

FOSATU WORKER NEWS



UITENHAGE STRIKES — VICTORY FOR A LIVING WAGE



The 3 week long Volkswagen strike and the wage settlement reached earlier this month mark a great break through for workers. The settlement marks the end of minimum wage negotiation and a hope for real collective bargaining in the future.

The Volkswagen strike started on Monday 16th June after the Uitenhage magistrate unwisely banned the report back meeting to have been held on 15th June. On the Monday the 3500 Volkswagen workers came out on strike followed on Tuesday by SKF workers. By Friday 20th the strike had affected about 12 factories and involved probably about 10 000 workers. By Wednesday 25th June nearly all workers had returned to work except Volkswagen.

Workers in other factories made similar wage demands in sympathy with the motor workers demand and widespread wage negotiations in Port Elizabeth/Uitenhage are continuing at present.

The Unions reached an agreement with the Companies that was accepted by workers. This gave a minimum of R1,45 per hour plus a service attendance allowance. There were also across the board increases for all workers and increases in the minimum reaching R1,60 in January 1981, R1,80 in July 1981 and R2,00 in January 1982.

These increases are the largest achieved by the Union but more important the companies accepted that a reasonable living wage must be paid. They also agreed that there would be an independent enquiry into what is a reasonable wage.

FOSATU has welcomed this as a great victory for all workers and a guide to future negotiations. FOSATU said that a reasonable wage:



VW Factory at Uitenhage

- must cover workers actual needs not the minimum required to keep him alive.
- must provide for a reasonable standard of living and not a continual struggle with poverty.
- must provide a secure income which means that a

- worker must also have job security; there should be training, service allowances, redundancy pay and benefits such as pension and medical schemes.
- must be more equitable compared to company profits.

LEATHER WORKERS REGAIN CONTROL

For almost two decades the National Union of Leather Workers (NULW) dominated the administration of benefit funds established for leather workers in Pietermaritzburg. Recently however workers themselves have reclaimed control of the funds. Last month the NULW called a meeting to try and stem the tide of discontent against their administration. However, General Secretary Jordaan was refused a hear-

ing by angry workers. The meeting was first postponed for a week and then quietly dropped.

An encouraging development in the workers attack on the alleged corruption in the fund's administration has been the non-racial organisation of their effort.

The NULW bureaucracy have supposedly been investigating these allegations for

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