

WHY is it necessary to go on strike?

At the conciliation board, when deadlock was reached, the union wanted to go for arbitration or mediation in order to reach settlement.

But the chamber rejected both suggestions.

We then went for a strike ballot. Over 95% of the members of recognised mines voted in support of strike action.

Since the negotiations started, the NUM has been reasonable. We pointed out that the gold and coal mines have made huge profits

The Chamber of Mines, on the other hand, argues that things are bad in the mining industry.

But let's take a closer look at conditions in the mining industry.

In 1986, the gold mines recorded their highest profits in history. They achieved record results in 1985 for the amount of ore that was processed,

The bosses get richer. The workers get poorer.

revenues and profits.

Working profit rose by 37% in 1985 and by another 14% in 1986.

Dividends paid to shareholders rose by 38% in 1985 and by 10% in 1986.

The union's demand for a living wage is based on the fact that the mining houses can afford to pay. Our demand is not only supported by the mines' results over the last year, but the excellent results over the past decade.

For the past ten years, the gold mines have earned remarkable profits for their owners and the government.

If we look at the profits over that period, it is

obvious that we have not benefited from the high gold price and profits.

Between 1975 and 1986:

* Total profits have gone up by 44%

* Total dividends (money paid to shareholders) have gone up by 21%

* Capital expenditure has gone up by 106%

* Taxation to the government has gone up by 38%

For the past ten years the gold mines have become used to making massive profit, while the mineworkers are getting poorer.

Coal mines

It is the same on the coal mines. Since the rise of

the international price of oil in the early 70s, demand increased for South Africa's coal as an alternative source of cheap energy. Exports to countries increased.

Despite the competition with other coal producers, South African coal is still the cheapest in the world to mine. This is so because they pay very low wages to coal miners.

In return for supplying cheap coal, all the mines get cheap electricity. 27% of the electricity generated by Escom is absorbed by the mines.

The coal mines can afford to pay higher wages.

Strike rules

WE HAVE reached the stage where we must move towards united action.

All regions and branch strike committees must fully understand strike rules and ensure that strike stewards carry them out.

Our strike starts on Sunday night, 9 August 1987. For the strike to be effective, we must have all workers on strike. We must be disciplined in our strike action.

1. The strike will continue until we have

won our demands or until the union's National Executive Committee calls off the strike.

2. Only strike committee members will be responsible for matters affecting workers during the strike. Workers should listen to the strike committee.

3. During the strike, all workers should stay in their rooms and only come out when the shaft stewards or strike committee members tell them to.

4. Workers are reminded

not to drink alcohol or to fight among each other or intimidate each other. Any worker who fights or drinks must be taken to the strike committee.

5. Should the management refuse to give food and water to workers, the strike committee will meet

6. We must be prepared to go on strike for many weeks, like the railway and OK workers, because the Chamber is refusing to give into our demand for a living wage.

