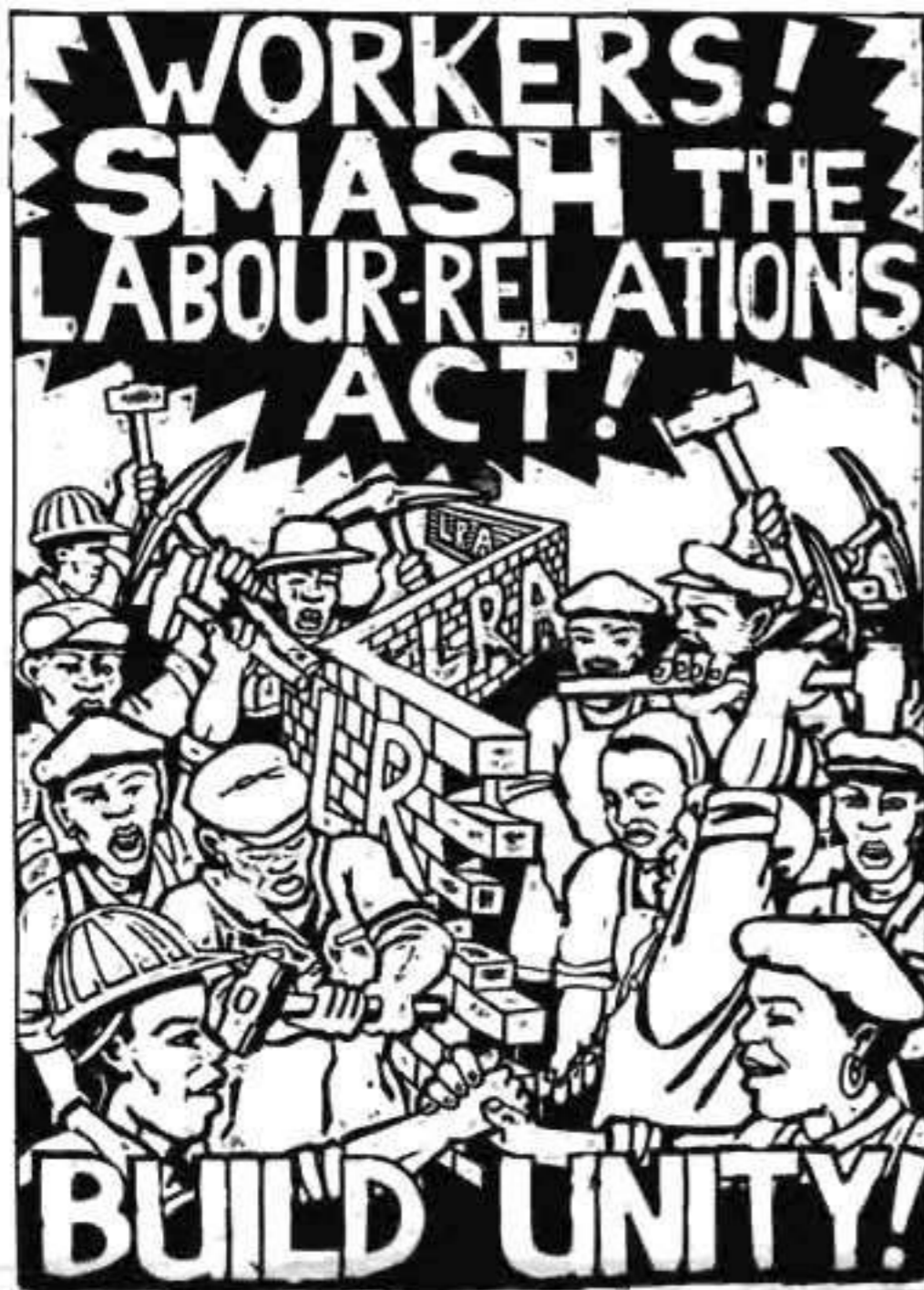


Unions vote on Act



ALL NUM members will be asked to vote on action around the Labour Relations Act as part of the campaign by COSATU, NACTU and independent unions.

Millions of union members and workers will be asked the question: "Do you wish to take action in support of the demands by COSATU, NACTU and independent unions conveyed to SACCOLA, SAAU and state departments on 1 June 1989."

The ballot forms will be distributed at the end of July.

COSATU and NACTU have sent letters of demand to the main employer associations and government departments. The letters of demand say those sections of the Act which violate the rights of workers must be scrapped.

Workers rights must be protected by the Act and it should include workers who are left out such as farm labourers.

The letters also say if the government refuses to change the Act, then employers must pledge themselves to recognise the basic

rights of workers - no matter what the Act says.

National dispute

If the employers do not answer the letters by June 30, then the unions will consider themselves in a national dispute with the main employer bodies.

Rallies and meetings are due to take place around the country to discuss action against the Act.

COSATU has called for co-ordinating committees of NACTU/COSATU and the independent unions to be set up in every region and local.

August summit

It has asked all workers, churches and community-based organisations to fully support the campaign against the LRA. A second workers summit is planned for 5 and 6 August.

The bosses are using the LRA to sue unions for damages, interdict legitimate industrial action, lockout union members, undermine job security and limit the right to strike.

The letters of demand call for:

- the right of all workers to belong to trade unions



- all workers excluded from the LRA such as farmworkers and domestic workers to be covered by the Act;
- the scrapping of all sections of labour legislation that undermines trade union rights;
- the entrenchment of the right to strike, take part in solidarity strikes and the right to picket;
- no dismissal without sound reasons and proper procedures;
- the duty to bargain with majority unions;
- retrenchment negotiation on the basis of 'last in, first out';
- and no employer to use homeland laws to refuse negotiation with a union.

COSATU/UDF meet Inkatha to stop violence

TWO peace meetings about ways to end the violence in Natal have recently taken place between leaders of COSATU/UDF and Inkatha.

The first meeting on 19 June agreed that to lay the basis for peace there must be: freedom of association; freedom of expression of one's political views or affiliations; and freedom of residence.

The meeting made a call for "an end to hostile propaganda against each other which does not contribute to the creation of an

environment for peace".

The second meeting on 23 June committed the three organisations to:

- Preparing a joint working document on peace proposals to be submitted to organisations
- A meeting of the "Four presidents", and delegations of the ANC, Inkatha, UDF and COSATU by the end of July
- A peace conference would take place after the meeting of the four presidents
- Joint peace rallies would fol-

low the conference

The meeting also agreed to highlight the role of the police, to move towards setting up peace committees and joint monitoring groups and to continue consultations about the violence in Natal.

COSATU and UDF have called for a peace process because they believe that the killing in Natal has to stop. Nearly 3000 people have died since 1987.

COSATU/UDF have said the violence only benefits the warlords, the police and criminal elements.

Advancing to congress

MORE than four hundred delegates from NUM will be attending the COSATU congress from 12 to 15 July.

Seventeen unions will be attending the Congress at Nasrec, Johannesburg.

The theme of the Congress is "Educate, Consolidate and Advance to Victory". The Congress will assess the progress of the federation and discuss ways to move forward.

It is expected important resolutions will cover areas such as strengthening the mass democratic movement, support for Namibia, action against the Labour Relations Act, building the anti-apartheid coalition and the need for peace in Natal.

There will be cultural days for workers on the 8 and 9 July at Nasrec, and again on the 16 July.

NUMSA congress calls for worker unity

THE National Union of Metalworkers (NUMSA) made a clear commitment to worker unity and building socialism at its second national congress from May 18 to 21 in Johannesburg.

Speakers emphasised the need to resist a concentrated attack by the state and capital on the trade union movement.

General Secretary Moses Mayekiso, recently acquitted on charges of treason and sedition, said workers had a duty to rebuild the mass democratic movement.

"NUMSA has committed itself to the unifying of the working

class in its struggle for a socialist South Africa."

"Socialism is the answer to social, economic and political problems", said Mayekiso.

The congress, attended by more than 750 delegates representing about 190 000 members, was opened by ANC veteran Harry Gwala who was elected honorary president.

Important resolutions at the Congress included:

- NUMSA reaffirmed its support for the Freedom Charter as a "starting point towards maximum democ-

racy".

- The union called for the rebuilding and transformation of the structures of the mass democratic movement. The NUMSA resolution envisaged a more centralised structure, not based on political ideology, starting at the street committee level.
- The congress noted the Labour Relations Act was part of the offensive by capital against the working class. The Congress resolved to bypass the LRA by replacing industrial courts with arbi-

tration procedures, and replacing unfair labour practices by strengthening the working class.

On negotiations, the congress indicated strong opposition to any negotiations with the Nationalist government before certain basic preconditions were met.

On the Living Wage, the congress noted the struggle for a living wage could not be separated from the struggle against the LRA, privatisation and deregulation. The congress resolved COSATU

and NACTU should adopt one set of living wage demands.

- On the way forward the union committed itself to socialism, and said the union must conduct itself on the basis of political analysis, open debate and democratic decision making.

The following office bearers were elected: Dancile Dube (President), Maxwell Xulu (First vice-president), Percy Thomas (Second vice-president) and Moses Mayekiso (General secretary).