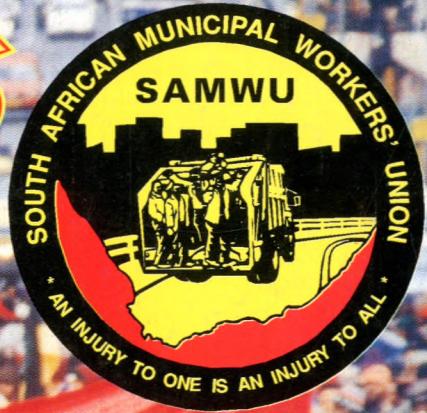


WORKER'S NEWS

SALHA 23: SAMWU



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15 000 comrades out on strike against privatisation!

SEPTEMBER 1997

THE MAGAZINE OF
THE SOUTH AFRICAN
MUNICIPAL WORKERS
UNION

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Message from the President

Heita Comrades!

I hope you enjoyed reading the first edition of ***Worker's News***.

I am now inviting suggestions from you as members as to how best we can improve the quality of this interesting magazine. We want all members of this organisation to be proud of this magazine. Secondly, I am calling all of you to assist in coming up with suggestions for a name for this magazine. Your suggestions will help the Central Executive Committee of your leaders a great deal when we try to finalise a name.

We also need to start discussing ways that we can use your magazine to build SAMWU. For instance, we could use the magazine to form discussion groups on political issues raised in the magazine.

Workers News is published by SAMWU Media, Private Bag X/9, Athlone, 7760, Cape Town, South Africa. Tel: 021-6971151, Fax: 021-6969175 E-mail: samwu@wn.apc.org. Contributors to this issue are Anna Weekes, Soraya Elloker, Alfred Sithole, Sanjay Tuckooriah, Sipho Mampe, Sandra van Niekerk, Roger Ronnie, Mcendisi Nontsele, Thobile Maso, Sam Mazabane, Andrew Nkoenyane, David Morake, Neil Nair, Thandeka Nhlapo, and Louis Thabethe.

Comrades, SAMWU is one of the signatories to the National Affirmative Action agreement. We must make sure that we get copies of this agreement and start implementing it in each and every one of our workplaces. All Local Authorities have signed this agreement and they are bound by it. We do not have to re-negotiate affirmative action in our councils - we only need to ensure the implementation. It is very important that every worker understands the Affirmative Action Agreement.

Lastly, Comrades, I must tell you that COSATU has declared war against corruption. Our sector has been identified as one of those in which corruption is rife. It is our duty to discuss the issue of corruption seriously. We must start to encourage each other in stopping this bad habit. This habit is practiced by a small minority within the union, but it is diminishing the good work done by the majority.

Comrades, enjoy reading your magazine. But do not forget the Anti-Privatisation campaign! We still need more signatures for this campaign. COSATU also needs more signatures for their petition for our Basic Conditions of Employment demands.

Please send **Worker's News** more information about what is going on in your Local Authority.

Amandla!
Viva SAMWU!

Petros Mashishi

PRESIDENT OF SAMWU

Comrades, this is your magazine! Please contact your Regional Media Co-ordinator if you have a story to report...



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Comrades say what's

Servicing of the members

The servicing of the members is a very important instrument that has to be sharpened every day if need be. In essence it is absolutely necessary to service the members, for the capacity building on policy of worker control of the organisation; building confidence, defending, developing and advancing the programmes of the organisation.

We need to also build organisational skills based not on reckless or appetite militancy, but on radical concrete co-ordinated militancy. The correct flow of information is the key on empowering of the members, so that they can be able to contribute in solving the problems and take an appropriate decisions on organisational issues.

Subscribed members

The name of the game is recruitment of the members, but it is very important that we must know that it does not end there, otherwise it will be like a fountain without water. Members have to be moved from notion that the union operates like an insurance, where members role is only to pay subscriptions and the union office will do everything.

The slogan should all the time be, **“FROM MOBILISATION TO THE ORGANISATION”** because we are a breathing and alive organisation, therefore growth and the development is the two sides of the same coin.

Organised members

Organised members are the members who are organisational, disciplined and educated, members who know and practice their role of defending and advancing the interests and the rights of the organisation, members who attend regularly the union and the community organisational meetings, an organised member is a member who is conscious of the importance of the unity and solidarity especially in campaigns.

A member who is constructively criticising if it is necessary and never allow to be manipulated by other member, worker leader or official. Then if we hope to advance towards socialism, the cornerstone is the revolutionary theory which has to be practically transformed, vitalised, concretised and tested in the workplace, otherwise it will be just a jungle of words in a desert of ideas.

Thobile Maso, Regional Education Officer, Eastern Cape

WINNING LETTER

Are SAMWU bank loans rooted in socialism?

Although I am new in SAMWU, I was lead to believe that it was based on Socialist and Communist ideals. As a SACP member these ideals are what most of my thinking and ideology is based on.

All Communist/Socialist affiliated organisations usually demonstrate against the vulgarity of capitalism.

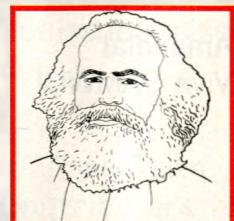
SAMWU has on several occasions fought capitalism and exposed these elements.

The thing that now confuses me is, that after fighting such ills how can a Union sudden turn it's back on the fight of the working class (Socialism) and sudden take a stand for Capitalism (the giving of loans). I've on many occasions ask several people why: their argument does not make sense.

The argument is that SAMWU is losing most of its members to other organisations, because of the loan issue therefore to maintain its membership, our Union bad to implement such a scheme.

If this argument carries any weight, my question is are these Comrades who joins SAMWU for loans Comrades or money-lenders? Did they join the Union for it's ideals and beliefs or for selfish reasons? When COSATU and SAMWU, take a stand against something for example, the fight against privatisation, are these the same money-lenders going to back the Union after their selfish need has been satisfied or must the Union once again compromise to buy their support.

In Karl Marx's famous teaching he highlighted the fact that in order to promote an ideal or fight against injustice it is not the size of your forces that's important, but the quality of your forces.



on their minds.....

Comrade Slovo used to also always say that when thought the SACP is not that big, but the strength that emanates from this organization is a force to be reckoned with.

All Communist based organizations have never sold their souls in order to let their organisation grow, they have never compromised on their values to increase membership, but instead added fertilisers to strengthen their organization, educated their followers and thus help empower Comrades.

Some might also argue that by giving loans you are empowering the worker, are you? Or are you simply putting our people in more debt? When monies are available for loans it's always easy to apply and qualify for such loans, but the every same person does not consider pay-back facilities.

By the time he pays off his loan and all the other deduction from his salary has this Comrade enough for him and his family's basic needs. Should this very same Comrade disobey his pledge to pay his loan and somewhere in the process is unfairly dismissed, is the Union going to assist this Comrade if his case or is the Union first going to ask him to pay his outstanding loan?

Are such case scenarios really something that a union has to deal with? I feel that somewhere in this process SAMWU has forgotten the reason of the establishment of such an organization and now wants to fit in with the rest trying to hold on

to a majority hold. What must also be taken into perspective is that SAMWU had become a majority hold organization without the fancy trimming.

Hope that the issue of loans will be re-visited, and the ideals on which this union has been built contemplated on.

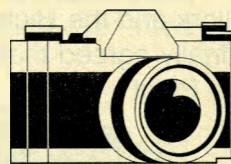
Yours for Socialism

SHARMILLA, KLERKSDORP

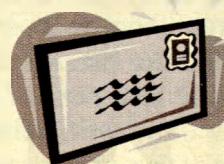
Editor's response: Sharmilla, you have won a book on globalisation from the Trade Union Research Project. Workers News would love to hear the views of members on issues like union investment. All comrades should ask themselves - Can capitalist institutions ever provide a solid base upon which to build a socialist struggle?

Ongeleukkige tydelike werkers

Ons rig die brief aan u oor die karige loon waarvoor ons werk. Ons is al in maand besig by die water werke te Oudtshoorn Munisipaliteit



If you would like your letter or photograph to appear in Worker's News send it to SAMWU Media, Private Bag X/9, Athlone, Cape Town, 7760. You could ask your shop steward to fax your letter to SAMWU Head Office. Don't forget to put your name and postal address on the back of your photo so that we can return it to you!



gestationeer to St. Sallier Straat. Ons werk vir R18.27 per dag en is baie ontevrede daaroor. Aangesien die werk skaars is moet ons maar werk. SAMWU's se laaste tydskrif sê dat dit nie reg is dat tydelike werkers die helfte wat permanente werkers kry nie." Ons het al gepraat oor die karige loon, maar daar is tot hierdie oomblik nog niks aan ons gese nie. Hulle sê net dat u met die hoof van die Waterwerke department in verbinding tree oor di situasie. Ons sal u samewerking hoogstens waardeur.

*By voorbaat dank,
VYF TYDELIKE ARBEIDERS.*

Editor's response - this letter is from five unhappy temporary workers at Oudtshoorn Municipality Waterworks who are only getting paid R18.27 per day! As we said in the last edition of Workers News, SAMWU finds it unacceptable that Councils hire part-time workers and pays them a fraction of the wage paid to permanent municipal employees. SAMWU Chairperson of the Oudtshoorn Local, Rodney Booyens, has made contact with these five comrades and is assisting them in their situation.

Comrades, your regional media co-ordinators have been out and about searching for news. This is what they found...

Free State -

Thandeka Nhlapo, Regional Secretary, reports on privatisation...

The Council of Bloemfontein TLC has decided to close the operations of its restaurant and delegate its future operations to a private company. Negotiations with the Council through our Bloemfontein Office have taken place without any major agreement being achieved. The Council was at the initial stage of tendering when the union intervened, and forced council to put matters on hold.

The Council had earlier decided that all existing personnel from the restaurant would be transferred to other sections within the municipality. However there have been some problems that have been picked up which workers raise as serious to their services. Amongst others there are problems about working hours, salary post levels and the kind of work expected.

The view of the union is that services that the municipality has been providing should continue because no thorough financial assessment whatsoever has been made. Also, the initial assessment did not involve the union. It is obvious that the Council is being ill advised to hand over certain services to private companies. Restructuring of Bloemfontein TLC should take place in an integrated manner and not on a piecemeal basis as with the proposed privatisation of the restaurant.

Eastern Cape -

Thobile Maso, reports on a municipality crisis solved by SAMWU...

The Aliwal North municipality failed to pay 450 municipal workers, without consulting SAMWU. When the penniless workers called SAMWU in to investigate, Council said that the municipality was bankrupt. Town Clerk Jan Scheepers told SAMWU that the council was R6 million in debt, because residents were not paying for services. SAMWU rejected this outright and threatened to stage a sit in if workers were not paid. We also asked that the municipal books be audited. After this threat, suddenly council paid the workers. Comrades, please call your regional SAMWU office immediately if council refuses to pay you. It is not good enough for councils to simply inform SAMWU that workers will not be paid because there is no money. It is up to Councillors to negotiate with their Provincial governments for emergency funding. SAMWU would like to know if this so-called bankruptcy ever causes the Councillors to be paid late?

Mpumalanga-

Louis Thabethe reports that victory against privatisation was recorded in Mpumalanga when SAMWU brought back the Mbelenhle Sewerage plant to the Highveld Ridge TLC. The Plant was privatised by the old eMbelenhle Town Council in 1991.

SAMWU's anti-privatisation campaign saved 12 workers who were employed by the old council. For six and a half years, these workers had no Pension Scheme or Medical Aid. The workers had no job security under this private contractor who was only interested in Profit.

After a series of meetings convened by SAMWU with ANC Councillors and the Highveld Ridge TLC, it was finally agreed that the Sewerage Plant should

become the property of the Highveld Ridge TLC from the 1st of July 1997. This went off smoothly, to the joy of many SAMWU comrades.

Northern Province-

Alfred Sithole would like to inform all SAMWU parents in the Region that they are now entitled to 20 days per year paid childcare leave. This is in addition to your normal leave days! Congratulations to Northern Province on securing this revolutionary benefit for members! Let's see other regions following in these footsteps!

Gauteng-

Andrew Nkoenyane reports on the Regional Congress...

The Gauteng Region held its first Regional Congress over the weekend of 12-13 July 1997. The Congress was addressed by guests from the province's Tripartite Alliance who all addressed the delegates about the country's economic policy GEAR. The guests were comrades Dan Mohapi (COSATU secretary), Jessie Duarte (MEC for Safety and Security), and Charlie Lewis of the S.A. Communist Party. All comrades including SAMWU's Assistant General Secretary, Comrade Nontsele, emphasised the importance of building a strong alliance.

The unity which prevailed through the first day was cemented on the last day when nomination for Regional Office Bearers closed in the morning. All the office bearers were elected unopposed which made the work of Cde Nontsele much easier. The following people were elected:

Chairperson - Freddie Khoza
Comrade Khoza was elected as vice chairperson at the Special Regional Congress to fill the vacancy left by Comrade C.C. McKay. He is working at Greater Pretoria Metropolitan Council's Treasury Department and is presently studying towards a Human Resources Diploma.

Regional Secretary- Comrade Victor Mhlongo
Was nominated by all branches to continue in his position of Regional Secretary. Congratulations to all the comrades!

Vice-chairperson - Comrade Meisie Mkhabela
The first female comrade to be elected as a Regional Office Bearer in Gauteng. Cde Mkhabela is a shopsteward at Greater Johannesburg T.M.C. She is attached to the Southern Metropolitan Local Council at the cleansing section.

Regional Treasurer- Comrade Reginald Mabogoane
Chairperson of the Benoni shopstewards committee, and East Rand Branch Treasurer. Cde Reginald is working at Greater Benoni Transitional Local Council as Sport, Art and Culture Development Officer. He is studying towards Bachelor of Administration degree, which he aims to complete soon.

KwaZulu/Natal -

Sanjay Tuckooriah reports that as business holds the 40 hour week back from implementation, the concept has already been alive and well in Durban for over three years.

Part of the wage agreement with the old Durban City Council in 1990/91 allowed for the reduction in the working week from 45 to 40 hours. Initially this agreement was only implemented for office and administration workers. But In 1993, SAMWU initiated negotiations with the Physical Environment Service Unit of the old Durban City Council. The result was a reduction of the working week to 40 hours for blue collar workers too. Subsequently, the Culture and Recreation Service Unit and all other service units, with the

North West-
Sam Mazabane reports on privatisation of the vehicle testing ground in Stilfontein...
The Greater Stilfontein Town Council recently announced the privatisation of a testing ground due to losses encountered by the department.
Due to the intervention of SAMWU comrades, the Council reversed the matter on the 21st July 1997 and a task team was established by the EXCO and the Unions to investigate the proposed privatisation.

exception of Durban Electricity followed suit. Negotiations are currently underway with Durban Electricity for a 40 hour week.

In the South Local Council of the Durban Metro all workers are on a 40 hour week. This is significant because it includes Security, Fire and Traffic. This is the first sub-structure in the Metro area to implement the 40 hour week. This came into effect from November 1st, 1997. Negotiations with the Inner West are currently underway.

On another issue, discussions have taken place at the South Local Council with the aim of providing housing for our members. Discussions are progressing very well. Comrades should watch this space for further details...

Services in danger!

Comrades, we are facing the privatisation of services that are essential to the lives of our communities. We must educate ourselves about the tricks Councils are using to contract out our services. Knowledge is power - keep the campaign alive!

Electricity

Many comrades think that Eskom is a private company. One reason for this is that in many ways it has acted like one since it was commercialised. It is owned by its shareholders, just like a private company. And it is divided up into different business units, which are meant to make a profit, just like a private company.

At the moment the government owns 100% of the shares, but this could easily change in the future. And it is not the government who is in control of the Eskom, but the management.

Even if Eskom acts like a private company it has done a lot over the last few years to extend electricity into areas which have not had it in the past. Now the government wants to make Eskom pay taxes and dividends on its shares. In this way the government is trying to make Eskom act even more like a private company, and it also means that Eskom will have less money for its electrification drive, and will not be able to extend electricity to all who need it.

Since last year Eskom, the government and NUM and NUMSA have been involved in discussions about more restructuring of Eskom. This restructuring also affects SAMWU members because many members are involved in electricity distribution at a municipal level.

The government set up an Electricity Restructuring Inter-departmental Committee (ERIC) to investigate different options for restructuring the electricity distribution industry. Some of the recommendations of ERIC are:

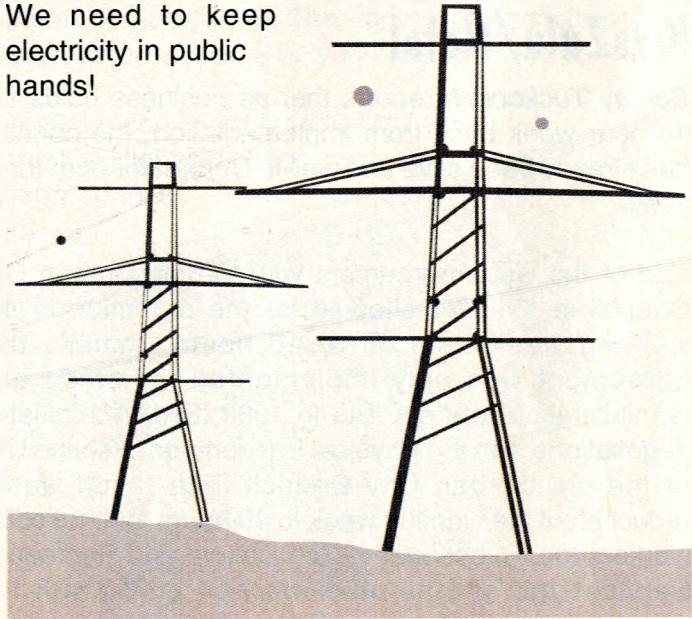
- the setting up of Regional Electricity Distributors (REDs) which must be financially viable and semi-independent. The exact number of REDs is still to be decided.
- the introduction of tariffs which reflect costs, an electrification levy and a capped tax. These will be introduced so that the costs of electricity can be met, but still allow municipalities to use the surplus from electricity sales for other municipal services.

The bottom line of the ERIC Report is that the distribution of electricity should be restructured in a way which will promote the future privatisation of the service. This is clearly stated in the report.

Comrades, right now SAMWU is busy finalising its position on the restructuring of the electricity distribution industry. This position will be based on our vision that electricity along with other basic services, must remain in the public sector. Some of the recommendations which are currently being discussed in Regions are:

- That the electricity distribution industry should be restructured so that decentralised bodies, which are not entirely independent but fall under a national body, are responsible for delivering electricity.
- That proper criteria needs to be developed to decide how many of these bodies should be established.
- Municipal representatives should be in the majority in these new bodies, which should be established as statutory bodies and not as companies. Electricity workers need to ensure that they are part of debates.

We need to keep electricity in public hands!



Waste removal

More and more municipalities want to contract out waste removal. They want to do this particularly in the areas which fell under the old black local authorities. Most often they want to contract out the services to local black entrepreneurs who live in the area, and who would be supported by a private sector company like Billy Hattingh and Associates. These companies, as well as banks like First National Bank, are encouraging them to do this.

In **Newcastle (KwaZulu-Natal)** the municipality contracted First National Bank (FNB) to investigate different options for contracting out the services. At first FNB was only asked to investigate contracting out the services for one part of Newcastle - the part where an efficient, full service is already being provided. Then the municipality said that they must investigate contracting out the service in all areas.

Equal services?

But FNB still came up with a different plan for the two areas. For Newcastle West they came up with a plan that meant the waste removal would be done in the old way - with different units responsible for different kinds of cleaning, and refuse removal being done with trucks.

For Newcastle East they have come up with a plan for entrepreneurs who will enter into a contract with the municipality for clearing rubbish from a specific area. They will be paid by the municipality to do this, and from this money they must pay their own salary, and the wages of any workers they employ to help them. The problem with this is that these workers will be paid very little, and will have no benefits or job security.

Also, these two different plans are effectively based on racial lines - one plan is for the areas covered by the old white local authorities, and one plan for the area covered by the old black local authorities! There is no attempt to integrate the services in the two areas!



Management buy-outs

FNB is proposing that the existing management of the cleansing department leave the public sector, takes out a loan and set up a private company that will take over responsibility for the cleansing service. This is called a management buy-out, and has happened in other countries.

The experience for workers in other countries of management buy-outs has been very bad. The Department becomes a private company, separate

from the municipality. In Britain where this has happened, the experience has been that another private sector company often buys out the company at a later stage.

In this way, a few private sector companies grow very large and begin to dominate cleansing services in municipalities across the country.

Another problem with a management buy-out is that the same managers and workers are operating the service, and they are paid a set amount to do this. For the company to survive outside of the municipality, it has to operate cheaply and still make a profit. If it doesn't make a profit, then it will collapse and another private company will take over. And if it doesn't operate cheaply enough then it will lose the contract when the contract is put out to bid again. International experience has shown that because of the pressure of making a profit:

- workers often suffer wage freezes or wage cuts, as management tries to cut back costs so that they can operate profitably
- communities experience a drop in services because management is trying to make a profit.

Employees Shareholders Trust

This is another option involving the private sector that sounds good for workers. It means that workers get shares in the company when it is set up.

Workers owning shares of the company they work in? This sounds like a good idea. But there are serious problems with an Employee Shareholders Trust. Between all the workers they will own too few shares to be able to extend any control over the company. At most they will only own 20%. Real control will rest with the management - who are the major shareholders.

Another problem is that workers might find themselves under pressure to take wage freezes so that the company can be profitable. Management will tell workers that it is in their interest to do this, because if the company is profitable then their shares will be more valuable. But since management is the major shareholder, they are the ones that benefit the most in the end!

Workers put forward alternatives

SAMWU comrades in Newcastle have many suggestions to run the cleansing department more efficiently. Comrades have suggested that the municipality buys another truck and hires another team so that all the work can be done without the workers having to work long hours of overtime. But these suggestions are not taken seriously by council. This is probably because councils have already made up their minds to contract out the services. It is up to all of us as SAMWU members to fight for our jobs and for better services for our communities. Let's all work hard at keeping up our campaign for services based on needs, not profits!



SAMWU Pilot Projects

At a recent National Labour Relations Forum meeting, SAMWU, IMATU and SALGA agreed that the delivery of services by local government is preferred, and must be prioritised.

This is important support for SAMWU's position of public sector delivery of services, and of the public sector pilot projects. The National Labour Relations Forum has also agreed to set up a process to investigate "additional sources of revenue for Local Government as well as alternatives to public/private partnerships to restructure the provision of municipal services."

This investigation will be done on the basis of the proposal that SAMWU has put together.

Cape Town: SAMWU made a presentation to the Cape Town municipal task team investigating different options for service delivery in the Ikapa area. But at a later meeting, the task team talked about appointing a consultant to investigate PPP's! SAMWU walked out of the meeting. We are waiting for Council's response.

Nelspruit: SAMWU has been meeting with community organisations to mobilise support for the public sector pilot projects. After a meeting between SAMWU,

COSATU and the SACP, a press statement was released calling on the Nelspruit councillors and TLC CEO to stop contracting out.

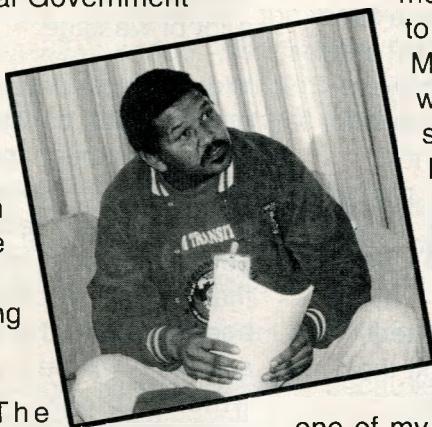
SAMWU slammed the privatisation of basic services. "South Africa can't allow a situation where its water is going to be in the hands of the multinationals - where the priority is profit, resulting in high price of water and deterioration of services and health," Pogisho Pasha, Regional Secretary told journalists.

SAMWU slammed organisations bidding for Nelspruit's water in the name of black empowerment. "Any empowerment aimed at creating an elite at the expense of the majority is totally capitalist. SAMWU calls on the people of Nelspruit to reject proposals that will enslave our children for decades." An injury to one is an injury to all - we stand behind our Nelspruit comrades!

Are municipalities low on cash?

Worker Leader Henry Venter asked Valli Moosa, Minister of Provincial Affairs and Constitutional Development, whether there is a funding crisis in Local Government....

SAMWU: What are the current sources of Local Government funding? The Constitution states that Local Government should have an equitable share of revenue - how is this being implemented?



Minister: The system is still in the process of development. This year Central Government allocated monies to each of the nine provinces for them to use in their own budgets.

Last year, an amount in the national budget was divided between the nine provinces according to need. Next year's budget will change the system again. Revenue collected by national government will be divided into three parts - for the national budget, provincial budgets and then for Local Government.

The Financial and Fiscal Commission will decide what is the equitable share for Local Government. Central Government will transfer this money to provincial government who will pass it on to Local Government. We also hope to introduce the multi-term budgeting framework. This simply means that a budget for one financial year will include estimates for three years. This makes planning easier.

SAMWU: Why can't more money be made available to Local Government? Millions of people are without the very basic services - shouldn't the Department of Constitutional Development fight for a bigger share of the budget?

Minister: I take it as one of my responsibilities to make a case for Local Government funding. But other ministers have to make a case for their areas of responsibility. So at the end of the day, cabinet has to make certain tradeoffs.

My own view is that the money that has been allocated to Local Government is definitely not sufficient. This year I asked for a commitment from provincial governments that they would not reduce the amount from last year's budget.

SAMWU: Some city councils are generating a lot of revenue, but the rural district councils are not generating any. In Citrusdal for example, there are very rich farmers but the municipality can't cope to pay a living wage. SAMWU is of the

view that there should be a levy system where the bigger, rich cities are levied to pay for the rural and poor.

Minister: The Metropolitan and the district systems of government were aimed at moving towards a situation where these councils will redistribute resources. It's for this reason that district councils are responsible for developing the rural areas. We are presently involved in drafting a new White Paper to see how this system can be improved.

SAMWU: What role does the Fiscal and Finance Commission play in determining the funds to be allocated to Local Government?



Minister: This is an independent body appointed by all three levels of government. This body must make recommendations as to what share of the money collected by Central Government should go to provinces. Parliament takes these recommendations seriously. It makes it easier for us if we can tell provinces that we have based their allocations on the findings of the Fiscal and Finance Commission. It removes the politics.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT FUNDING CRISIS

SAMWU: Why are there no plans for the Finance and Fiscal Commission to meet with other stakeholders in Local Government such as SAMWU?

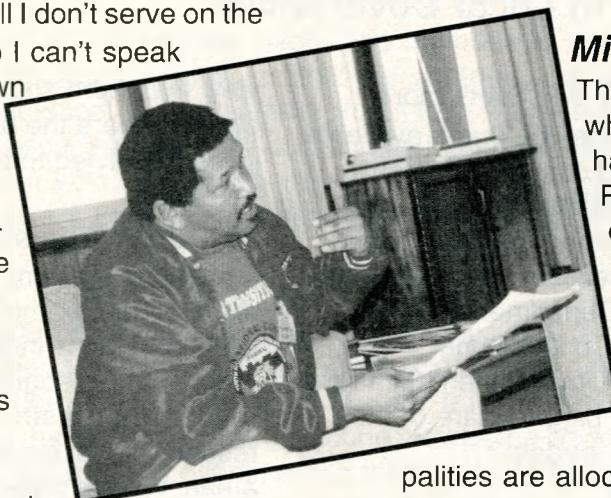
Minister: Well I don't serve on the commission so I can't speak for it, but my own view is that it is important for the commission to interact with all role players.

SAMWU:
R50 million has been made available for public-private partnerships. (PPP's) Could this not have been used more fruitfully to explore a number of options, such as SAMWU's pilot projects? In some areas consultants are taken in to draw up plans, but we already have a department for Town Planning. Isn't this a waste?

Minister: This money has been made available for PPP's because this is an area that needs to be explored. Quite clearly municipalities do not have sufficient resources to make an investment at this point in time. Therefore there is a need to attract investment from the private sector. We have also invited SAMWU to submit pilot projects because we have taken on board the view from SAMWU that the pilot project approach is important. We are monitoring the pilot projects from a national level to avoid the risk of municipalities entering into contracts that will not be in their best interests. This experiment of pilot projects will reveal what sort of regulations we need.

SAMWU: The Cape Town central substructure wants to spend their

one million rand grant on options other than PPP's, yet the Provincial Administration of the Western Cape has said that this money may only be used for PPP's. What is the real story here?



palities are allocated money from that fund and then use it for something else.

SAMWU: What we aim as SAMWU is to restructure the public sector so that they can deliver. In the past we rendered a good service to the white Local Authorities - what was wrong was that there was no infrastructure or funding in BLA's. We know that three million rand has been allocated to the Nelspruit TLC to cover the costs of putting out a tender. This is a one sided approach! Right through the country there is a crisis in Local Government, so surely you should look at cheaper options?

Minister: Quite clearly if a municipality goes about it's work without proper consultation, that work will not succeed and therefore that money will be wasted. We have made it very clear that all the

stakeholders, particularly trade unions must be consulted. We will not always agree on everything but that does not mean we should not go through the proper consultation process.

We have embarked upon Project Viability so that municipalities can improve their financial management because there appears to be a lot of wastage.

We want municipalities to have proper credit control so that they can collect those monies which are possible to be collected. We must not exclude the restructuring of the public service to improve delivery - that is quite important. There has been cases in other countries where a service will be put out on tender which allows the relevant department to tender. If you say to a department - "here is an outside company that can provide the service at 75% of the cost," then that department will have to look at ways of reducing their costs.

Ordinary people don't want services to be provided by municipalities if it costs more. At the end of the day you need to bring the community into this debate also. I don't know exactly what the restructuring of the public service means in practical terms, but if things remain as they are we are not going to expand our services.

SAMWU: You mention that the department can also tender for a job. As labour we are very suspicious of that. By doing this, you give the department the chance



to increase their rates. What people don't appreciate is that the ordinary workers know how to do the job best. It is easy to say that Heads of departments know everything, but it is not true. This is why SAMWU is asking for a budget for pilot projects.

Minister: I have agreed in principle that SAMWU should be able to have a budget for that.

SAMWU: We've made proposals that a solidarity fund should be introduced. This would be a fund that all Local Authorities contribute to - the money would be spent where it was needed. We also feel that the taxing powers of Local Government should be reviewed. At SAMWU, we feel that these mechanisms would help end the funding crisis.

Minister: Some of the proposals that SAMWU is making will go to the White Paper. The others will be considered as part of Project Viability.

SAMWU: How successful is Project Viability?

Minister: It has been very successful because we have been able to get quite accurate information about the state of affairs in Local Government finances. This helps us to see when a municipality is in danger of running out of funding. Before it reaches a stage of collapse, we will get the warning signals and intervene.

SAMWU: But in the Northern Cape region, lack of funds have caused some Local Authorities, like Delpoortshoop and Colesburg to shut down. How stable is local government?

Minister: A Local Authority can only be stable if it can collect revenue in its own area. Even if it needs grants, there must be some capacity to collect money and create a revenue base. Many Local Authorities don't have that and that is why we are developing new systems.

SAMWU: We think that the Masakhane campaign has few actual roots in communities. Municipal workers took to the streets on May Day in some areas to deliver the message of Masakhane, yet we have not been involved by government.

Minister: This campaign is not run by the national level - each municipality must take responsibility. Government doesn't own the campaign. This is a campaign of the people and everybody must play an equal role. If it is a government campaign I am quite convinced that it will fail. But we will continue to make funds available to promote the idea.

SAMWU: As SAMWU we re-affirm our position against privatisation.

That's what the Minister says about the funding crisis. But what is happening on the ground?

Northern Cape municipalities shut down!

Regional Secretary Sipho Mampe reports...

Local Authorities in the Northern Cape Region are near collapse as they face a deep financial crisis. A case in point is Ritchie and Delpoortshoop which ground to a halt because the Local Authorities concerned did not have the finances to meet their running costs. This resulted in workers not receiving their salaries for April and May.

Subsequent to this, workers refused to do their work and demanded guarantees to their future and job security in the Local Authorities. Workers asked continually why they must work when they are not sure whether they will be paid.

During this period, the Union made representation to the Minister of Local Government and Housing to highlight the plight of these workers. The Ministry insisted that any financial assistance was dependant on Municipalities co-operating with his Project Viability. This we viewed as unfair and tantamount to holding our underpaid, exploited members ransom because of mismanagement in the apartheid era.

We find it opportunistic that Councillors at Ritchie Municipality decided to approach this impasse by implementing the "no work, no pay" policy for the period. Their motive in this regard is clearly to accumulate funds to pay their allowances. To them, the fact that workers did not receive a salary for two months is a non-issue!

Municipalities that currently have difficulties in paying the monthly wages of their workers are Ritchie, Delpoortshoop, Calvinia, Colesburg, Richmond, Port Nolloth and Nieupoort. Some of these Local Authorities use their financial difficulties as a motivation to privatise services. Most local authorities appear to be in serious financial debt.

Comrades, SAMWU arranged for some interim relief for the unpaid workers. Please let us know if there is a funding crisis in your municipality. We will do our best to get to the root of the problem.

Comrades, it seems to many of us lately that the government is influencing ANC Policy. This should not be - the ANC as the ruling party should be influencing government policy! SAMWU President, Comrade Petros Mashishi decided to tackle Labour Minister Tito Mboweni, who is also Head of the ANC Policy Unit, on this issue. Andrew Nkoenyane was there to record the proceedings....

Does the ANC support privatisation?

SAMWU: To what extent is government policy influenced by the ANC Policy Unit?

ANC: The issue is very complicated. Before the 1994 elections there was a lot of capacity within the ANC around policy development. Policies were developed in anticipation of the ANC getting to Government but in government, the capacity was much broader. We had to ensure that legislation is passed to effect the ANC policies from our *Ready to Govern* document. The ANC policy must lead the Government not the Government leading the ANC.

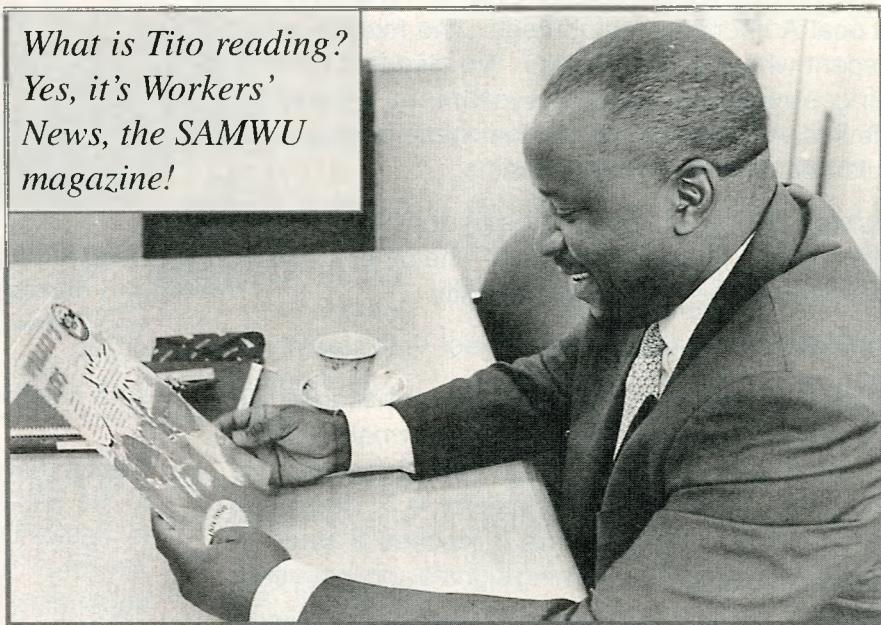
SAMWU: Is the Policy Unit being restructured?

ANC: The Policy Unit was established to develop ANC Policy that should guide government policy. There are moves to establish a Policy Board consisting of Alliance structures to look at our Policy.

SAMWU: What structures are there in the ANC to co-ordinate policy formulation in the area of Local Government? What role can other Alliance partners play in these structures?

ANC: Initially there were two comrades at national level in Shell House responsible for local government co-ordination. There is a policy unit in the National Executive Committee. There is a

*What is Tito reading?
Yes, it's Workers'
News, the SAMWU
magazine!*



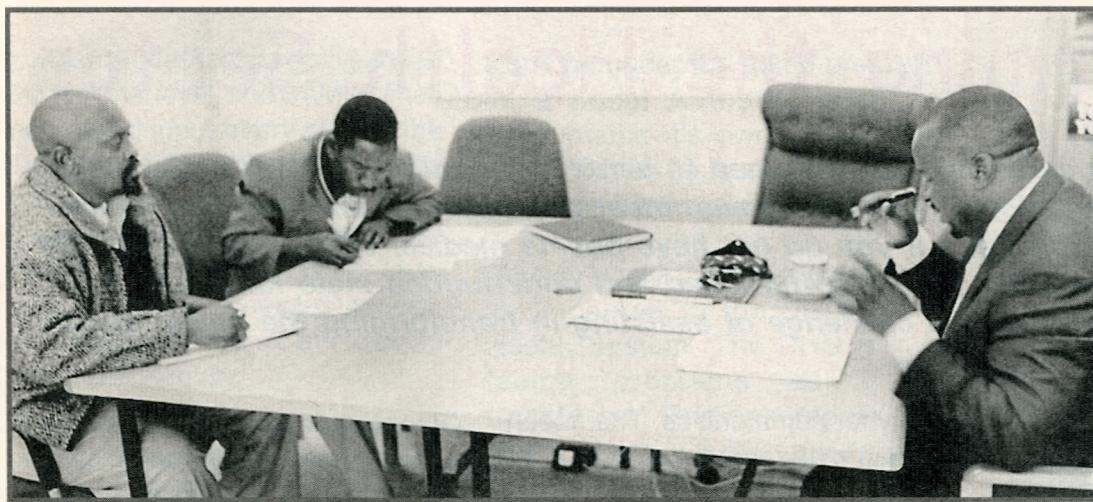
similar unit in each Provincial Executive Committee. These units are responsible for policy formulation. The proposals from the National Consultative Forum will be submitted to the National Executive Committee where they become ANC policy. The involvement of COSATU and SANCO needs to be improved. It is very important that a meeting with SAMWU and the ANC policy unit is held to help us become sensitive to each other.

SAMWU: Is there any ANC policy that guides the way in which ANC councillors go about their work?

ANC: If policy is developed by the Policy Unit and accepted by the National Working Committee, it is sent to the Provincial Executive

Committee to be implemented by the Local Government Structures. The ANC whips should ensure that ANC policy is implemented. The ANC takes responsibility of training its Councillors. Government also, through the Department of Constitutional Development, has the responsibility to train Councillors.

SAMWU: The government tells us that we need privatisation because there is a lack of funding in local government. Has the ANC Policy Unit investigated the funding crisis? Our members would like to know what proposals the ANC has come up with to solve this crisis. For example, has the ANC investigated the effectiveness of SAMWU's pilot project proposals?



SAMWU President Petros Mashishi and Gauteng Media Co-ordinator Andrew Nkoenyane interview Minister Tito Mboweni....

ANC: I have not seen the SAMWU proposal, but I will get it from Comrade Valli Moosa. The private sector has an important role to play and the governing structure must ensure control of the community service - the political control must remain in the hands of the state. I have no problem as long as the service is delivered.

It is very good that SAMWU has come up with proposals on this matter. You need to sensitize yourselves around some very important issues and I promise to look at your proposals and ensure that they are discussed by the relevant policy unit of the ANC to guide our policy. The key issue is that the movement must lead.

SAMWU: To improve service delivery in Local Government, the involvement of the private sector is being promoted strongly. The reasons given are that Local Government is inefficient and does not have the capacity to deliver services. What is the ANC's position?

ANC: The ANC's position is found in our *Ready to Govern* document. The state shall establish Parastatal partnerships, for instance Toll Roads in the Transport Department.

A developmental state such as South Africa needs to have some control over the private sector to achieve developmental objectives. This government leverage can improve service delivery.

SAMWU: What is the position of the ANC around Mega Cities? (Mega Cities refer to a situation where metropolitan areas are expanded to include rural areas into their jurisdiction. Mega Cities also promote a single level form of metropolitan government).

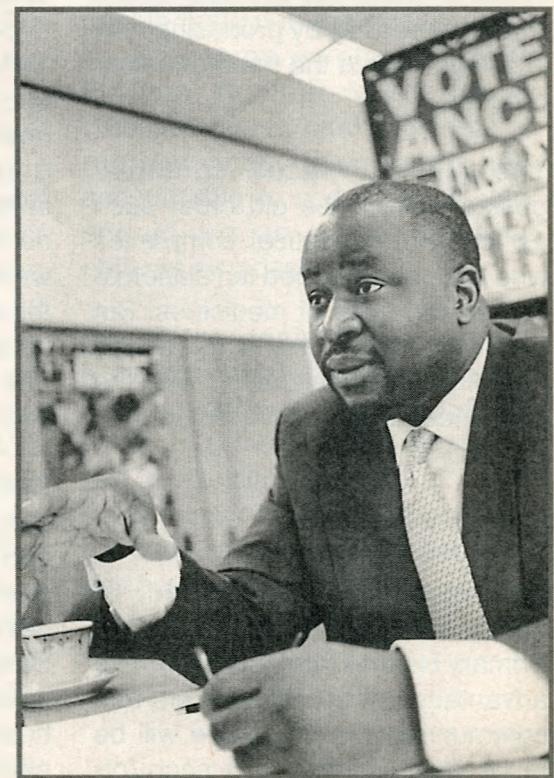
ANC: This matter hasn't been discussed by the National Working Committee. If the Gauteng Province has discussed it they will have to bring the issue forward for discussion as it will affect the ANC nationally.

SAMWU: CCB structures within Local Government are still existing in various departments especially in the major cities. What are you doing about this problem?

ANC: There was a general approach that we expect the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to deal with the matter. On the other hand,

Councillors and Premiers must deal with individuals in their areas. It is difficult at the National level to identify individuals but we accept that it might exist.

Comrades what do you think? Does the ANC have a clear position on privatisation or did Cde Tito dodge the real issues? Workers News would love to hear your point of view...



Transforming the Health Sector

South African health services were designed to serve the ideology of racial oppression and economic exploitation. The ANC government has inherited an inefficient health system based on inequalities - if you do not have private medical cover you will not get the health care you need from overburdened and underfunded state hospitals. As municipal workers, we face the challenge of assisting in transforming the health sector.

Recognising the need for total transformation of the health sector in South Africa, in 1994 the ANC began developing an overall National Health Plan based on the Primary Health Care approach. The National Health Plan also links with the other sectors of the RDP as health views health as a vital part of the socio-economic development plan of South Africa.

Many policy documents and draft bills have been published since 1994. These all led to the Ministry of Health publishing the White Paper for the transformation of the health system in South Africa last year. The Ministry of Health has done a good job on this White Paper, especially by proposing new legislation to aid the transformation process.

The Ministry faces continual obstacles from the old order such as the pharmaceutical companies who opposed planned legislation to reduce the price of medicines. But the White Paper introduces various new strategies designed to meet the basic needs of all our people.

The White Paper is calling for these reforms

Decentralised Management of health care with emphasis on the Primary Health Care approach. The advantages of this for workers and communities are that there will be more local control and account-

ability for communities. The decentralised management approach will ensure that communities get health services specific to their needs.

The White Paper also proposes an RDP focus - the health of all South Africans must reflect the wealth of the country. The health status of individuals and communities are affected by poverty, and gains in health will only be possible if the RDP's attack on poverty succeeds and economic development occurs.

Problems in the White Paper

But SAMWU has also found areas in the White Paper that workers should be concerned about. SAMWU is of the view that the public and private health sector need to be integrated somehow in order to redress the massive imbalance in health care. There is no concrete proposal to do away with the situation we have where there are overstretched government hospitals who cannot treat everyone, and other private providers only serving the rich.

Comrades may have read about Minister Zuma's proposed community service for medical students - this has been set at one year and is still under discussion in Parliament. If passed it could help rural and understaffed clinics and hospitals greatly. Proposals of this nature need to be supported.

Other legislation currently aimed at helping more people get access to health care is the National Health Bill, which is now in its ninth draft. This Bill provides the legal framework for the Department of Health to execute its functions.

Some important aspects of the National Health Bill

- ◆ The rights of communities to have regular access to health care services and health care education and the responsibility of nurses and doctors to provide such care and information
- ◆ Training of health providers - the Bill states that managers should be re-trained urgently, but SAMWU says that all health workers should have equal access to training
- ◆ The integration of private and public health establishments - the Bill states that private health care providers may not be compelled to participate in any programme contemplated by the National Health Authority. SAMWU opposes this clause - we want a partnership between private and public health providers to be legislated. This will avoid a situation where critically ill people are turned away from a private hospital just because they do not have money. We feel that the private health establishments cannot be relied upon to follow a duty of care to communities as they are driven by profit, so this duty of care must be legislated.

So these processes are going ahead on a national level, and SAMWU has been giving input every step of the way. But South Africa also needs new policies for developing an efficient district health system on the ground. Restructuring district level health services is a complex process, but it must be done if we are to avoid permanent inequity.

Primary Health Care

Part of transforming the health sector is recognising that Primary Health Care is extremely important. The PHC approach emphasises full community participation in the planning, provision control and monitoring of services. PHC covers all aspects of community health. For example, the PHC approach recognises that housing, water, sanitation, education, employment, income, the environment and individual lifestyle should all be looked at when examining community health problems. A problem in any one of these areas could lead to a health problem for the whole community. PHC should ensure decentralisation of decision making, local accountability, quality and appropriate health care, efficiency and effectiveness of service provision.

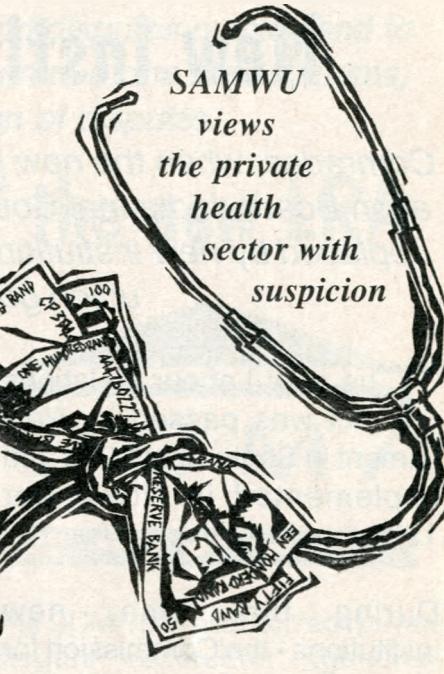
PHC services can be provided in three ways - either by Provincial Administrations, Local Authorities, or Statutory District Health Authorities which could cover a number of communities. SAMWU support the Local Authority option as it is the most effective and accountable. A danger of the Statutory District Health Authorities becoming providers comes in where the SDHA's do not have the capacity and infrastructure to provide comprehensive PHC services. Because the SDHA's

won't be under the same pressure as a Local Authority is to be accountable it's own community, SAMWU feels there are certain to be problems if this option is chosen.

Primary Health Care services are implemented by the District Health System. The DHS is facing problems as it transforms. Regions report that there are different conditions of service and salary levels between staff in the same district, which has led to dissatisfaction amongst workers. There seems to be a lack of co-ordination in appointment of the District Managers. For example, only the Greater Johannesburg area Interim Management District Manager was appointed by consensus.

Other problems faced by workers are that in some regions, senior posts have been frozen, which makes it difficult for services to be effectively delivered. The posts have supposedly been frozen because of a lack of funding but SAMWU is rejecting this and calling for the unfreezing of posts as soon as possible.

In some areas, like the Northern Cape, things are even worse. District boundaries do not exist in some places and there seems to be no move at all towards actually establishing the system at all. In the Eastern Cape, in the former Transkei, the DHS planning and implementation is chaotic and confusion exists. For example, the outpatients departments are closed at hospitals which has led to a huge increase in patients coming to the community clinic, yet there have been no new staff appointed at the clinic to help with the overload. But the transformation is progress-



ing nevertheless. In some regions, provincial health administrations have committed themselves to restructuring being agreed to in the Bargaining Council. Transformation Committees have been established with all role players.

Workers can drive transformation

One way for comrades to drive transformation in the health sector is to become involved in RDP Forums. Another way is for all SAMWU health care providers to realise that they are now accountable to communities, and should be as caring towards patients as possible.

But at the same time, we must remember that the government's macro-economic policy, GEAR, which is actually contradicting the ANC's election promises of health transformation. GEAR proposes to cut back on public sector services, and promotes privatisation.

Our fight for health transformation must include our fight against GEAR!

New institutions for new procedures

Comrades, when the new LRA became law, many old institutions fell away. The Conciliation Board, Industrial Court and Labour Appeal Court no longer exist. They have been replaced by new institutions to suit the new labour laws. Read on to find out where the union goes when there are problems to be settled...

The new Labour Relations Act was passed by Parliament in September 1995 and implemented in November 1996.

During that time, new institutions - the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA), the Essential Services Committee, the Labour Court and the Labour Appeal Court - were established to deal with new procedures under the Act.

These institutions are vital to the success of the new Act, as they will be responsible for settling most labour disputes.

An institution in transformation!

The long established INDUSTRIAL COUNCIL system has been revised and expanded. Instead of industrial councils there will now be bargaining councils.

All existing industrial councils will be deemed to be bargaining councils under the new Act. The main changes are:

- ◆ councils can now consist of parties drawn from the private and public sectors;
- ◆ councils will be responsible for settling most disputes in their industries
- ◆ councils will have to accommodate small and medium enterprises in their constitutions
- ◆ where council agreements have been extended to non-parties, councils are required to set up independent bodies to consider applications by employers for exemptions
- ◆ councils will determine the matters to be bargained at sectoral and at workplace level

SAMWU wins Centralised Bargaining - Forward to the National Bargaining Council!

In our last issue, we asked the question - What has become of centralised bargaining ?

At special meeting of the National Labour Relations Forum for Local Government (NLRF) held on 18 July 1997, unions and employers reached an agreement on the Constitution for the South African Local Government Bargaining Council. This Constitution, amongst others, gives full powers to the Central Council - a long standing SAMWU demand. The Central Council can then decide which powers to give to divisional structures of the bargaining council. A NLRF will meet again on 2 September to formally sign an agreement which dissolves the

NLRF and establishes, in its place, the National Bargaining Council (NBC). The Minister of Labour has been invited to this historic meeting.

This victory signals the end of 10 years of militant struggle by SAMWU members for centralised bargaining in the industry. The establishment of the NBC allows us to intensify our struggle for a whole range of benefits to be negotiated centrally. This is part of our fight to ensure that all municipal workers across the country receive the same benefits.

One of the first challenges, is to agree on a standard Conditions of Service

for municipal workers. SAMWU was never part of previous negotiations which set conditions of service in the different provinces. At the same time, where two or more local authorities have amalgamated, workers doing the same work are often governed by different sets of service conditions.

The Union will need to develop a common set of Conditions of Service proposals and decide at which level, national or provincial, these should be bargaining. Members need to ensure that they are fully involved in this process.

Forward to the National Bargaining Council!

At the heart of the new Act is a system that is expected to end disputes quickly and to the satisfaction of both parties. The CCMA, which is at the centre of the new systems, is responsible for ensuring the effective resolution of disputes.

Dispute resolving institutions of the new LRA

COMMISSION FOR CONCILIATION, MEDIATION AND ARBITRATION (CCMA)

The main functions of the CCMA are:

- ◆ to attempt to resolve workplace disputes by conciliation and arbitration
- ◆ to assist in the establishment of workplace forums and statutory councils
- ◆ to publish information and statistics about its activities

The CCMA may also:

- ◆ give advice and assistance to parties in a dispute
- ◆ conduct elections and ballots
- ◆ provide advice and training on the Act

The CCMA was established early this year and has employed and trained staff who are known as commissioners. There are full-time and part-time commissioners who are graded according to their skills and experience. Most of their time will be taken up in conciliation and arbitration work. The work they do is vital to the success of the LRA.

The CCMA has an office in each region and a national office in Johannesburg. It is an independent body, but funded mostly by government. The CCMA is controlled by a governing body on which labour, business and government have equal representation (three each). The governing body has an independent chairperson and a director.



The CCMA can also accredit private dispute resolution agencies. Councils must decide whether they are going to apply to the CCMA for accreditation to perform dispute resolution functions, or to appoint an accredited agency to perform these functions for them. Apart from taking on some of the dispute resolution functions of councils, these accredited agencies may also be asked by the CCMA to assist it in its work. The SAMWU Local Government National Bargaining Council will have its own dispute resolution system accredited by the CCMA.

LABOUR COURT & LABOUR APPEAL COURT

The labour courts are the only courts that can hear and decide labour disputes.

The Judge President and the Deputy Judge President of the **LABOUR COURT** must be Supreme Court judges with labour law experience. Other judges of the Labour Court may be either Supreme Court Judges or legal practitioners with labour law experience. The new Labour Court will hear and determine unresolved disputes referred to it and will be a court of review. This Court has the status of a provincial division of the Supreme Court.

Appeals from the Labour Court come to the **LABOUR APPEAL COURT**. The judges of the Labour Appeal Court are appointed in the same way as Labour Court judges. The Labour Appeal Court has the status of the Appellate Division. The appointment process for the judges involves representative of business, labour and the government.

STATUTORY COUNCILS

Statutory Councils perform dispute resolution functions; promote and establish training and education schemes; establish and administer pension, provident, medical aid and unemployment funds; and conclude collective agreements.

While a statutory council will normally not engage in collective bargaining over wages and terms and conditions of employment, it does allow for certain matters to be regulated in a sector. A statutory council may become a bargaining council.

Comrades are still dying at work!

We mourn the tragic deaths of our members. Rest assured, comrades, SAMWU will seriously investigate any deaths or accidents of workers at work, and we will bring the perpetrators to the harshest justice available!

Free State - Comrades hospitalised at Odendaalsrus TLC ...

On April 15th this year, Comrades George Maboye and John Moletsane were busy fastening one of the big automatic suction meters at the sewerage substation in Odendaalrus. Two automatic suction meters were not working properly on this day. When they were busy with the meters the sewerage water began to rise uncontrollably up the substation. The foremen instructed them to start the generator in the manhole to help speed up the sucking out of the sewerage water. While the comrades were busy closing the valves the smoke (carbon monoxide) from the generator and

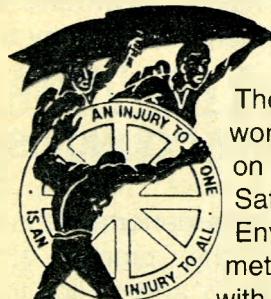
sewerage gases overcame them. By this time, one of the comrades had been overcome by the gas and was helplessly floating in the sewerage water. The comrades were helped by the Odendaalrus paramedics who pulled them out of the manhole. They were then hospitalised. The Department of Labour inspectors conducted an inquiry on the 26 of June 1997. SAMWU is awaiting the results.

KwaZulu Natal - Comrades killed in Newcastle...

In February 1997 comrades Reginald Sithebe and Ashwin Singh were killed by an explosion at the Electricity Substation. SAMWU will release a detailed report on this matter soon.

Mpumalanga - Workers injured at Morgenzon TLC ...

Cdes Yende and Nkonyane were severely shocked last October, when their supervisor, Mr Robert, allegedly instructed them to remove an iron bar lying under an electric pylon. Robert allegedly took the Cdes straight to hospital without informing SAMWU. He said he would arrange compensation. The cdes are back at work, although they have not fully recovered. SAMWU asked for a copy of the claim from Robert, but was informed that the matter was with the Department of Labour. The Department says no claim forms have ever been received! We are investigating what seems to be a cover-up for employer negligence.



The COSATU working group on Health, Safety and the Environment met recently with the task of

holding urgent discussions around the formation of a national health and safety council. South Africa does not have a national policy at the moment.

Instead, the regulation of occupational health and safety is the responsibility of the government departments of Labour, Health and Mineral and Energy affairs. Several other Departments, such as Transport, Environment, Water

Affairs and Agriculture are also responsible for aspects of occupational health and safety. But the problem is that each Department has different health and safety policies!

The COSATU working group has taken a decision that a national health and safety policy for SA must be developed in order to provide effective regulation of Occupational Health and Safety.

This national institution should include representation from organised business, trade unions and all government departments responsible for administering health and safety. Health and Safety legislation should also cover occupational health as a

service to workers. Significant initiatives are under way to deliver occupational health services as part of the National Health System.

The Committee on Occupational Health has also made proposals for the provision of occupational health services by the Provincial Departments. Plans are that there should be at least one Occupational Health Unit in each province.

Another Health and Safety problem at the moment is that there is no constant approach to the regulation of occupational health or the provision of occupational health services. This has severely undermined the regulation of occupational health in all sectors.

News from the COSATU Working Group on

Health and Safety - at last it's on our agenda!

Good news for all comrades! You no longer need to be afraid of your work environment. National Health, Safety and Environment Officer, David Morake, has been travelling the country educating workers and shop stewards about workplace hazards, and the laws that exist to help workers.

By the end of September 1997 all regions will have attended Health and Safety Workshops and each Region will have elected a Regional Health, Safety & Environment Structure.

Training programmes aim to:

- ◆ Develop H,S&E confidence in Shop stewards to help them address workplace hazards.
- ◆ Develop strategies around identification, evaluation, controlling and prevention of workplace hazards.

- ◆ Assist the H,S&E Shop stewards in negotiating with management for change to the working environment.
- ◆ Give information about how to use occupational health and safety legislation as an organizing tool
- ◆ Set up regional H,S&E structures where they do not exist. The workshops also evaluated the H,S&E structures that currently exist.

The primary aim of our education and training programs can be summarised as education for critical consciousness. It is a collective or group process of education where the facilitator/s and learners learn together, beginning with the experiences of participants, leading to reflection on those experiences in order to effect positive change.

Education and training programs will be aiming at providing knowledge and skills to Health and Safety Shop Stewards.

A National Health, Safety and Environment workshop is planned to look at these things:

- ◆ Evaluating the impact of the training programs on regions.
- ◆ Evaluating set structures, program of actions, problems and progresses.
- ◆ Highlighting issues for policy and campaigns development.
- ◆ Setting HSE education and training goals, programs and dates for next year.
- ◆ Planning SAMWU's Health Safety & Environment conference for next year.

Health, Safety and the Environment...

To fix this, a national health and safety policy should lead to the enactment of national health and safety laws applicable to all sectors. The regulation of hazards specific to particular sectors would be catered for through sector regulations. This means that problems commonly found in the municipal sector will be regulated nationally. This should make it much easier for unions to target bad H,S&E practices.

The Working Group found that Health and Safety legislation is not enforced. The few inspectors are not trained properly, and investigations and inquiries into accidents are inadequate. Criminal law is not a deterrent to perpetrators of bad

H,S&E practices - in some cases councils and business are fined so little for an offence that it is cheaper for them to commit the offence, than to mend the actual problem!

The Working Group recommended that sanctions should be developed to make prosecutions more effective as well as to develop sanctions for which prosecutions are not appropriate. Health and Safety offences should not be seen as less criminal simply because they involve injuries incurred at work.

The Working Group also discussed compensation for workers. At the moment, our workers compensation scheme is based on an apartheid

trade off where workers were given the right to compensation from a state-run fund for injuries and ill health caused by work, but forfeited the right to institute civil claims for damages against their employer. Employers on the other hand are protected against the possibility of damages claims being instituted against them, in return for the contribution they make to the compensation fund.

We say that the bosses cannot buy the silence of workers in this way! Forward to new worker based health and safety laws!

For more information, please contact your Regional Health and Safety Co-ordinator.

Comrades, as a worker you are not alone. We are all part of one struggle. On these pages, we will keep you informed about the international struggle for socialism. We will also feature historic strikes from different parts of the world. These strikes show one thing - a working class united will never be defeated!

The Bread and Roses Strike

The Bread and Roses strike is part of the hidden history of the working class - the history that the capitalists like to forget! Under terrible conditions, unorganised men, women and children of 30 different nationalities managed to unite in a strike that crushed the bosses!

It all began in the town of Lawrence, Massachusetts in America in January, 1912. Lawrence was a town dominated by textile mills. The biggest was the American Woollen Company. Average earnings were R24 per week and most families could only survive if all family members worked.

The families were recruited from Europe - as there was massive unemployment there, people were happy to work in America. But the reality was different - the workers were housed in shacks where newborn babies died regularly and where tuber-culosis was a common disease. The only river was full of sewerage.

With twenty thousand workers living under terrible conditions, the time was ripe for a massive strike! All the workers needed was something to set off the timebomb that was their discontent. This came when a state law was passed prohibiting women and children from working for more than 54 hours a week. At the mill, the working week was 56 hours. The company responded to the law by cutting the hours and pay of every worker by two hours.

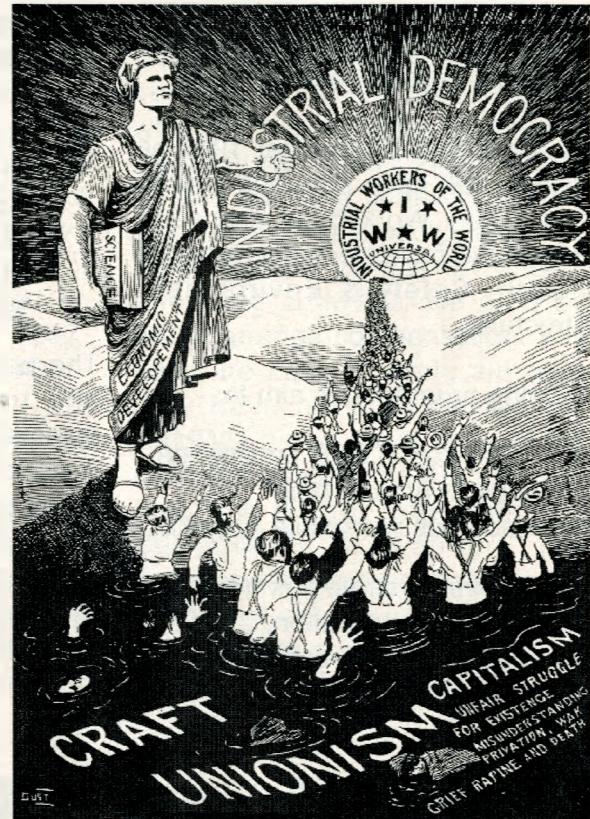
When workers got their first pay that year, they received 32 cents less - the difference between survival and starvation in the cold winter.

As soon as they saw this, the workers became angry. A writer says that "from room to room the Italian workers ran, stopping the meters, tearing the cloth, breaking the electric lights." After two days, 20 thousand workers were on strike!

The strikers had no organisation or leadership. Help came in the form of the Industrial Workers of the World. These unionists - known as the Wobblies - were militant and courageous. They aimed at organising and politicising all workers, irrespective of gender, age or nationality into one big union. "There is no foreigner here except the capitalists," said Bill Haywood, a Wobblies organiser.

Soon a strike committee was set up to organise clothing, medicine and to raise funds for the strikers. Sub-committees managed to set up 11 soup kitchens for the strikers. The strike became named "the Bread and Roses Strike" after a placard which read:

**"We Want Bread, But
Roses Too!"**



But the state was full of dirty tricks. Before long, the town of Lawrence was filled with 2500 armed soldiers. The mayor of Lawrence said, "We will break this strike - or break the strikers heads."

During the strike, an 18 year old boy was bayoneted to death by soldiers, and a woman was shot dead. Women were often at the frontlines of the action, but this did not stop police brutality - two women had miscarriages when their picket line was attacked by police. The State tried to blame the Wobblies organisers for her death, and even imprisoned two leaders! These leaders were later acquitted and released.

Another trick the bosses used was to keep the mills running so that the sound would dishearten strikers. But a New York Times journalist put a stop to this when he reported that "in the spinning rooms every belt is in motion yet not a single person is at work."

Strikers were harassed by police. They were sprayed with freezing cold water in the middle of winter and arrested and imprisoned. But none of this broke them down. Instead, a committee of Strikers' Friends in cities all over the country was formed, where friendly families offered to take care of the strikers' children for the period of the strike.

As the hungry children from Lawrence arrived by train in groups at cities, with banners proclaiming "some day we will remember exile," they won massive public support. Every one of the 119 children was found to be suffering from malnutrition. 100 children arriving in New York were greeted at the railway station by 5000 socialists singing the Internationale. The State immediately tried to put a stop to children leaving the town. They went as far as having police attack a group of mothers and their 40 children departing for Philadelphia. But this action increased public support for the strikers, and after this the unity of the strikers became unbreakable.

As Bill Haywood said, "These children have been starving from birth. They have been starved in their mother's wombs. and their mothers have been starving before the children were conceived." A child who had been scalped by a machine, Camella Teoli, was invited to talk to the American Congress. She told Congress that her wages were vital for her family's survival yet she went unpaid during her hospitalisation after her scalp had been pulled off.

With the children safe in other parts of the country, the parents had more time to devote to picketing. Over 10 thousand picketers surrounded the mills in Lawrence, forming a continuous moving chain. By this time more than two months had passed. The bosses could not hold out. They gave in to wage rises, double pay for overtime and no victimisation. Workers greeted this news by singing **The Internationale** in every language used in Lawrence!

The Lawrence strike is an inspiration to workers of the world. Why is it hidden from history? Because it shows the great power of collective action - a power that we as workers still have today!



THE WORST THIEF IS HE WHO STEALS THE PLAYTIME OF CHILDREN

The Internationale

Arise ye prisoners of starvation
Arise ye wretched of the earth
For justice thunders condemnation
A better world's in birth
No more tradition's chains shall bind us
Arise ye slaves no more in thrall
The earth shall rise on new foundations
We have been naught we shall be all

Chorus

'Tis the final conflict
Let each stand in their place
The International (Working Class)
shall be the human race
(Repeat)

We want no condescending saviours
To rule us from their judgement hall
We ask not for their favors
Let us consult for all
To make the thief disgorge his booty
To free the spirit from its cell
We must ourselves decide our duty
We must decide and do it well

Behold them seated in their glory
The kings of mines and rail and soil
What have you read in all their story
But how they plundered toil?
Fruits of workers' toil are buried
In strongholds of the idle few
In taking back the wealth

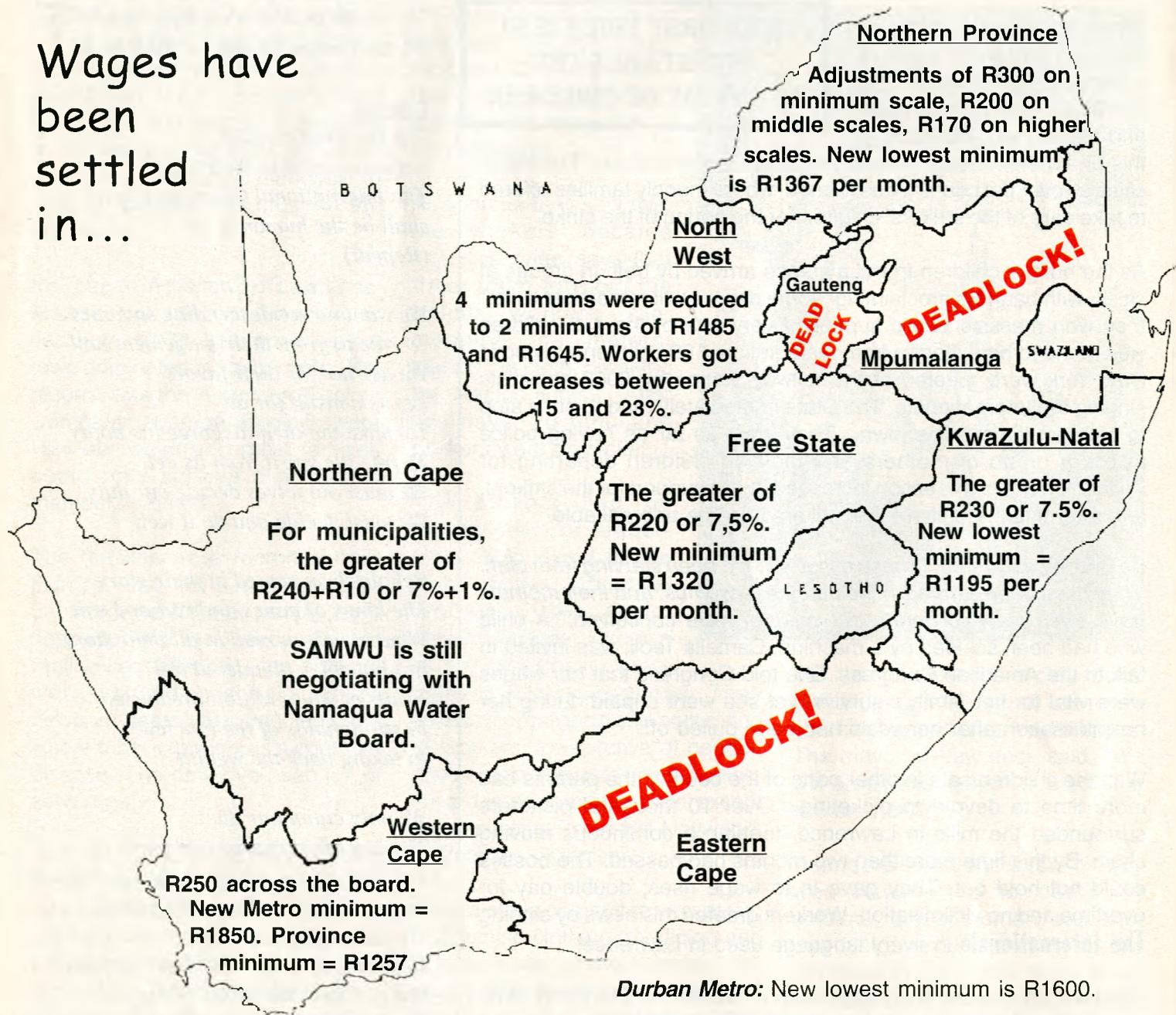
We only claim our due
The law oppresses us and tricks us
The wage slave system drains our blood
The rich are free from obligations
The laws the poor delude
How many on our flesh have fattened!
But if the circlin' birds of prey
Shall vanish from the sky some morning
The blessed sunlight will stay

If you want to write to comrades in other parts of the world, and from other unions, post your letters to SAMWU Media, Private Bag X/9, Athlone, Cape Town, 7760. We will send your messages to the workers in the country of your choice. Write your name and address on your letter so that they can write back to you!

Wage Negotiations 1997

The need to struggle for a living wage still exists! Although the lowest entry wage was adjusted last year to R1000, some Local Authorities failed to implement this due to a lack of funding. This year, in some areas, the offer made by management was ridiculously low - 2% for workers on the minimum, which would have given them an increase of R20 per month! As SAMWU, we are striving to create the same minimum wage for all our workers. Forward to a living wage!

Wages have
been
settled
in...



Other Settlements

Pretoria: Centurion has agreed on a R200 adjustment to the minimum. Above minimum scales accepted an increase of the greater of R200 or 8%. North has agreed on a R210 increase.

Durban Metro: New lowest minimum is R1600.

Gauteng Province: Arbitrators ruled in favour of a R235 increase on the minimum which works out as an adjustment of 18%. The above minimum scales were awarded R215 or 7%.

Rand Water Board (Gauteng): An agreed R200 or 12% on lower levels, and 10% on upper levels.

Still under negotiation...

In the **Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metro Council** (GJTM) SAMWU and the bosses agreed to consult their constituencies on a proposed settlement. This proposal states that there will be a phased wage adjustment of the greater of R150 or 4% to be backdated from July 1st, 1997. Then from January 1st, 1998 wages will be adjusted by the greater of R100 or 4%. If we fail to reach agreement here, a dispute will be declared.

Water and Sanitation Services S.A. (WSSA): The bosses offered the greater of R250 or 8%, to be implemented over 2 years. Another condition was that SAMWU help WSSA to extend their services to other local authorities across the country - in other words, SAMWU should help WSSA privatise water! We rejected these conditions, and are awaiting a response.

Aquafund (Western Cape): There has been no progress in negotiations at this stage.

SMS Eastern Cape: This company no longer exists, as it was taken over by Aquafund. But as Aquafund will only start operating from September 1st, 1997, SMS made an interim offer of 10% across the board. This has been rejected by SAMWU - we demand conclusion of a final wage agreement before a new company takes over. We cannot allow a situation where it is possible that workers pay could drop after a few months!

The **Overberg Water Board** (Western Cape) began by refusing to negotiate with SAMWU because we do not have a recognition agreement. But they changed their minds after we declared a dispute. We are currently negotiating a recognition agreement and a wage increase.

There are five Water Boards in the **North West** region, and we are still negotiating with all. Magalies, Goudveld, Rand Water (in the farm areas) and North West Water Supply all offered 10% across the board, which SAMWU rejected as it would not close the wage gap. We are still negotiating with Namaqua Water Board.

Deadlocks!

Gauteng: There is a dispute in the Pretoria Metro Central sub-structures. Bosses have offered the greater of R165 or 7.5%, while SAMWU has asked for the greater of R250 or 7.5%.

In **Mpumalanga**, negotiations have deadlocked and the matter has been referred for arbitration. SAMWU's

position was an adjustment of R320 on the minimum and an across the board adjustment of R320 or 8.75% - whichever is the greater. But the employers made a final offer of R200 from July 1st, 1997 and an additional R20 to be granted from August 1st. The across the board adjustment would be the greater of R200 or 4%.

Eastern Cape: The negotiations in the Eastern Cape deadlocked after SAMWU asked for an increase of R350 or 11.5%, whichever is the greater. Good news is that we won the first round of arbitration - the arbitrator ruled that employers were not allowed to submit the annual increment as part of their wage offer. Our demands were revised to R250, or 8.5% in arbitration. The bosses came back with three ridiculous offers:

- ❖ for workers below last year's minimum of R1000 - the greater of R20 or 2%.
- ❖ for workers above R1000, an increase of 4% or R70, whichever is the greater
- ❖ once in arbitration, bosses offered to split the local authorities into four groups and offer each group a minimum the same as the offer rejected by SAMWU earlier! For example, bosses offered to give Grades 1-3 a minimum wage of R1020 - the same as 2% or R20 we had rejected outright!

How did the wage campaign go?

There were arbitrations for the second year in a row in Gauteng and Eastern Cape. Mpumalanga is currently in arbitration. The result of arbitrations so far has shown that SAMWU's demands are not unreasonable - they are justified!

But there were also problems with the campaign. We have uneven development within regions, which led to different settlements. Also, the financial position of some local authorities did not allow for the increases we would have liked. But we achieved a good adjustment on the minimum wages in general - this forms a solid base for advancing our campaign to narrow the wage gap, and secure a living wage for all municipal workers. If we take into consideration outstanding settlements we are expecting to increase the lowest entry wage nationally to R1225 per month.

To comrades in those areas where wages are still not final, you will be the first to receive the news once agreement has been reached. The Secretariat will also send out a special news bulletin to all members once wages have been finalised.

The National Organising Forum- building a strong union!

Comrades, one of the most important tasks of your union is to provide the best possible service. Monitoring the service that you as members and shop stewards get from SAMWU is just one of the tasks of the National Organising Forum. Read on to find out what else the NOF does

The SAMWU National Organising Forum (NOF) is a sub-committee of the Central Executive Committee tasked with the responsibility of co-ordinating the organising activities of the Union. The Forum is chaired by the President - Petros Mashishi. Delegates to the NOF are the Regional Chairpersons and one Organiser per region.

The NOF is co-ordinated regionally by the Regional Organising Forum. Delegates at this level include all Branch Chairs, all Regional Office Bearers and all Organisers.

The National Organising Forum began in 1994 and has focused on:

- ⇒ Guidelines and Work-plans for Organisers
- ⇒ Monitoring Servicing Standards
- ⇒ Campaign - Logistical Planning & Implementation
- ⇒ Assessing Staffing Requirements of the Union
- ⇒ Planning and Implementation of Structural Changes: Regional & Branch Demarcations

By the time of the SAMWU Central Executive Committee meeting in May this year, the new constitution was in place. This meeting of the CEC tasked the NOF with the responsibility of overseeing the process of branch demarcations in line with SAMWU's Constitution. If workers have complaints with union service, they should report these directly to their regional offices.

All SAMWU members must belong to a branch. The reason is so that you as a member have a union office nearby where you can go if you need assistance or information. After a strategic planning session in June, all new branches have been demarcated within their Regional boundaries and regions are now in the process of launching the new structures. Once branches have been established, there will be many more union offices open. New branches are:

Gauteng

West Rand Branch
East Rand Extended Branch
Greater Johannesburg Branch
Greater Pretoria Branch
Greater Vaal Branch

KwaZulu-Natal

Durban Metro Branch
South Coast Branch
North Coast Branch
Pietermaritzburg Branch
Newcastle Branch
Vryheid Branch

Eastern Cape

Amatola Branch
Greater Port Elizabeth branch
Drakensberg/Stormberg Branch
Wild Coast/Kei North Branch

Mpumalanga

Eastern Highveld Branch
Highveld Branch
Highveld Ridge Branch
Lowveld Branch

Free State

North East Branch
Southern Branch
Northern Branch

N. Province

Southern Branch
Northern Branch
Far North Branch

North West

Wouthern Branch
Mmabatho Branch
Northern branch

Western Cape

Boland Branch
Cape Town Metro
Garden Route-Karoo branch
North West Branch

Northern Cape

Kim-Kuru Branch
De Carna Branch
West Griqualand Branch
Up-Nama Branch

The NOF is aiming to recruit ten thousand members by the October National Congress. All Regions have committed themselves to pull out all the stops in realising this campaign.

We will be monitoring progress closely.



10 years of SAMWU!

As SAMWU nears the end of its first decade of organising South African Municipal workers, the National Congress will be both celebrating and looking to the future. To be held from the 29th of October till the 1st of November in Gauteng, the Congress will be packed with speakers, debates and events marking this historical time.

The speakers on the first day of the Congress will include the ANC who will be speaking about Local Government; SANCO who will talk to delegates about the role of civil society in transformation; and the SACP who will discuss building a socialist alternative.

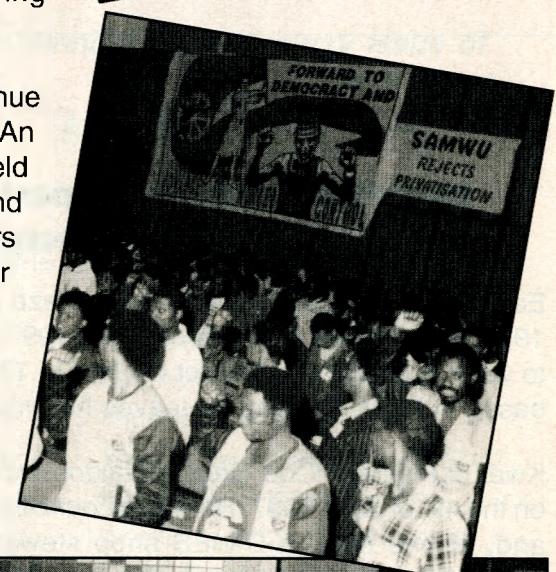
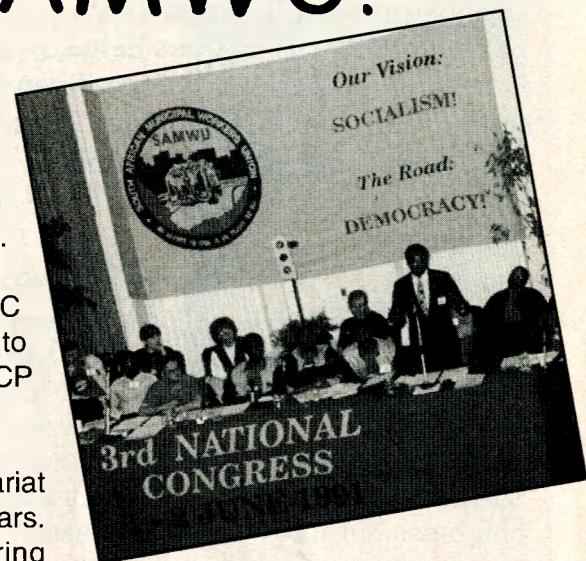
The Congress will continue into the evening by discussing the Secretariat Report which will give an overview of activities over the past three years. The Secretariat Report will be available in regional offices during September 1997, so contact your region if you would like a copy.

On October 30th, the second day of the Congress, comrades will continue to discuss the Secretariat report and debate regional resolutions. An exhibition of photographs and other SAMWU memorabilia will be held in the evening at the Worker's Library, Newtown. The debates around resolutions are sure to continue well into the third day, as office bearers and workers decide on steps that will power SAMWU into the year 2000!

The third day of the Congress will end with elections of our new National Office Bearers. The final day, November 1st, will see workers celebrating SAMWU's tenth birthday at a rally and cultural event. President Nelson Mandela and COSATU's President Gomomo have been invited to attend. Speeches will be kept to a minimum, and the focus will be on SAMWU's cultural groups who are going to perform for the comrades.

195 Workers and their elected Office Bearers from all the regions will take part in the Congress. Regions that have women shop stewards will be expected to send these comrades as 30% of their delegation. Six comrades from the national office will attend and about 12 delegates from the international labour movement are expected to arrive for the occasion.

As the celebrations will be held in Gauteng, unfortunately not all members will be able to attend. But funds have been made available for regions to hold their own 10th Anniversary celebrations, so every member will be part of this anniversary. A 10th anniversary poster and clothing will be on sale at all of these celebrations. Comrades, contact your regional offices soon with suggestions and ideas for how you would like this occasion to be celebrated.



WE APPEAL TO SAMWU CULTURAL GROUPS - PLEASE MAKE YOURSELVES AVAILABLE TO PERFORM FOR COMRADES AT THE CONGRESS.

New babies!

The stork was kept busy in KwaZulu Natal over June and July.

Congratulations to Cdes Eshara, Sandiya and Yoshini. In Cape Town, congratulations on new babies go to Cdes Jerome, Elaine and John.

Just married!
Northern Province Administrator
Christina Mmatlou Pabale tied the knot
with Raffic Pabale on the 14th of June
in Moletjie Moshate. We wish you all the
best in your marriage!



Retired after 16 years of loyal service

Cde James Sheyi Ngosini of Kanana near Orkney went on retirement with a broad smile in March this year. Born on the 1st of January 1936 in Didi, Encqobo in Transkei, he joined the Orkney Town Council, employed as a general worker at the Electrical Department and retired on March 1997. "During my employment, I joined SAMWU and then I became the Chairperson of the Shopstewards," he said. He further mentioned that since his retirement, he had experienced difficulties with coping that he was no longer involved in meetings. "I was used to being in a Shopstewards meeting every Wednesday, but at least now I will be with my wife, Catherine and my nine children," said Cde Sheyi. The Cde came back to join SAMWU for the June 2nd COSATU march!



SAMWU conveys its deepest sympathy to the families and friends of our late comrades. Their untimely deaths are a loss to all members of our union.

Eastern Cape - Cde Basie Willison Geza was born in 1950 and died on the 24th of June, 1997. He started to work in Stormberg District Council in 1982. He was based in Hofmeyer and he leaves his wife.

KwaZulu Natal - Cde Reggie Naidoo was murdered on the 4th of June 1997. He was a councillor at Tongaat and, at one time, a DIMES shop steward, and the brother of the Durban branch secretary, Monty Naidoo.

Free State - Cde Peter Xaba passed away on June 10th, 1997, while he was waiting to resume work three years after being dismissed by the Tweeling TLC. Cde Xaba was one of the workers dismissed during the national strike in 1993, who were all re-instated during this year after a long battle. We are sad that he could not reap the fruits of his loyalty to SAMWU.

Eastern Cape - A leading Port Elizabeth medical practitioner, human rights fighter and SAMWU Comrade, Dr Mangaliso Maqina died on July 20th 1997 in a car accident. Dr Maqina was the Western District Council Health Director. He leaves a wife and two children.

Northern Province is crying for Cde Leriba Johannes who passed away on the 13th of July 1997. The

comrade was working for the Parks Department in Pietersburg TLC.

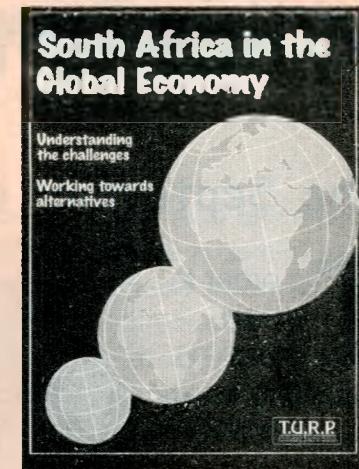
North West - Cde Hail Sefako Oliphant died on the 29th of June, 1997. Many SAMWU comrades attended his funeral. O ne a thapiwa mo go sona sekolo sa bathaping jaaka clerk ya sekolo fa a sena go falola mophato wa bolesome. O simolotse go dira kwa municipality ka Ngwaga ya 1985 go fitlhela a kgaogane le botshelo ka 26 June 1997 morago ga bolwetse je bolelee.



Fight globalisation!

The labour movement is facing a global offensive. Capital has more power than ever, and is moving around the world with great ease. We have already felt the effects of globalisation with a number of multinationals attempting to privatise our water supplies. As comrades, it is our duty to fight globalisation on all fronts. To make this easier, the Trade Union Research Project (TURP) has just produced a very useful book called South Africa in the Global Economy. The book was written for trade unionists.

Shop stewards - if you are holding workshops on globalisation, you will find useful information in this book. The book covers topics such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, neo-liberalism and export processing zones. Complicated words are explained in boxes. At the moment, labour has no overall strategy to fight globalisation. This book raises ideas about how we can do this and is sure to stimulate debate on globalisation within your structures. The book costs R35 (including postage) and can be purchased by sending a postal order or cheque to TURP, Industrial Labour Studies Unit, University of Natal Durban, 4041. Please don't send cash! Please send TURP your full name and postal address so that they can post you the book.



SAMWU will be giving away a copy of this book to the winning letter in every issue of Worker's News!

Rise and Share

A poem by Thobile Maso

I am a human being and demoralised
I do things not because I like to
I do things because I have to
I am separated from the soil and the tools
Chased away from the land, Law and Labour
Capitalism, you are a monster
I am Universal Soldier, Combatant for Universal Mission

Rise and Share, Rise and Share

Workers let me talk to your being
Workers let me penetrate the essence of your being
Workers let me provoke your social being

Rise and Share, Rise and Share

You have nothing to lose except the chains of oppression and exploitation

Mountains of truth, mountains of realities
Oh milestone of Marx, Engels and Lenin

Rise and Share, Rise and Share

No more dancing around the truth
No more throws of blames around
Why camouflaging of laws?
Why the shadowing boxing?

Several SAMWU members are part of the Hillstar Celtics soccer team (affiliates of the Cape Municipal Workers Sports Association). R.C. Petersen's Transport donated money to upgrade their soccer gear.

Rise and Share, Rise and Share
Who ever come across them?
The Whole world was in thunderous joy
They know where the plight of the world is going to end
Workers seize the moment
Decaying egg shell is bursting asunder

(This poem is dedicated to the late Chris Hani and Joe Slovo)



Comrades, send your SAMWU sports or cultural group photo to this page!

What is the future of COSATU?

The September Commission

In order to assist COSATU in plotting a way into the 21st century, the September Commission was set up approximately two years ago.

This body, named after the second Vice-President of COSATU Connie September, is made up of senior COSATU leaders and includes a couple of current parliamentarians with links to the labour movement, Philip Dexter and Susan Shabangu.

The broad brief of the Commission was to look at the strategic options available to COSATU in this period of transformation in South Africa and to come up with recommendations for meeting the challenges of a changing world order. A world order in which workers are under constant attack!

The Commission Report will be considered by the forthcoming COSATU National Congress.

Although the Commission has not yet released its final report, an interim report has been released. The national and regional leadership within SAMWU have started discussing the report and working out ways to involve as many of our members as possible in the debates.

Comrades, the September Commission Report is all about deciding on a direction for your Federation. You are part of deciding that direction!



SAMWU Worker leaders from all over the country gathered for two days of debates around some controversial proposals...

The Commission has come up with recommendations in the following areas:

- ◆ A political and economic programme for transformation.
- ◆ Transforming the public sector
- ◆ Building democracy in the workplace
- ◆ New organising strategies for COSATU
- ◆ Building women leadership
- ◆ Restructuring the Federation.

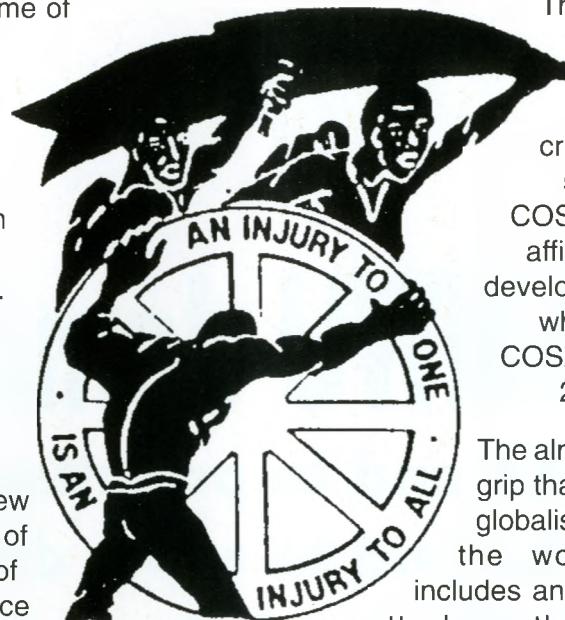
Comrades, there are many far reaching recommendations in the September Commission Report. We need to ensure that workers are familiar with these recommendations and that any decisions we take, are well informed decisions.

We think it would be incorrect if the COSATU National Congress took final decisions on the recommendations contained in the September Commission Report if workers have not been fully involved in the debates. Ask your regional office for a copy of the report and prepare to debate!

Defend, Consolidate and Advance Social Transformation!

This is the theme of the 6th COSATU National Congress which will take place in Johannesburg on 16-19 September 1997.

This Congress will be the first opportunity that COSATU will have to fully review the performance of the government of national unity since the April 1994 elections.



The Congress will be charged with looking critically at the structures of COSATU and its affiliates and to develop a strategy which will take COSATU into the 21st century.

The almost vice like grip that neo-liberal globalisation has on the world - this includes an out and out attack on the rights of workers - calls for review of past

strategies. Central to any new plan of action must be a re-think of how labour organises internationally. Only a united international working class can stand any chance of withstanding the world wide attacks on workers and their families.

Other issues to be debated at the Congress include how COSATU should go about building women leadership, the very tricky question of union investments, union demarcation and the future of the Tri-Partite Alliance.

Approximately 150 delegates from SAMWU will be participating in the Congress which will be attended by over 2500 delegates.

HAMBA KAHLE COMRADE DOROTHY MOKGALO - Tireless fighter for the rights of women and workers!

SAMWU mourns the loss of COSATU's Organising Secretary, Dorothy Mokgalo. Comrade Dorothy was tragically killed in a car accident on 2nd August 1997. Her contribution to the working class struggle is immeasurable. Dorothy's union work started in the mid 80's when she was a Shopsteward in National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (then Metal and Allied Workers' Union). In 1991 she was appointed to the post of regional education officer for the NUMSA, Wits Region. Within a short time she was appointed the first National Gender Co-ordinator of COSATU. Two years later she was promoted to the position of COSATU Organising Secretary, a position she held at the time of her tragic death. She also made her mark outside of COSATU. Dorothy was elected as a member of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Governing Body in Geneva, becoming the first woman

from the labour movement in Africa to be elected to such a position. She represented the labour movement on the Task Team set up by the Minister of Labour to investigate methods of payment for maternity leave, a key demand of workers in our struggle around the Basic Conditions of

Employment Bill. Comrade Dorothy was a living example of COSATU's dedication to the eradication of gender oppression within the trade union movement. Those who had the honour to work with her found her a true inspiration - an unfailing comrade, trusted friend and a unifier. Dorothy will take her place in the history of the revolution alongside the rest of our heroes such as Ruth First, Lillian Ngoyi and Helen Joseph. Although the



accident took place in the early hours of Saturday morning, it was only after much searching that, on Monday evening, we discovered what had happened. Nobody saw it fit to use her car registration, her ID document to trace her family or inform COSATU. Had we and

her family not frantically tried to find out what had happened, we believe that we would still not have been notified! Her handbag, cellular phone and wrist watch are missing. The central question we ask, is this what happens when everybody dies so tragically? Was it because perhaps she is a worker leader or Black that she was treated like this? (Comrades, COSATU is investigating this and we will keep you posted).

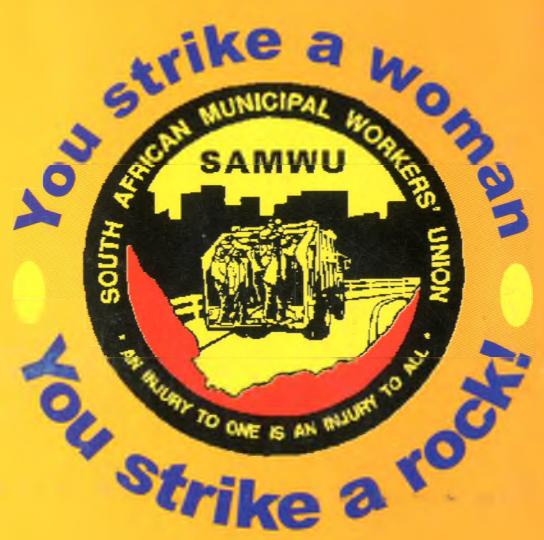
NATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

AUGUST 9TH 1997



SAMWU demands

- **An end to privatisation!**
- **An end to rape, domestic violence and sexual harassment NOW!**
- **20 days paid childcare leave for parents!**
- **Men to share housework!**
- **No child labour under 16 years of age!**
- **6 months paid maternity leave!**



**You strike a woman
You strike a rock!**

