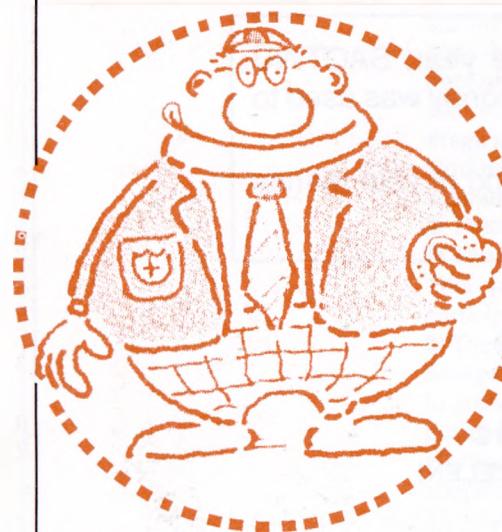


For the first five months of the year, SACTWU spent almost R5 million. This money was used to keep the union running.

This page shows how each Rand of your money was used.



RESTRUCTURING



IS SACTWU A FAT GIANT OR A STRONG GIANT?

Peter was puzzled. He took his factory problems to the union a few months ago, but nothing had been done about it. The organiser promised... the shop steward promised... but nothing was done...



"But SACTWU is so big and strong - why don't they do something. I earn so little, and can only put my trust in the union".

PETER is not alone. In some parts of the country workers feel that the union can be more active. That problems should be solved quicker.

SACTWU can be very strong. It has almost **TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND** members. It is the **third biggest union in the country**. It is the union with the highest membership per industry. It is the only union with a majority of workers in its industry being members of the union. It has **3 000 shop stewards** and **70 organisers**.

But large numbers alone does not make a union strong. It can make a union fat with members, fat with organisers.

It is because we do not want to be fat, but strong, that the Second National Congress decided to adopt the theme "RESTRUCTURING".

Restructuring means changes. Changes to give SACTWU muscle and power.

THE PROGRAMME TO BEEF UP THE UNION WILL CONSIST OF:

- ✓ mass involvement in a few, clear campaigns
- ✓ better use of skilled organisers and training for unskilled organisers
- ✓ more demands on union staff to provide a good service to members.
- ✓ better use of union meetings, and less wastage of time at meetings
- ✓ Building a stronger, more confident worker leadership.

SACTWU has adopted the theme of "RESTRUCTURING" at the National Congress. This will be the guiding policy of the union for the next 12 months. On this page we look at the meaning of restructuring for our members, and shop stewards and staff.

COMRADE SHOP STEWARD...DO YOU REALLY SPEAK FOR THE WORKERS?

"A strong union is a union with real support among workers. That support comes not from how clever you are as a steward, but if you solve the problems of the workers," says union vice-president Johnny Malebo.

DO SACTWU shop stewards speak of the concerns of workers? In some cases it is clearly not so.

Some shop stewards are quite unpopular with workers. The workers do not say it openly, but in the toilets you hear the buzz:

Our steward Mrs Zuma is too friendly with the boss - we can't trust her."

"Joanie is too political, and she's always giving us a speech - she never listens to our opinions."

"Peter does not report to us as workers - but he always has a lot to say in union meetings. He must start here in his own factory."

Are you like Mrs Zuma, or Joannie or Peter?

It is true many shop stewards have become removed from the workers. They give their own opinion in union meetings.

They confuse their views with the views of workers.



A good leader is one who:

- * gives the views of workers at union meetings
- * keeps workers regularly informed of union plans, decisions and action
- * does not force his/her personal and political views down on workers
- * does not divide workers
- * does not feel superior or better than workers.

Shop steward elections - an exercise in democracy.

ELECTIONS are one important way of workers controlling the union. But it can only work if it is free and fair.

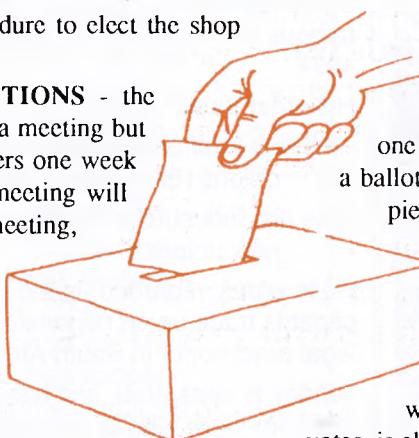
A well organised factory is one where elections are contested - that is, many people stand for a post, and workers choose who they want through a secret vote (this vote is called a ballot).

If the organiser, or the more experienced shop steward chooses the new shop stewards, it is wrong.

If the workers choose the shop stewards, it is right.

The procedure to elect the shop steward is:

NOMINATIONS - the union must call a meeting but must give workers one week notice that the meeting will be held. At the meeting, any union member is free to propose another union member. Two people must nominate you before you can stand as a candidate



ELECTIONS - three days after the nominations are completed, elections are held. If only one person stands for one post, he/she is automatically elected. If more than one person stands, the union holds a ballot. Every member receives a piece of paper, and - without anyone else seeing - writes down the name of the person they want as a steward.

The person with more than half of the votes, is elected.
See page 21 for an extract from our constitution on the conduct of shop-steward elections



FACE TO FACE

JOHNNY COPELYN is the SACTWU General Secretary. He is forty years old, and started working in the trade union movement from 1974. He was banned from 1976 to 1980, during the government clampdown on the new trade unions. During his banning, he completed a law degree to add to the Honours degree he had.

Johnny has helped to build the new trade unions in a number of different posts he held. He was the National Secretary of the Chemical Workers Industrial Union, General Secretary of the National Union of Textile Workers and Actwusa. He was the first editor of the South African Labour Bulletin, the general secretary of the trade union federation which preceded Cosatu and Fosatu, namely the Trade Union Advisory and Co-ordinating Council (TUACC) and the head of the trade union education section of the Institute of Industrial Education.

He was also the first trade unionist in South Africa to negotiate a recognition agreement with a company, the famous Smith & Nephew agreement of 1974.

His other "firsts" include

- the first arbitration case by the new unions (SA Fabrics 1981)
- the first industrial court case by the new unions.

He is widely regarded as the most capable trade union negotiator and legal practitioner in South Africa.

Johnny is separated, and has two children - Julie who is 12 and Ilan who is 14.

Education Secretary

EBRAHIM PATEL

*interviews SACTWU's
newly elected*

General Secretary,

JOHNNY COPELYN

Ebrahim: Johnny, what do you think is the biggest challenge facing the trade unions in the new political circumstances created by the reforms of De Klerk?

Johnny: The key challenge is whether the trade unions can retain sufficient independence as organisations, to really reflect the views and struggles of its membership.

Is it not natural though for trade unions to reflect the views of the membership?

No

Why not?

Throughout the world, the tendency is for trade unions to reflect the views of the union leadership, not the membership. Trade union leaders can easily become removed and remote from the desires of the membership. This tendency holds true for all societies, communist and capitalist.

But why is this indeed the case? On paper, trade unions are such democratic organs, with real structures of accountability - how do they manage to become removed from the membership?

Most trade unions in other parts of the world do not have democratic structures. They do not foster the development of a major shop stewards movement. The emphasis on worker control too, is not a significant part of the structures and practices of many trade unions.

In South Africa, the new trade unions have fought hard to establish the principle of worker control. We have a more favourable arrangement accordingly, but the struggle for worker control did not end with the adoption of that principle on a piece of paper. The principle of worker control faces new challenges in the new circumstances of our country.

In my opinion, the key issue for us to address is our relationship with a future democratic government. In South Africa, we have not really been confronted with this issue, because the current state has no legitimacy. Naturally, we are in opposition to it. In a post-

13
apartheid South Africa though, our relationship will need to be different.

In what way will our relationship be different?

Where a government has no legitimacy, the entire relationship of the trade unions to that government is one of hostility. Where the government has legitimacy though, there needs to be a working relationship between the unions and the governing or opposition party in parliament. That is not the difficulty. The difficulty or challenge is to maintain a sufficient distance or independence from such parties. If that distance is too narrow, then in practice all the decisions of the party automatically applies to the trade union, and workers then lose control of their trade union. We need to debate what is the right balance between a working relationship with government and the distance needed to protect our independence. The trade union movement must be the home where workers can independently influence government.

What steps can trade unions take to foster such independence?

You have touched on what is a central debate which has yet to be worked through in South Africa by the unions.

I think the experience of other countries can be instructive, and will unavoidably have to be taken into account in the debate.

The issues resolved by the Italian trade unions are of particular interest. Firstly, the refusal by the unions that its leaders can wear both the leadership hats of the trade union and the political parties, and secondly, the mechanism whereby workers can force the government to submit legislation to a referendum when more than half a million voters petition against it.

Does this struggle for independence mean that we must not take part in political campaigns aimed at the eradication of apartheid?

No - workers have a key responsibility to fight apartheid. It is workers who have been the biggest victims of apartheid. But, given that our trade union has as its members workers of all shades of political opinion, the contribution of the union movement to the struggle against apartheid, in my opinion, should primarily be based on campaigns which are centred around issues which the trade union members have united around.

What are those sort of issues?

Those issues are likely to be formulated in the Workers Charter campaign, for

instance collective rights such as the right to strike and picket, the democratising of factory life, and mechanisms to properly obtain the views of workers, like the holding of referenda.

How best can worker rights thus be secured in the future negotiations for a constitution of a democratic South Africa?

First, we must have something to say - if we are just waiting for the political movement to formulate demands before we can respond, then really there is no role for the trade union movement.

If we want to contribute, we must formulate clear proposals and mobilise and unite the rest of the trade union movement around these proposals. We need then to obtain the support from all political groupings for these proposals which we will put forward. The key people to convince within the political movement would of course be the ANC. But, more importantly, we must convince a much wider audience.

We need to ensure that employers do not rally against these proposals - and the best way to do this is to take the demands into the factories. The Workers Charter Campaign is therefore an important way in which we engage the employers on our demands. Not only are we then taking constitution making to the factories, but in our interaction with employers, we are engaging other classes in the debate about the future constitution. ●

FAVOURITES

Colour

red

Book

Catch-22

Scene/Sight

Mtaphufo, on the Wild Coast

Event

the birth of my children

Music

light classic

Musician

Vivaldi

Politician

Gorbachev

Food: macaroni

Film

Harold and Maud

Newspaper

Time Magazine

Challenge: Zenzelezi

Frustrations: Union Finances

Outstanding achievement of career: To have concluded the first recognition agreement with the Frame Group. The agreement was achieved after the biggest trade union recognition battle of the 1970s and 1980s. It was concluded after a 13 year struggle, during which two major strikes took place, and 53 court cases between the union and Frame were launched. The company spent well over a million rand in legal fees alone, to try to block our recognition. I remember walking in the Frame work area for the first time after we had been recognised, and the feeling is indescribable.

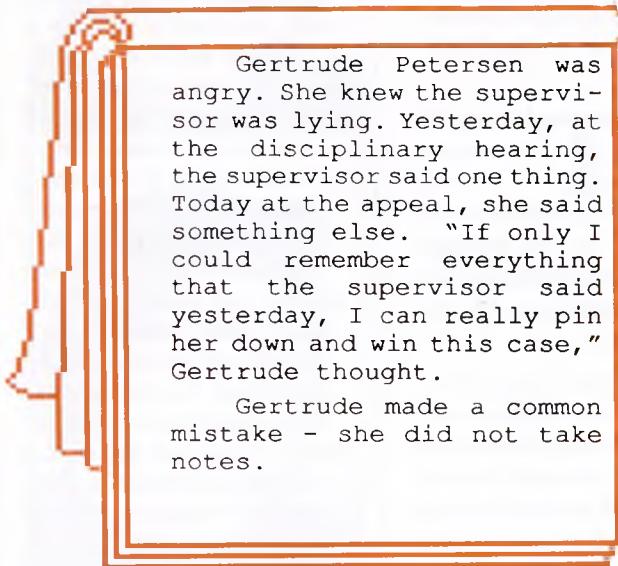
Trade union activity with which I am most uncomfortable? Sactwu Worker News' Natal Edition! Either I am really out of touch with what our members are, what they are doing, what they are thinking and what they aspire to, or the newspaper is out of touch!

Biggest internal challenge for the union? To professionalise the union and its activities. Part of this will be to correct the newspaper so that our members would really want to read it, but it goes further. We should not call someone an organiser unless she can organise, or an education officer, unless she can teach workers, or an administrator, unless she can administer.

Biggest achievement of SACTWU? We have strengthened the unity of our members, worker leaders and officials at all levels, but especially at the national level of leadership of our union.

We have also within SACTWU the most competent, thoughtful and independent leadership in the trade union movement.

MAKING NOTES



SHOP STEWARDS often need to take notes. Taking notes is when you write down what someone is saying or the details of something that is taking place.

A shop steward will normally take notes at

- a disciplinary hearing
- union meetings
- worker meetings in the canteen
- when interviewing members or witnesses
- at meetings with management.

We take notes for different reasons. At a **disciplinary hearing**, the purpose is to write down the charge, all the facts and what the different witnesses are saying. This allows the shop steward to check the facts, to use it in an appeal or the cross-questioning of witnesses, or give it to an organiser if we are taking the case further, or use it in court.

At a **union meeting**, note-taking allows the shop steward to give an accurate and full report to the members afterwards.

In the **canteen** it allows for a proper decision (mandate) of workers to be written down, so that it may be conveyed to the union official or the boss. It allows too for problems to be clearly recorded so that it may all be tackled by shop stewards.

How much detail?

- * Start by writing background details
 - date and time
 - place
 - people involved

- what the meeting/interview is about.
 * At meetings, write down only the important points - do not try to get a word for word account of what everyone said. But write down ALL decisions, any action to be taken and who should take it.

* Sometimes you will need to take notes word for word. You may be taking a statement from a witness to a fight involving workers, or noting the wording of an agreement with management.

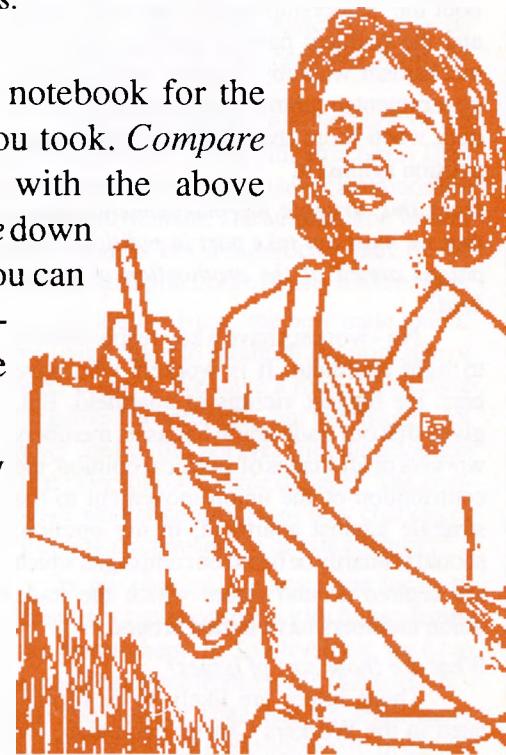
Layout

- * If possible, try to use a single notebook, not many sheets of loose pages.
- * Use a clean sheet of paper in your notebook, for each different meeting or interview or hearing. Squeezing everything onto one page does not help.
- * Break up the notes - use paragraphs, numbers and headings (underlining) to do this
- * Highlight important words and points - through underlining it, using capital letters or a different coloured pen.
- * Leave plenty of space. This helps you to read the notes, and add to the notes later. Leave wide margins (the space at the side of the pages).
- * Number the pages if the notes cover more than one page.
- * Write neatly and clearly - perhaps someone else would need to use your notes afterwards.

NOW

Check your notebook for the last notes you took. *Compare* your notes with the above points. *Write* down the things you can do to improve those notes.

H a p p y
note-
taking !



ECONOMIC NOTES

OUR industry plays a very important role in the South African economy. It earns money through what we sell to other countries (this is called exports), it clothes the population, and it employs many thousands of people.

The people in our industry drawn from five areas of work:

- * **primary/source workers** - those who make man-made yarn, and cotton and wool growers.
- * **textile workers** - spinners, weavers, finishers, knitters and those making carpets, ropes etc.
- * **clothing workers** - clothing and millinery (hat) makers
- * **leather workers** - tannery, and footwear, handbags and other leather good workers
- * **retail workers** - shop and supermarket workers where clothes are sold.

More than 750 000 workers are employed in these five areas - SACTWU has largely organised textile, clothing and leather workers.

	Manufacturers/Producers	Workers	Production
PRIMARY/SOURCE			
Synthetic Fibre/Yarn	3	5 000	R900m
Cotton Growers	5800	75 000 (fixed)	R290m
Wool Producers	25000	375 000	R830m
Total	30 803	455 000	R2 020
TEXTILE			
Spinning Weaving	105	41 000	R2 061m
Finishing (excl carpets blankets)			
Hosiery &			
Knitted Clothing	122	18 000	R643m
Automotive, carpets, rope, felt, bags, tents, cot. gin, wool, dyeing, printing	478	36 000	R1 911m
Total	705	95 000	R4 615m
CLOTHING			
Mens Boys	392	63 000	R1 391m
Womens Girls	543	59 000	R1 308m
Bespoke Furriers/Millinery	296	3000	R53m
Total	1231	125 000	R2 752m
RETAIL			
	8000	50 000	R6 741m
TOTAL	42 759	725 000	R16 128m

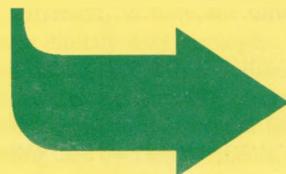
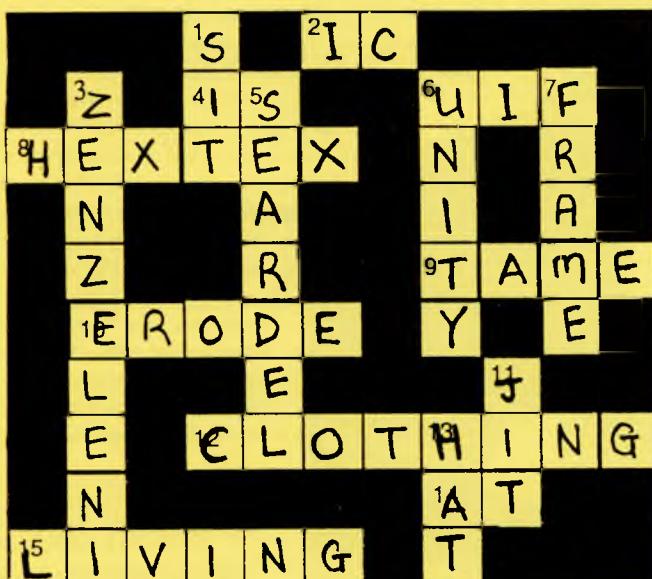
source: NCF

WINNERS FROM THE LAST BULLETIN

FEEDBACK WINNER (R50): STANLEY MAJIKELA
Beier Industries
TRANSKEI

CROSSWORD WINNER (R30): MARGARET LINCKS
Heriswell
SALT RIVER LOCAL

CROSSWORD SOLUTION



R50
COULD BE WAITING
FOR YOU OVER THE
PAGE

Tell us what you think about our BULLETIN on the form on the next page and send it to

SACTWU EDUCATION DEPT

P.O. Box 194

SALT RIVER

7925

and you could be a WINNER!

UNDERSTANDING UNIONS

What is a trade union?

IN the previous issue of the Bulletin, a union was described as

“a permanent, democratic organisation of workers ...

* to protect workers and improve the conditions of their work through collective bargaining

* to better the condition of their lives

* to provide a means of expression for the worker views on the problems of society.”

In the box in the next column, the **three types of trade unions** are described.

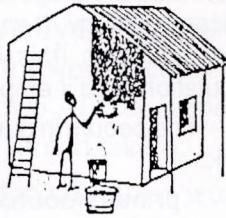
SACTWU is **not** a craft union (a weaver and a sewing machinist do not do the same type of work, but are both allowed to belong to SACTWU).

SACTWU is **not** a general union (metal workers and food workers are not entitled to belong to SACTWU).

SACTWU is an industrial union (all clothing, textile and leather workers may join SACTWU).

CRAFT

WORKERS
DOING
THE SAME TYPE
OF WORK
IN DIFFERENT
COMPANIES



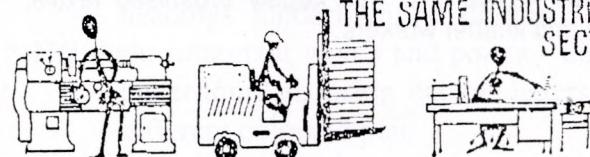
GENERAL

DIFFERENT (USUAL)
UNSKILLED OR
SEMI-SKILLED WORKERS
FROM DIFFERENT TYPES
OF JOBS AND COMPANIES



INDUSTRIAL

WORKERS WITH DIFFERENT TYPES OF JOBS IN
THE SAME INDUSTRIAL
SECTOR



Name/Surname:

Address (Home)

Post code.....

Ph. No:

Factory name:

Local/branch:

Home language:

Date elected as a shop steward:

I want my bulletin posted to

My factory

My house address

My best articles/cartoons are:

1.

2.

3.

I did not like

1.

2.

3.

I would like to see articles on

1.

2.

3.

My views on (*Name an article*) is:

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Other comments:

.....
.....
.....
.....

ITALY - more than the world cup!

Cosatu recently hosted a meeting between Italian and South African trade unionists. The meeting was held in Johannesburg, and SACTWU was represented by **Lionel October** and **Ebrahim Patel**. The Italians were **Bruno Trente**, General Secretary of the trade union federation, CGIL, and **Chris Gilmore**, a staffer in the International department of the union federation.

Bruno Trente spoke about Italian trade unionism, the challenges in Europe and the role of trade unions in the political struggle. Here is a report of the meeting.

UNIONS AND POLITICS

THE Italian trade union movement is highly politicised - perhaps more than any other country in Europe.

There are three federations, each who were in the past aligned to a particular political party. The CGIL is the largest of the federations with about 5 million members, and most of its leadership is aligned to the communist and socialist parties. Indeed, its prominent leadership were often the leadership of political parties too - Bruno Trente was at one time a prominent unionist AND a member of parliament for the Communist Party AND a member of the party's Central Executive Committee.

The Communist Party in Italy is very big - the biggest in Western Europe. In the last elections, one out of every four Italians voted for the party.

With time, the unions realised though that the close link of the leadership to both the unions and the political parties were creating problems among the members. The majority of the CGIL's five million workers, says Bruno, are not members of any political party, and the minority who do belong to political parties, belong to different political parties.

The unions then introduced what they called the "incompatibility rules." These rules are as follows

* You cannot be a **union official** and at the same time an **executive member** of a political party.

* You cannot be a **union official** and at the same time stand for **elections** for parliament or the city council. When you stand for election, you must resign as a union official, even if you were to lose the election.

The unions then decided to have open meetings with the various parties, and institutionalise the relationship. The union thus deals with parliament, political parties and the government, as *trade unions*, and not through individuals who wear both the trade union and political party hat.

"This does not mean a union without politics, but a union with its own, independent policies based on the internal discussion of the union members," says Bruno. "If the position of one political party was adopted by the unions, it would split our organisations. People can accept a decision based on democratic discussion in the union, but not one imposed from an

outside party. The defence of the autonomy of the organisation is therefore the defence of the unity of the organisation."

THE CHANGING CONTEXT OF UNIONS

What do you do when your world as you know it changes? That is the challenge facing all European trade unions, according to Bruno. Up to now, trade unions organised workers according to national boundaries. Unions exist in Italy, England, France and so on. And it made sense, because the market of labour is a national market, and the labour laws are national laws.

Unions needed to organise Italian motor workers separately from German motor workers, because the industries were separate and different, the laws separate and different.

But all of that is changing. From 1992, Europe will become a single market. This means that there will no longer be any restrictions in the movement of goods, money and labour within Europe. A French boss will now be able to move all his money to Germany, and set up a factory in Germany. He will be able to employ labour from anywhere in Europe. He will be able to sell his goods anywhere in Europe.

New, European Labour Laws will be passed, which will bind all countries. All workers will, with time, have the same rights of unionism, to strike, to bargain with employers.

This 1992 single market creates a number of new challenges for trade unions. Many factories will close in some areas as cheaper goods from elsewhere in Europe are imported. One factory owner will own factories in all parts of Europe. Under these circumstances, it may be wasteful to have separate national unions. Perhaps a single textile/clothing union for the whole of Europe will be more powerful than separate ones. One single wage deal would have to be considered.

Yet there are many difficulties. The bargaining arrangements in each country is different: in Italy, the **union federation** (like COSATU) negotiates directly with employers, while in Germany, the **national unions** (like SACTWU) negotiates with employers.

The periods of the agreements differ from country to country.

Unions would need to confront these difficulties and pass from a culture of defending their own arrangements, industries and areas, to a broader culture of solidarity.

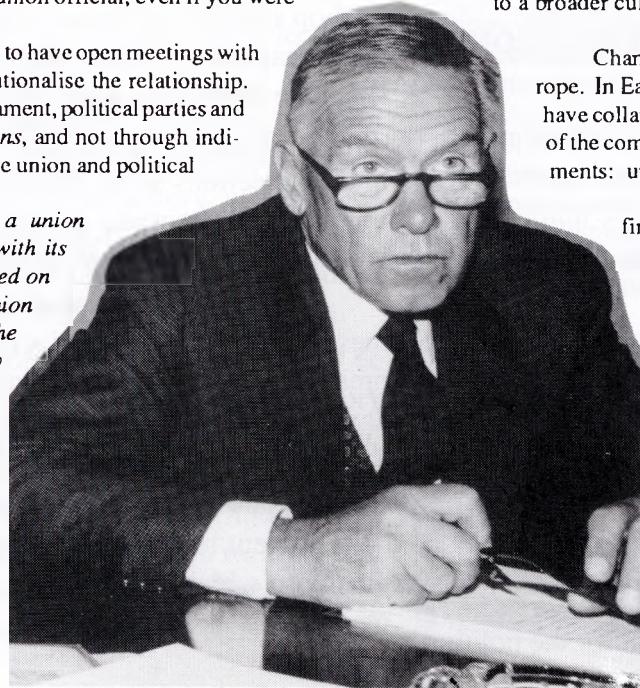
A CHANGING WORLD

Changes are not only taking place in Western Europe. In Eastern Europe, the state promoted trade unions have collapsed. The changes brought about since the fall of the communist parties have led to major social adjustments: unemployment and rising prices.

The new unions in Eastern Europe need to find a new, independent role for themselves. Their struggles must win them support from workers, not their closeness to political parties.

Not only are many East Europeans streaming into Western Europe, but immigration from Africa and Asia is increasing. With greater immigration comes racial tension as the established workers fight against immigrants for jobs, housing and social benefits.

The union must combat the racism and fight for an open Europe - open to all who live in it, including immigrant workers from the Third World.



BRUNO TRENTE
Gen Secretary-CGIL

RESOLUTIONS

NB
Resolutions adopted at National Congress of SACTWU, held in Durban 28 - 29 July 1990.

FINANCES

1. All members should pay weekly subscriptions fees including the annual shut down period.
2. The amount of such dues should be as follows from 1st November 1990:

WEEKLY AMOUNT	PURPOSE
.10c	Bursary Fund
R1.00	Union Subs (incl newspaper)
R1.10	Total without benefits
.55c	Funeral and retirement benefits
R1.65	Total with benefits

How will the bursary and fund operate?

The union bursary fund will be administered by the unions on the basis of offering bursaries to all members and their children for tertiary education (i.e. the fund will not be used for primary school or high school education cost but for other studies).

The amount available in the fund will be shared among all applications provided that they passed the previous year (i.e. we will not pick and choose between members).

Payments will be made directly to the educational institution involved and no money will be given to the individual member. We will collect the money from 1st October 1990 and pay out the bursaries as close to March 1992 as is possible and annually thereafter. Every member of SACTWU will be obliged to pay for this benefit.

What are the funeral and retirement benefits?

The union will offer funeral cover to all members unless they are not required in any factory. The benefits are as follows:

Death of member:	R1200,00
Death of spouse:	R1150,00
Death of child:	
Age 1-6:	R250,00
6-14:	R500,00
14-21:	R1150,00
Death of indigent parent:	R150,00
<i>(this benefit only applies where the deceased was a state pensioner or in receipt of a welfare grant)</i>	

The union will continue the "paid up policy" system.

Retirement benefits will be paid to all members on the funeral scheme with proof of permanent retirement from the industry on the following basis:

20 years member in union:	R210,00
For each thereafter	
21-30:	R25,00 p.a.
31-40:	R30,00 p.a.
41:	R40,00 p.a.

Provided no benefit to which any member is entitled will be reduced hereby.

NEED TO RESTRUCTURE THE UNION:

Resolves that:

1. The union accept the desirability of promoting the issue of restructuring throughout its structures in order to avoid stagnation within the union.

2. Elections be held at Congress for the following posts:

a) National Office Bearers and General Secretariat

b) Two additional posts of National Officers which will attend meetings of the National Office Bearers Committee, namely:

National Organiser and National Education Secretary

3. Branches and Locals to monitor the holding

of shop steward elections to ensure by the next Congress that every factory has elected shop stewards since the formation of the union.

4. Regions to monitor the holding of local/branch elections in all branches and locals at that point in their programs of restructuring where urgent elections have been held to ensure revitalisation.

5. The education department promote programmes within the union to increase awareness of the pressures acting on shop stewards from employers or any other source which undermine their commitment to truly represent their members.

6. The union commit itself to rebuilding that commitment to national and regional campaigns of the union which characterises the aspirations of our members.

KNOW OUR CONSTITUTION

SACTWU's constitution is an important document. It sets out the rules of the union. The constitution has rules on who may join, how to elect shop stewards and officials, who makes decisions in the union, how the union money is controlled and what committees are set up.

This page has details on shop stewards elections, and is the first part of a series on our constitution.

SHOP STEWARDS

9.1 Method of Election

Shop Stewards for each factory shall be elected by the **members in good standing** who are employed at such factory. The election of Shop Stewards shall be subject to the following provisions:

9.1.1 only members in good standing employed at a factory shall be **eligible for election** as Shop Stewards for such factory;

9.1.2 the number and distribution of Shop Stewards shall be in accordance with the **nature of their employment** and the Local/ Branch Executive Committee having **jurisdiction** shall decide such numbers and distribution after **consultation** with the membership of each factory;

9.1.3 an **official** or a member of the Regional Executive Committee of the Union shall be present at the meeting convened in each factory for the purpose of electing a Shop Steward;

9.1.4 the **nomination** of members as Shop Stewards shall take place at a meeting of the members of the factory, who shall be given at least seven (7) days notice thereof. All nominations shall be duly **proposed** and **seconded** by such members;

9.1.5 written notice of such meeting may be posted on the notice board in the factory where an election is to be held and shall be posted on the notice board of the **relevant local office** of the Union at least three (3) days prior to such meeting, but no elections shall be **invalidated solely by the non-receipt** of any such notice by

any member;

9.1.6 voting for the election of Shop Stewards in each factory shall be by ballot only and in the event of only one (1) person duly nominated, he shall be declared to be duly elected;

9.1.7 Shop Stewards duly elected at each factory **respectively** shall **assume** and **hold office** for a period of two (2) years as from the date of their election and shall **exercise the rights** and discharge the duties **assigned** to them in this Constitution. They shall be **eligible for re-election**.

GLOSSARY

a member in good standing : a worker who is up-to-date with his or her union subs.

eligible for election : fit to be chosen

nature of their employment : kind of work done

jurisdiction: authority in that area

consultation: taking into consideration the feelings and interests of members

official: someone who works full-time for the trade union (eg. organiser)

nomination: putting forward of names

proposed: formally put forward for consideration

seconded: formally supported

relevant local office: the office of the union that serves that factory

invalidated solely by the non-receipt: made illegal on the basis of not having seen

respectively: for itself

assume: become (a shop steward)

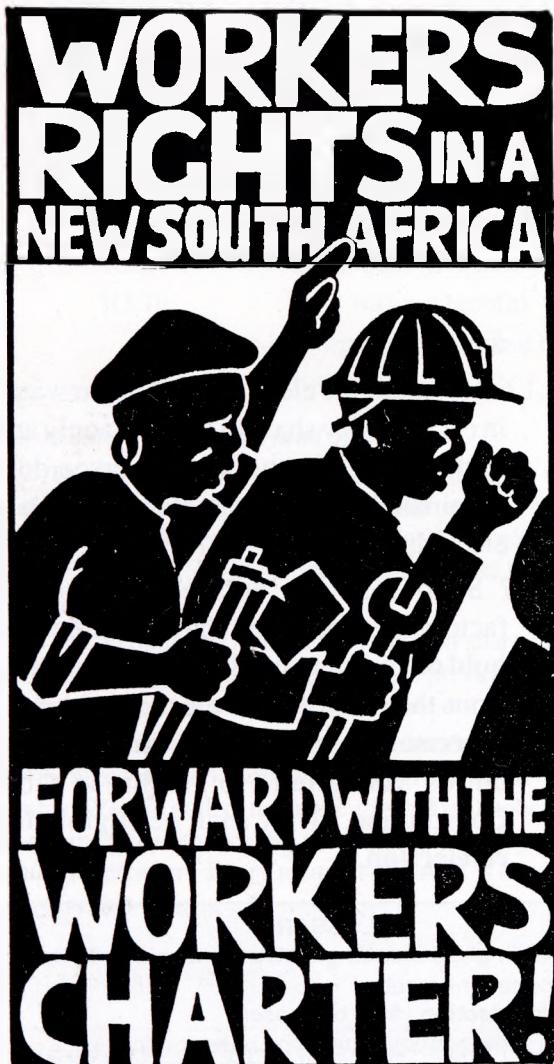
hold office: remain (a shop steward)

exercise the rights: do what they are entitled to

assigned: given

eligible for re-election: can be elected again

Below we print a section from a Cosatu report on the Workers Charter - for you to debate and discuss.



Workers Charter

Workers have been holding discussions about the Worker's Charter over the last few months. The right to join trade unions, to a living wage, to education, training and skills upgrading are demands that all workers would agree with.

These are issues that workers have been struggling for over the years. They are our demands to the bosses and State.

However there are some demands which are not so clear cut. These problem issues need more discussion.

Below are some questions which workers should discuss in their unions, locals and in their factories.

1. Should the right to strike be restricted?

Everybody agrees on the right to strike. But what should happen when a strike may lead to death or major damage of property? Should doctors and ambulance drivers be allowed to strike? What about soldiers and policemen or policewomen?

At the LRA/Living Wage Conference in May, delegates said:

- If a strike is going to lead to death, some procedures are needed. Two suggestions were debated: *One*, the bosses should be given a period of notice during which it is up to them to make arrangements. *Two*, workers who work in such jobs should not strike but should have an automatic right to independent arbitration.
- It is more difficult to define what jobs can be called "*essential services*" which, if there is a strike, will lead to major damage to property. Delegates felt that such jobs should be defined in negotiations between bosses and workers.

THERE IS STILL A LOT OF DEBATE ON THIS ISSUE.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Discuss:

- Should there be any restrictions on the right to strike in essential services?
- If so, who decides which workers are essential service workers?
- If so, who decides what restrictions will apply?
- For workers whose right to strike is restricted, what other procedures should apply?
- What should the Worker's Charter say about this?

Rachel van Wyk - Hextex Striker "MAMA SACTWU"

BORN: 1937 Now 52 years old

BIRTHPLACE: Beaufort West, a town two hours from Worcester.

EARLY HISTORY: My mother was a domestic worker, and my father died while I was still very young. We came to live in Worcester, where I then schooled. I completed Std 5 (7 years of basic schooling) and stayed home for about two years. My mother did not have money to buy things I needed at school. Thereafter I went to work at Hextex. It was my first and only place I have worked. I was 14 years old when I started to work, and was so short that I had to stand on a wooden crate (*kissie*) to reach the machine.

I became converted when I was 19 years old. A few years thereafter, when I was 22 years old, I married a textile worker from the blanket factory which used to be in Worcester. That factory has closed down many years ago.

I have two children, a boy **Frans** who is 29 years old and is a labourer on construction sites, and a girl **Luchelle** who is 14 years old, still at school and who wants to become a social worker. The worst thing that happened in my life was the death of my son, **Thys** in a motor cycle accident about 5 years before the strike.

A new right?



Some of the 26 000 SACTWU members who linked hands to form a massive human chain on 18th July 1990 in Main Road, Woodstock. One worker carries a placard with a demand for a right to "RICKET". Are we demanding a right to bone disease - or is it a new demand, as yet not understood by the world?

OTHER INTERESTS: I belong to the Bet Al Mission Of the Pentecostal Church, and am very active in church.

PRE-STRIKE POLITICAL VIEWS: I always went to political meetings in Worcester, with leaders such as **Alwyn, Bibi Dout** (who was banished from South Africa), **Henny Ferus** and **Baardman**.

I supported the student uprisings, but only wished that it happened earlier. If so then I'd have been able to go to school and today I would have been a nurse.

SERVICE AT HEXTEX: 35 years

JOB AT HEXTEX: Mender

FEELING ABOUT STRIKE: It had to happen. It showed us what our power really is.

NICEST MOMENT IN THE STRIKE: The day the comrades accepted the 50 cents on the Friday of our victory, when Ebrahim was carried shoulder high, that was the day I could not keep my tears of pleasure.

MOST HURTFUL MOMENT: When the buses left each day to fetch the scabs

FUNNIEST MOMENT: The day we discussed what we would do with scabs, and some of the comrades said we poison them, abduct them with a false bus ... and the way our comrade secretary wrote it all down on the overhead screen - I can really laugh now.



IMPORTANT SACTWU TELEPHONE NUMBERS

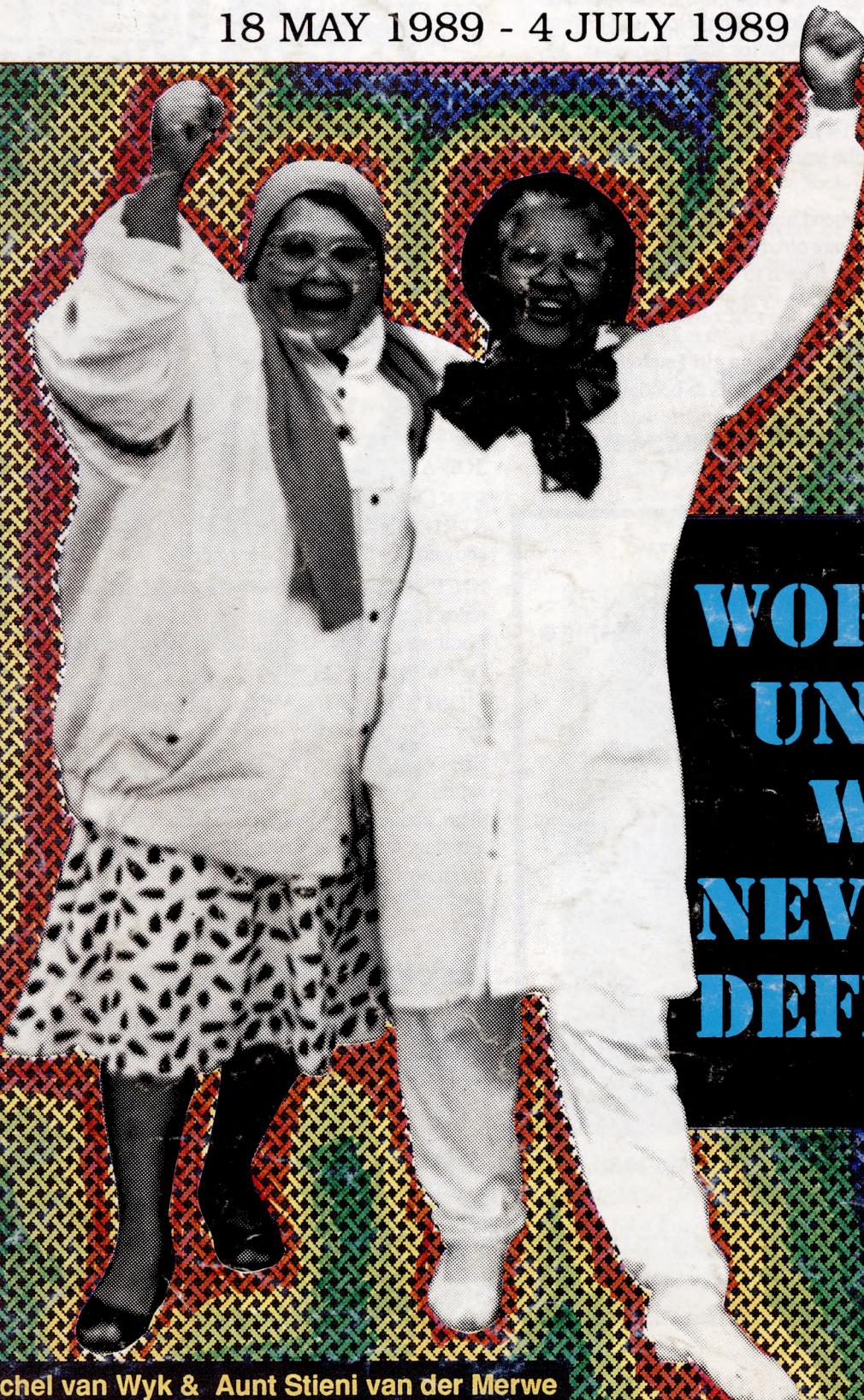
Western Cape (021) 474360/474570; **Atlantis** (0226) 71137; **Boland** (02211) 625887; **Durban** (031) 3011351; **Jacobs** (031) 486881; **Port Shepstone** (0391) 20215; **Isithebe** (0324) 61328; **Hammarsdale** (0325) 61665; **Ladysmith** (0361) 25891; **Newcastle** (03431) 22675; **East London** (0431) 434582; ; **Port Elizabeth** (041) 433918, **Uitenhage** (0422) 22973; **Transvaal Region** (011) 4022744/5, (011) 4023247/8; **Pretoria** (012) 216859; **Kimberley** (0531) 23413

HEX'TEX STRIKE

Longest ever strike in our industry

● 7 WEEKS LONG ●

18 MAY 1989 - 4 JULY 1989



WORKERS
UNITED
WILL
NEVER BE
DEFEATED

Aunt Rachel van Wyk & Aunt Stieni van der Merwe