



Watchmen in Johannesburg.

FOSATU is moving to help watchmen and workers in Watch Patrol Services.

In Natal they are weakly organised while in Transvaal they have no union. They earn a minimum weekly wage of R23,77 for working an 84-hour week. Because they are not well organised they have not been able to bargain for a fair deal from their employers.

FOSATU learned of their terrible working conditions through the complaints service in the Transvaal, the Industrial Aid Society and the complaint service in Natal.

The Wage Board is now investigating the watch patrol services and may fix a new minimum wage. FOSATU believes that it should help these unorganised workers in Transvaal as well as its own organised workers in T&GWU in Natal.

FOSATU has therefore sent two memorandums to the Wage Board making these demands.

1. A weekly wage of R50 with an increase each year. The increase should be decided after a study of the

- increase in cost of living for the year.
2. A working week of 48 hours.
3. A minimum notice period of one week - not 24 hours.
4. Three free uniforms a year. These must be maintained by the employers to protect them from rain, wind, sun and cold.
5. Watchmen be employed as permanent staff and not as casual staff. Many companies are keeping permanent workers as casual staff for many years.
6. Employers be prosecuted by the law for not keeping to the wage determination covering Watch Patrol workers.

EAWU GETS RECOGNITION AT FAGERSTA

The Engineering and Allied Workers Union has won recognition from Fagersta Steels (Pty) Ltd. The workers and the company signed an agreement on Monday, March 3.

Fagersta, a Swedish company near Springs in the Transvaal, has 260 workers. Half of them belong to the union. They make drill bits for the mines. This was the third agreement signed between a company and an unregistered union. It shows once again that unregistered unions can get agreements. The first two signed were Smith and Nephew and Kelloggs.

The Agreement states that management recognises the union and the union shop stewards. Union shop stewards will now be able to take up grievances and to negotiate working conditions inside the factory.

The agreement also permits union officials to go into the factory every Wednesday at lunchtime. The management will also provide an office for small union meetings.

In a press statement, Fagersta shop stewards said they saw the agreement as a step forward in the struggle of all workers for their rights in South Africa. The EAWU was also pleased by the signing of the agreement and said that it was the most important step in the history of the union, founded in 1963.

HEINEMANN WORKERS WIN CLAIMS

The Minister of Police will pay R21 359,50 to 20 workers and a union official who were injured three years ago.

In March 1976, workers at Heinemann Electric Company had a dispute with management. The police were called. They made a baton charge to disperse the workers. Many of the workers suffered broken limbs and head injuries and one worker lost the sight of an eye.

These events led to a number of court cases which ended in October 1979 when the Minister agreed to pay more than R21 000 to the workers.

The Minister has said that he does not accept the blame for what happened. But it is clear to us that the amount paid to the workers shows that the workers were innocent. It also shows that the police needlessly injured many workers.

The large payment after three years does not cancel all the bitterness. There should have been no need to call the police in the first place.

ADVANCE IN CRAFT STRUGGLE

WORKERS at Craft Industries are writing their own agreement. Soon they will meet management to negotiate this agreement.

Craft was one of the first MAWU factories in the Transvaal. The union has been active there since 1976 with no recognition.

Now management has seen the workers vote for their own shop stewards. The workers voted for five out of six shop stewards they had already chosen.

Workers from Craft have played a big part building the Union in the Transvaal. These workers have served on the Branch Committee and National Executive Committees for a long time.

At the same time, MAWU members at Craft have struggled to get the Union recognised at their own factory. The owner of the factory refused to accept the Union even though it was clear that the majority of workers supported the Union.

In 1979 the owner of Craft sold his factory to a company called Hubert Davies (Pty)