

More workers pull out of TUCSA's Typo union

BOYCOTT WINS WAGE INCREASE

AFTER an overtime boycott at G & W Base and Industrial Minerals in Wadeville, the company has agreed to an immediate 19,5 cents increase.

However, although the workers have for the time being accepted this increase, they have pledged themselves to continue the fight for a living wage.

STRIKE

In April the workers at the plant went on strike after the company had refused to better its wage offer.

At the time, management claimed they could not make a better offer as profits were bad.

This was not believed by the workers as the company had recently built a new plant in Brakpan so they downed tools.

OPEN

They demanded that the company open their books so that the profits could be checked by somebody they trusted.

The workers went back to work when the company agreed to open their books to the Chemical Workers Industrial Union's auditors.

The examination of the books by union auditors revealed that the company had large reserves of money.

RAISE

The workers again demanded that this money be used to raise their pay to a living level.

G & W Base still refused to increase its offer, so workers decided at a general meeting to ban overtime.

In settling the wage dispute, the company agreed to increase its offer to 19,5 cents an hour and to re-open negotiations early next year.

THE printing industry's closed shop has been dealt another blow by the Paper Wood and Allied Workers Union.

On August 11, the majority of the workers at Nampak in Pietermaritzburg voted in favour of resigning from the TUCSA affiliated SA Typographical Union (SATU).

They are all members of the Paper Wood and Allied Workers Union.

These workers now join their colleagues at three Nampak factories in the Transvaal who also broke free from SATU.

The printing industry's closed shop forces workers to belong to SATU and judging from the decision of the Nampak workers this has been done against their will.

Workers can only belong to another trade union if the company they work for, gets an exemption from the closed shop agreement.

To get this the company has to apply to the printing industry's Industrial Council where SATU sits.

It is believed that SATU is furious about the number of members who have left the union to join the Paper Wood and Allied Workers Union.

And it seems likely that the TUCSA union will attempt to block any future applications for exemption from the closed shop even when workers clearly show that they do not want to belong to SATU.

This could only lead to a bitter struggle between the Paper Wood and Allied Workers Union and SATU.

PWAWU branch secretary, Pat Horn said SATU had already stalled on Nampak's application

for exemption for workers at the Pietermaritzburg factory.

She said they had used the excuse that they were 'upset' about the publicity given to the granting of other exemptions in FOSATU Worker News and in the commercial press.

'For this reason, they were invited to attend the ballot held by the company to test worker opinion on their membership of SATU.'

'But they didn't show up,' she said.

Sister Horn said SATU's refus-

Motor workers' meeting



General Motors' workers meet to discuss the final round of the Eastern Cape wage talks. Far left - General Motors' workers congratulate NAAWU's negotiating team.



Sham union tricks workers

THE Paper Wood and Allied Workers Union has attacked the National Union of Sugar Manufacturing and Refining Employees for tricking workers at SAPPI's Stanger mill.

Recently when PWAWU organisers went to the Stanger paper mill, Indian workers came up to them and said they had joined the union.

The organisers thought this was strange as although they had spent weeks talking to workers about the union, they had not yet started collecting joining forms.

The workers explained that they had been called by their foreman to the personnel department, where they had 'signed stop order forms in the presence of personnel staff and 'union officials'.

The bogus union officials had merely said they were from 'the union' and did not even bother to explain which union, the PWAWU organisers said.

The workers were 'horrified' to find out that the 'green card' they had been given did not belong to the Paper Wood and Allied Workers Union.

PWAWU has a yellow membership card.

At SAPPI, where there are 500 Indian workers and 250 African

workers, Selby Nsibandé's sugar union has already begun canvassing the African workers.

It appears that this had been done on the basis of Nsibandé's reputation as a trade unionist who is able to get workers' pension money back for them.

To date, PWAWU has succeeded in winning important improvements to the SAPPI pension fund but many African workers would prefer to withdraw from the pension fund altogether.

It is clear that to fulfil the many promises Nsibandé's union has made to the African workers it needs to organise a majority of the workers.

So his organisers had been trading on the weeks of work put in by the PWAWU to draw in Indian workers, PWAWU said.

In this it appears they also had the cooperation of management, PWAWU added.

'This is not surprising in the light of the sugar union's origins. (It is well known that Nsibandé's union was established in 1980 with the aid of a large loan from the sugar bosses)'

PWAWU slammed the sugar union saying 'this is a thoroughly deceitful practice'.

'When workers sign any PWAWU form it will certainly not be done by management,' the union said.

Fabric firm backs down

PINETOWN's Universal Lace and Fabric Mills has been forced to back down on its earlier refusal to pay workers their cost of living allowance.

The 170 workers at the mill went on strike last month in support of a demand for more pay.

The workers described their R28 a week wages as 'starvation pay' which was not even sufficient to cover transport costs let alone feed their families.

They demanded a R20 increase to their weekly wages.

Only when the company agreed in writing that it would begin negotiations with the National Union of Textile Workers, did the workers return to work.

However before talks began, the company went ahead and gave workers a R10 a week increase and at the same time took away the cost of living allowance.

At a meeting with the union, management said they had spoken to the workers 'individually' and they had agreed to the R10 increase and the dropping off of the cost of living allowance.

The union asked for access to the mill to check with workers whether this was the case but the company refused.

At a meeting outside the gates, workers said they had never accepted management's proposal.

When NUTW tried to raise the issue with the company, Univer-

sal Lace again stalled on negotiations.

The union then decided to start proceedings for an unfair labour practice case in order to prevent the company from cutting off the workers' allowance and to get it to bargain in 'good faith'.

However, before the matter could go before the Industrial Court, Universal Lace agreed to talk to the union about recognition.

In the meantime, it has agreed to continue paying the cost of living allowance to the workers.

If the company is unable to settle the matter with NUTW the case will still proceed to the Industrial Court.