

# NUM News



OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE  
NATIONAL UNION OF MINEWORKERS  
DECEMBER 1988

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Mineworkers of  
Nambia demand  
democracy



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UNION  
NEGOTIATES  
PROVIDENT  
SAVINGS FUND  
FOR ALL  
WORKERS

INSIDE  
PULL-OUT  
1988 -  
THE YEAR  
IN PICTURES



## How Anglo rules mines

- Mass retrenchments
- Assaults of workers by mine security
- Banning union meetings
- Forcing mineworkers to work in unsafe places
- Workers intimidated by mine security on horses
- Derecognition of the NUM
- Not recognising shaft-stewards
- Closing NUM's offices
- Stopping telephone use
- Arbitrary charges against workers
- Refusals to negotiate wages and working conditions with shaft stewards
- Not allowing union officials to enter mine premises
- Stopping union officials and outside speakers from addressing union meetings.
- Bans on workers' songs at meetings and on mine premises
- Union meeting agendas censored
- Time restrictions put on union meetings
- Union meetings video and tape recorded
- Distribution of anti-union pamphlets
- Dog squads, and patrols by armed Casspirs and Hippos
- Practising racial discrimination
- Housing mineworkers in over-crowded compounds
- Encouraging of tribalism and ethnicity



SECURITY GUARDS ON HORSES: Anglo has increased surveillance since the 1987 strike

# WORKERS CHARGE ANGLO

*Survey discovers repression on mines*

Wide-spread complaints against Anglo American Mines have been made by black mineworkers.

Every day NUM offices country-wide hear chilling reports of dismissals, arbitrary disciplinary charges, physical assaults, random police-styled room searches and general harassment and intimidation.

NUM and an academic research organisation interviewed mineworkers at Anglo. Everywhere the story was the same. Anglo claims to be a model of "civilised labour practices" have been unmasked by the NUM investigation. No other conclusion can be

drawn than that profits count most.

Good industrial relations ended with the 1987 miners strike, say mineworkers.

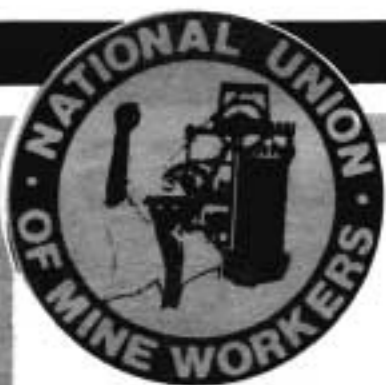
All major gains the NUM made before the strike for its members and black mineworkers in general are being taken away.

At Anglo American the very survival of NUM is threatened.

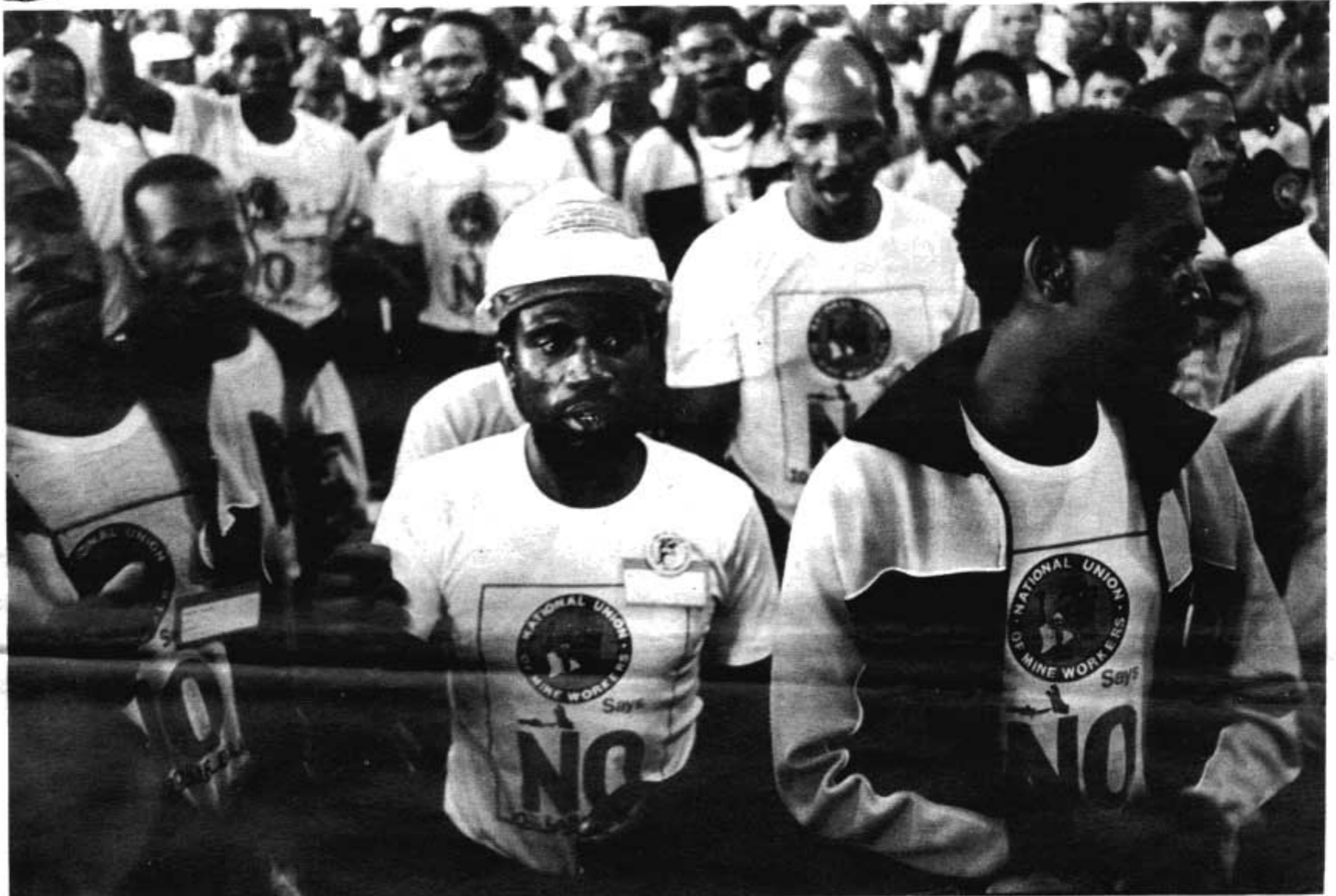
Some shaftstewards at Anglo say the minebosses want to go back to the unpopular system of Isibondas, Tribal Committees, Indunas, Liaison Committees and the like.

SEE FULL STORY OF ANGLO'S MINE CONTROL ON PAGES 8 AND 9





# 1988 THE YEAR IN PICTURES



## Workers under attack and fighting back

THE Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) is tougher and stronger after the many battles of the last two years. This year we saw the bosses and the apartheid state turn their attack on COSATU to full blast. But the organisation has remained a strong movement in the face of repression and a united front in our struggle against apartheid and exploitation.

I COSATU iyalqina ngoqina emva kwamadabi amaninzi kuleminyaka mibini indlulileyo. Kulonyaka sibone abaqheshi kunye nelizwe localucalulo behlasela i COSATU, kodwa umbutho uye wahlala ulukhaba nomkhonto phanti kwencinizelo yocalucalulo kumzabalazo wethu.

Aabahlaseli abavela kwi zwe localucalulo kunye nabaqheshi babandakanya oku kwe COSATU.

Sesosa seo COSATU e hloiloeng ke bahiri le 'muso oa khethollo ke hobane e hanyetsa taolo le se bitsoang matla a bona holima maphelo a rona joaloka ha eka re likonyana. Ba re hlasela hobane rona le balekane ba demokrasi re kopanya limilleone tsa batho khahlano le khethollo le bonoamali.

Tihaseho khahlano le federeishene e thatafalitse ho bopa letsolo le metso e matla.





NUM says 'NO' to the new labour law. It takes away many of the industrial relations rights we had won in the past.

## Law removes our rights

THE new labour law attacks the rights of all workers. It attacks the rights of workers to strike.

The act says it is illegal to take any kind of solidarity action in support of our struggling brothers and sisters. The Labour Relations Act says any kind of solidarity is illegal, and that the bosses can bring an interdict against the union for "illegal" strikes. Shopstewards could be jailed and union property seized.

Workers cannot strike on the "same issue" in a period of 15 months. But most recognition agreements say we must negotiate on wages and conditions every year. For example, now workers cannot go on strike for two years in a row.

There is a much more complicated procedure for going on a legal strike. The new Act gives the Inspector powers to delay the time when a union can go on a legal strike.

The new law gives the bosses the right to interdict legal strikes. The purpose of going on a legal strike was to stop the bosses from attacking the union.

But in the miners strike we saw that even when the strike was legal, the bosses still fired 50 000 workers. Now with the new law the bosses can go to court to interdict a union during a legal strike to try and force the workers to stop striking.

The new law says it is not an unfair labour practise for bosses to selectively reemploy workers after a strike. The Industrial Court now says that if a boss wants to reemploy workers, then

he must reemploy everyone. The new law takes away this right.

In the new law a union is seen as responsible for all strikes that happen and the union can be sued for these strikes.

The law attacks our gains in the industrial courts. It restricts the powers of the industrial court. Previously the decision of the industrial court was final, but now cases can get sent to a Special Labour Court.

Dismissed workers may have to wait years for an appeal, and it is in the interests of the bosses to delay.

In the new law the Minister of Manpower can define what is an unfair labour practise and he can change this when he wants to. In the past the Industrial Court said what was an unfair labour practise. Now the Minister can decide. The Minister is part of a bosses government so he will act in the interests of the bosses. Many of the rights around unfair labour practises workers have fought for will be taken away.

The law attacks rights workers have won. It says that it is alright to dismiss a worker who has worked for less than a year.

Before that the situation was no worker could be dismissed - no matter how long the worker had worked - unless there was a good reason and a fair hearing had taken place. The law makes unfair retrenchment legal.

Many unions negotiated retrenchment procedures on the basis of last in, first out. Now retrenchment can be decided by the boss or foreman.

# Workers resist the union bashing Act all the way

WHEN the apartheid regime introduced its union-bashing Labour Relations Bill the Minister of Manpower, Pieties du Plessis, said the bill would "hang like a sword over the heads of the unions".

The bill was the answer of the government to the militant struggles of organised workers, and to COSATU's living wage campaign.

Its aim was to attack our main weapons of struggle - strikes, solidarity action, blacking action and boycotts; to attack hard won legal rights by making unfair dismissals and retrenchments legal and by letting the Minister of Manpower decide what a unfair labour practise is.

### COSATU resists

At once COSATU and its affiliates condemned the bill as a major attack on the trade union movement.

Lunch-time factory demonstrations were held throughout the country. A detailed memorandum was sent to Botha's parliament explaining union objections.

But still the bosses continued to support the bill and ignore the demands of the union. The government pushed ahead.

In February 1988 the COSATU central executive committee (CEC) decided that a Special COSATU Congress be held to discuss the workers response to the restrictions and the Labour Bill.

### The Special Congress

The Special Congress was finally held at the Wits Flower Hall, Johannesburg on May 14-15. There were about 1 500 delegates from trade unions and the community.

The Congress decided to protest against the bill and to call a conference of a broad range of anti-apartheid organisations (Anti-Apartheid Conference).

The Congress further resolved to take peaceful national united mass action on June 6, 7 and 8 to protest against the attacks of Botha and the bosses on the working class and our allies.

In addition COSATU committed itself to organise, co-ordinate and unite factory based action against the Labour Bill and the restrictions placed on it.

The June 6, 7 and 8 protest action was against the labour bill, the restrictions on COSATU and the banning of the UDF and 16 other organisations. NACTU supported the action. It was the biggest, strongest and longest protest action in the history of our struggle.

It wasn't until the protest action

was made public that bosses started addressing themselves to the Bill. The bosses response so far had been that of tacit approval of the Bill; which workers understood as showing capital/state co-operation in trying to crush the labour movement.

In the middle of the action Minister of Manpower Pieties du Plessis suddenly said his door was open to discuss the bill. After the action SACCOLA said they wanted to negotiate with COSATU about the bill.

### Bosses should ignore bill

COSATU is demanding that the bosses sign an undertaking to ignore certain sections of the act. These are: Section 1 says that all sympathy or solidarity strikes will be illegal and which make it easy for the bosses to legally dismiss and retrench workers.

Section 27 and 35 which says you can only strike legally if you notify the Manpower Department within 21 days of the dispute starting and which says the Inspector can delay forever the time when a union can go on a legal strike. Section 67 which says that Industrial Court judgements can be kept secret from the workers, and Section 79 which says a union is responsible for all strikes that happen and that the union can be sued for these strikes.

At a meeting on 11 August SACCOLA finally agreed that those sections of the Bill which the unions objected to should not be made law. The Director General of Manpower was im-

mediately informed and a meeting was set up between him and SACCOLA, and COSATU/NACTU for the following Monday 15 to discuss the agreement between SACCOLA and the unions.

But the very next day, Friday 12 August, the government announced that the bill would become law on September 1.

The action of the Botha government sabotaged the negotiated agreement with SACCOLA and COSATU/NACTU. COSATU and NACTU refused to meet with the Director General of Manpower on Monday 15 August.

The COSATU executive met and decided that:

- only working class action can defend us against the attack of the Labour Relations Law;
- mass meetings must be called in every local and region to discuss the latest developments in the struggle against the dismissals and the Bill and to plan action on the Bill and the way forward;
- Talks should continue with SACCOLA on the basis that they stand by the agreement reached that the sections of the Bill COSATU objected to should not be made law.
- A standard COSATU letter where bosses undertake not to use those sections of the law COSATU objects to should be given to all employers by shopstewards for signing.

## Plans for workers' summit on law

COSATU will call a workers summit next year which will discuss the way forward on the LRA.

It has also been reported that bosses have started to use the new law to attack unions. Numerous interdicts have been brought against unions resulting in lockouts of hundreds of workers.

Most management has

refused to sign the letter saying they are prepared to sign a contract that they will not use the most vicious anti-union clauses in the new law.

COSATU also plans to hold a public commission of inquiry.

The plan is to bring together a number of world famous labour lawyers to make a judgement on the new labour law.



The June 6, 7, 8 stayaway was the largest in the history of struggle. Three million people did not go to work each day.





# 1988 - THE YEAR IN PICTURES

### The attacks include:

- trying to crush our unity with other sectors through banning UDF as well as its youth and civic affiliates.
- burning of COSATU from taking up all campaigns outside the shop-floor.
- police disruption of shopstewards locals and regional councils.
- raids in our offices and confiscation of documents etc.
- mysterious fires in union offices.
- the passing of the new labour law which viciously attacks the power of unions.
- mass dismissals, evictions and threats to sue for what bosses lose in strikes.
- the banning of the Anti-Apartheid Conference.

This repression followed the many anonymous attacks against us last year, including the bombing and the burning of offices.

But the bosses and the state are frustrated that this has not stopped the militancy of workers. COSATU is a powerful force in the huge industrial areas, where workers keep the wheels of the economy turning. Even if they ban the organisations, the spirit of progressive trade unions and worker militancy can never be rooted out.

The bosses and the apartheid state have COSATU because we challenge their control and power over our lives. They act against us because, together with our democratic allies, we mobilise millions of people against apartheid.

### Living wage

This campaign has become like a religion among COSATU and NUM workers. As miners we know that without a living wage, we will never have a decent life. We will never break the chains of starvation and poverty. But the bosses are trying their best to bury this campaign. The attacks which started last year continued this year. They used dismissals - even in legal strikes - evictions and court cases against the unions. They united among themselves: in this way they discourage some bosses in different sectors from paying higher wages. The unions can see that the bosses don't want to negotiate properly. In some sectors they offer even less than before because they are scared the campaign will grow into an even bigger challenge to bosses profit making.

However, the militancy of workers has not been dampened by these attacks. In fact it has grown as the year went on. Between June and August there were as many strikes as the whole

of the first half of the year. In these 3 months 50 000 workdays were lost, and that is not counting political action.

And in many sectors worker militancy led to important victories. NUM won on pension benefits.

### Labour Act

The campaign against the new labour law is not separate from the living wage campaign. The new law came after last year's living wage campaign. Bosses are happy that the new law by attacking our right to strike will lift the pressure on them.

The campaign against the Bill together with the crackdown on UDF and COSATU led to the Special National Congress of COSATU and allies. This was followed by the Three Day Protest Action (July 6, 7 and 8) that was one of the biggest stay-aways in history.

The success of the action surprised the bosses and the state. The state claimed there was still time to talk. However, 2 months of negotiation with the bosses organisation, SACCOLA, led nowhere. The new law was forced through on September 1 with the blessing of most bosses. SACCOLA refused to reject the bad clauses so that the talks could carry on.

In the last few weeks we have seen the bosses rush to use the new law. Many workers in different COSATU unions have faced interdicts which allow for lockouts and evictions. They have also threatened to take COSATU unions to court to make us pay for lost production.

How will we stop the bosses using this law to attack us? This is the question NUM must answer. COSATU will hold a huge mass summit meeting of workers to discuss this. This meeting will also discuss the need for one union federation in South Africa.

### Unity

The Special National Congress called for all anti-apartheid organisations to come together in a big conference. The Anti-Apartheid conference was to discuss action against repression.

The conference was planned for mid-September. About 80 organisations were invited such as Idasa.

The state saw that the conference would strengthen COSATU and its allies. Both and his allies would be further isolated with even less support. The conference was banned about 24 hours before the starting time.



NUM members arrive in Welkom on KwaZulu Day, 1 October



LEFT: General secretary RAMAPHOSA says union will resist attacks on our rights



NUM delegates at the Special Congress



ABOVE: Factory demonstrations against the Labour Bill  
BELOW: Scene from an NUM play on safety



LEFT: Safety before profits



Members of the COSATU national executive at the Special Congress in May which decided to call an anti-apartheid conference, and three days of peaceful protest



BELOW: The United Democratic Front was banned in February





General secretary CYRIL RAMAPHOSA: Progress has been made, but the Provident Fund has gone to an arbitrator

# Union negotiates Provident Fund

THE National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) has negotiated a Provident Fund for all mineworkers with the Chamber.

A Provident Fund is a way of saving for times of need - workers and management both pay money into it. The Chamber and our union have been negotiating the Provident Fund since August 1988 up till now.

All workers in job categories 1 - 8 underground and surface as well as monthly paid staff will be able to participate in the Provident Fund from 1 March 1989.

A lot of progress has been made in the negotiations. But the union has problems on a number of issues where the Chamber refuses to agree to our proposals.

The Chamber and our union have agreed that the issues in dispute should be taken to an arbitrator to give a final decision. The decision of the arbitrator will be in February 1989.

The union expects the Provident Fund to start working on 1 March 1989.

## How the Fund works

It is a benefit for Workers. The Provident Fund is aimed at making sure that workers get

money when they:-

- go on pension;
- die (this will go to their families);
- are retrenched;
- are dismissed;
- resign from the mines;
- are disabled as a result of accidents;
- have to pay for funeral expenses for themselves, or families; and
- workers will also get the interest the money they have in the Provident Fund.

## Management pays

In order that workers should get the above benefits the mines will pay: From 1 March 1989 to 30 June 1989 -

The mines will pay R1,50 for every R100,00 a worker earns, that is if you earn R300,00 per month the mine will pay R4,50 every month for you and it will be saved under your name by the Provident Fund.

From 1 July 1989 to 30 June 1990 -The mines will pay R3,00 per month for every R100,00 a worker earns, that is if you earn R300,00 per month the mine will pay R9,00 per month for you.

## Workers will pay:

From 1 March 1889 to 30 July

1989 - Workers will have to pay R1,50 for every R100,00 they earn. That is if you earn R300,00 you will pay R4,50 per month.

From 1 July 1989 to 30 June 1990-

## Money will be taken off

Workers will pay R3,00 for every R100,00 they earn, that is if you earn R300,00 per month you will have to pay R9,00 per month.

Money will be taken off your salary and be put under your account in the Provident Fund. The money paid by the mine for each worker will be added to the money deducted from each workers' salary.

It will be put in the worker's account in the Provident Fund.

The money put in every workers' account in the provident fund will be his money.

## Committee controls Fund

A committee with representatives from the Chamber of Mines and the union will control the Provident Fund.

Workers are asked to attend union meetings and ask shaft stewards to explain the Provident Fund to them. Further information about the Provident Fund will be given after the arbitration.

## MINEWORKER BRIEFS

### NUM workers win overtime case

NUM members won an important industrial court judgement which rejected an application by De Beers Premier Mine to force 1034 NUM members to work overtime.

The mine bosses wanted the industrial court to judge the refusal to work overtime as an unfair labour practise. But the court said the work was not urgent and that individual mineworkers were not committing an unfair labour practise.

NUM general secretary Cyril Ramaphosa said "with the continuing loss of jobs and the high rate of unemployment, a ban on overtime could increase the possibility of job creation".

Union members were already working very hard and producing adequately, he said. Comrade Ramaphosa said "workers should not have to work hard as it only serves to heighten exploitation".

Working overtime caused the disruption of home life and placed strain on family relations, he said.

### Polyurethane ban underground

OUR struggle to ban the killer foam polyurethane - cause of the Kinross disaster- took several steps forward when the Government Mining Engineer said he would ban the use of polyurethane underground from January next year.

The NUM called on the GME to issue regulations at once and to monitor the removal of the killer foam and not leave this to the mine bosses.

In South Africa two hundred and eight workers have died in polyurethane fires since 1977. The NUM said it was "saddened by the fact it took two years of vigorous campaigning and the loss of 7 more lives at Western Deep Levels to convince the GME to make this important decision".

The NUM has campaigned strongly for the banning of polyurethane. It is now up to workers to pressure management and make sure that they stand by the new regulations.

### May 1, and rises, at General Mining

THE union has signed an across the board minimum increase of 17% for workers on the A-level at General Mining Union Corporation.

Union members will get May Day off as long as they do not take PW Botha's holiday on the first Monday in May.

New minimum wages will be R690 for A1, R748 for A2 and R889 for A3. The new maternity agreement provides for two months paid maternity leave and two months unpaid leave with a job guarantee after the four months.

### Ergo party celebrates victory

ERGO workers had a celebration party - for which they each paid R10 - at Happy Valley, Tsakane on 17 December.

The happy workers were celebrating the decision of the Industrial Court to award R500,000 to the over one thousands workers re-employed by management after the August 1987 strike. Management had tried to withhold wage rises from the strikers.

## All must sign new membership forms

THE union appeals to all mineworkers to sign the new union membership forms (stop order authorisation forms).

The new membership forms have been introduced at the insistence of the Chamber. The reason that everyone must sign new membership forms - whether you be an old member or joining for the first time - is because subscription fees have been raised from R1 a month to R2 a month.

This decision was taken by worker delegates at the last

NUM National Congress.

This is the union's first increase in its membership subscription fees since 1983.

NUM members pay the lowest fees out of all the unions in South Africa.

The fee to join the union is only 50c. Old members will not have to pay this money as they have already joined the union. They must just sign the new membership forms.

The minebosses will try different ways to persuade workers not to join the union.

Workers should be warned of this and ask whose interests the minebosses have at heart when they condemn the union.

NUM's National Organiser, Gweda Mantashe said the union would be launching a massive recruitment drive in the new year to get workers to either join the union for the first time or to sign the new membership forms.

Mineworkers, NUM is your organisation.

Sign, or join for the first time without delay.



A happy scene from a previous congress

## Forward to NUM Congress

WORKERS should start discussing now what they would like to happen at NUM's National Congress in April next year.

It will start on 13 April and continue over that weekend.

The delegate system has changed from past congresses. In the past there were 50 voting delegates per region.

The new system is that there will be 25 voting delegates per region, and one delegate for every 1000 members. So, for example, the OFS has 73 000 members or 25 and 73 = 98.



# Wage rises beat inflation. But still not a living wage

ALMOST all wage agreements negotiated by NUM this year have beaten price increases.

But the Chamber of Mines still refuses to pay a "living wage" to workers.

From July 1987 to July 1988 consumer prices rose by 12.4%. In most cases, mineworkers' wages have gone up by more than this amount.

Minimum wages were on average 17.9% higher than in 1987.

The top ten wage increases are well above inflation.

The Eskom increase in January was part of a move towards parity between wage scales in the Western Cape and the rest of the country.

The January minimum was 39.4% above the rate in January 1987!

## TOP TEN PERCENTAGE WAGE INCREASES

Rank	Company	Minimum	% rise
1	CULLINAN MINERALS	R404	72.8%
2	ESKOM GROUP 1 NON-SHIFT *	R538	39.4%
3	CROMORE - MONTROSE CHROME (SURFACE)	R335	27.9%
4	TRANSHEX GROUP (Diamonds)	R542	25.2%
5	AFR. CHRYSOTILE ASBESTOS SURFACE	R269	24.0%
6	SAMANCOR MANGANESE (SURFACE)	R290	22.9%
7	CROMORE - MONTROSE CHROME (UNDERGROUND)	R367	22.7%
8	PERING MINE	R589	21.9%
9	AFR. CHRYSOTILE ASBESTOS (UNDERGROUND)	R300	21.5%
10	SAMANCOR MANGANESE (UNDERGROUND)	R373	19.9%

But the main problem with the wages, which are all for the A1 (labourer) grade, is that they were too low to start with.

Only three of the wages for labourers in the NUM are above the bare poverty levels set by the University of South Africa.

In September 1988, the SLL stood at R610 per month for an "average family". No mine yet pays a "living wage" to labourers.

The average minimum wage for all the 1988 negotiations of the NUM is R389 per month, but the median wage (the wage in the middle of a list running from the highest to the lowest wage) is only R350 per month.

The Chamber of Mines, in the wage negotiations that affect most of the miners in South Africa, rejected the union demand for an industry minimum wage of R350 per month.

So the lowest paid workers are still stuck on minimum wage rates below R350 per month.

The NUM still continues to fight a struggle with the bosses for

a minimum living wage for all mineworkers.

The mines can afford to pay. The latest results of Randfontein Estates gold mine show how profitable the mines are.

The mine made R228,4 million profit before tax in 1987/88. There were 14 769 workers on the mine in this period. So, an average, each worker contributed R1 627 to the mine's profits every month of the year.

Minimum wages at Randfontein Estates were R289 per month for surface workers and R330 for underground. Over 80% of the workers were on wage scales that were less than R600 per month.

The latest Randfontein Estates Annual Report says the mine has changed its "management style" radically.

Now it has "participative management".

## Management attitudes to living wage are wrong and unfair, says COSATU

COSATU has launched a strong attack against management attitudes to the living wage campaign.

COSATU spokesperson Frank Meintjies told an industrial relations seminar last month it was "hypocritical for those who enjoy a living wage to cry foul when other human beings demand the same for themselves".

The living wage is a human rights issue, said Meintjies.

"No employer has come out in public support of the notion of a living wage". This is very revealing to workers, he said.

### State and capital gang up

"Workers see the living wage as a perfectly moderate demand. But the state has labelled it a communist plot. And employers are ganging up with them, in what workers regard as an alliance of minority power and privilege."

Meintjies said employer attitudes through the years consisted of statements such as "You can pay them a few shillings because

they do not have the same standard of living" and "These people do not want all the comforts of city life because they actually yearn to go back to the homelands". The false idea behind this was that wages for black workers could be kept low because subsistence farming brought in extra money.

### Abolish cheap labour

COSATU condemns the cheap labour system, he said, and wants to see it abolished.

"We are saying the economy cannot function best if the mass of people cannot buy the goods they produce". Employers accused unions of making unreasonable demands which led to inflation.

They spoke of "growth" but not the need to redistribute. When speaking about growth, we should not just look at the results of a single company but of the whole economy, he said.

South Africa's economy was not growing but standing still.

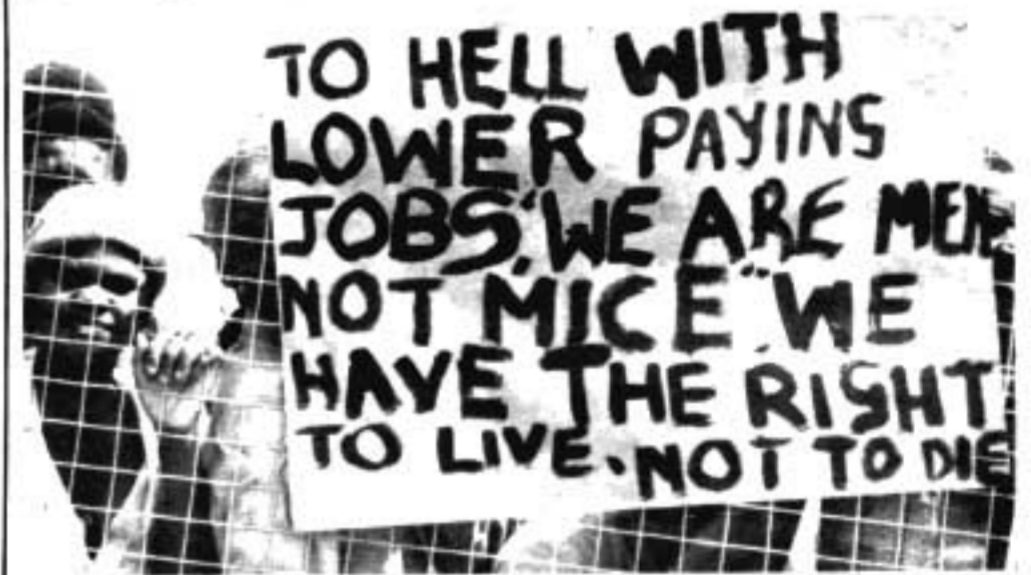
Management spoke of growth, but when it did increase its profits it did not put the money back into extending the business or creating new jobs. It often put its money in the stock market or sent it overseas.

"If there are high profits", and no job creation, the only conclusion we can draw is that our continued persecution under the cheap labour system is aimed at filling employers' pockets and making the rich richer.

### Workers are worse off

Workers had been driven to the point of despair with the collective bargaining system. They had to protect their real wages and "haggle over percentage points". There was no meaningful progress in living standards.

The living wage campaign was rooted in the hearts and minds of millions of organised and unorganised workers and could not be wiped out by management or the state, he said.



No mine pays a living wage

# WORKERS UNITE FOR A LIVING WAGE!

**LOOK AT OUR LIVES!**

1. LOOK AT OUR OVER-CROWDED HOUSE
2. LOOK AT THE ROADS WHICH ARE NOT REPAIRED
3. EVERY DAY FOOD COSTS MORE
4. AND WHAT DO WE GET WHEN WE ARE TOO OLD TO WORK? A SMALL PENSION. WHAT HAVE YOU GOT TO LOSE BY JOINING NUM?

WE HAVE NO MONEY, MY WIFE. THE MINES DO NOT PAY ENOUGH. BUT I AM SCARED TO JOIN THE UNION

MY HUSBAND, I WILL TELL YOU WHY YOU MUST JOIN NUM.

MY WIFE, YOU ARE RIGHT. I WILL JOIN NUM TO FIGHT FOR A LIVING WAGE





For South African workers, 1988 has been a year of struggles, setbacks and victories. Organisation is our chief weapon against the attacks of the bosses and the government. Let us unite together as never before in 1989. VIVA NUM! VIVA COSATU!



ABOVE RIGHT: NUM regions took up the Save the Patriots campaign  
ABOVE LEFT: May Day fell on a Sunday but that did not stop workers celebrating



LEFT: NELSON MANDELA was admitted to hospital with TB

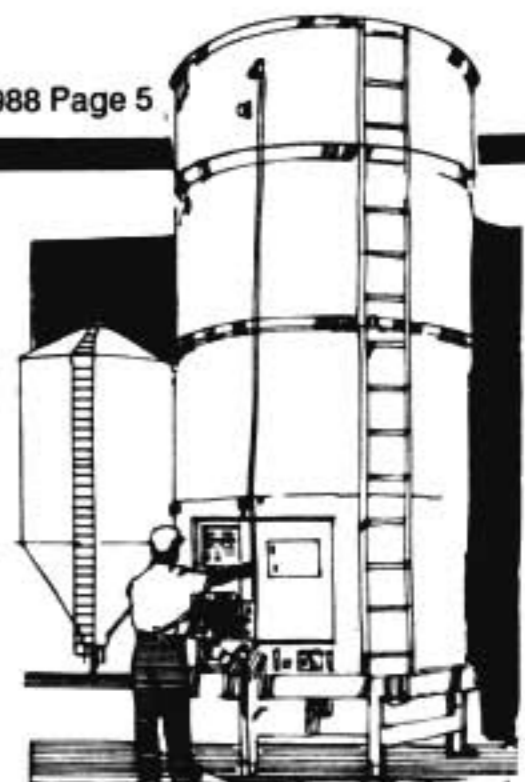
RIGHT: A striking hotel worker was shot outside a

BELOW: Workers stayed at home on June 6, 7 and 8





# Most people have no electricity. So why is Eskom retrenching?



**ESKOM'S decision to retrench workers and cease some of its activities has been rejected by the union.**

The decision which will affect over 5300 jobs in the next three years.

The National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA) and the Electricity Workers Union (EWU) have also supported the declaration of a dispute with Eskom.

## Unions declare dispute

The decision to call a dispute was taken after Eskom failed to consider the union's proposals of shorter working hours or to examine alternatives to lessen or avoid retrenchment of its workers.

Eskom seems unwilling to negotiate in good faith. Instead it seems intent on going ahead with its downscaling of its plant which will have serious effects on the coal mines which supply the power stations.

Eskom has claimed that the reason for the retrenchment is the over capacity of electricity which is not needed by its users.

Eskom's Chief Executive, Ian Mc Ray said: "Eskom's position of over capacity goes back beyond eighteen months .... in fact before 1983 signs of a drop off in demand ... became evident". He said retrenchments are nearly the last step.

Eskom's position is due to mismanagement and bad planning. "If they knew over 18 months ago, why did they only inform the unions about two months ago, that they intended to retrench", said comrade Gwede Mantashe, National Organiser of the NUM.

Comrade Mantashe said Eskom is trying to fool the workers and the public. The main reason was that they are mismanaged, and now workers have to take the brunt of this bad planning.

Eskom must surely be lying! How can they claim they have an over capacity of electricity, and need to reduce the workforce, when 80% of the country continues to live in darkness?

They admit that out of every ten households, eight do not have electricity. It is clear that Eskom is only concerned about profit and that the advertisements that they are concerned about people are lies.

## Profit not jobs

Eskom has put profit and not jobs as its main concern.

The rationalisation of the workforce seems in line with the intention of Eskom to privatise. Eskom started to retrench workers in 1986, and this was followed again in March 1988.

By the end of 1989 Eskom hopes to have reduced the workforce of 57 000 which employees due 52 000. Put simply, Eskom wants less workers to

produce the same or more electricity than they have today.

Eskom's decision to retrench is to make the company more attractive for privatisation. Eskom has refused to admit that it intends privatising.

They have refused to give the union any information of its future plans on privatisation, or even how it intends electrifying the country.

The union has asked Eskom the following questions:-

- What do they intend doing about bringing light to millions of our people in the townships?
- Why do they need to destroy jobs when other alternatives can be looked at?
- Why are they hiding information from the unions about privatisation?
- Why do they not work shorter working hours like other energy sectors in other parts of the world?

Eskom has had no answers to these questions.

## Union unity

When Eskom informed the unions of its intention to retrench workers, we worked closely with NUMSA and EWU as well as the white Eskom unions.

This was an important step in getting unions building unity and solidarity against job losses.

A joint memorandum was sent to Eskom, setting out alternatives to the intended retrenchment

programme.

Among the most important recommendations made to Eskom to avoid retrenchments were the following:-

- The introduction of shorter working hours per week.
- The trade unions believe that the working week of all workers should be reduced by five hours.
- The limitation of over time.
- All contracting work for maintenance and line and sub-station should cease at once and all these jobs be given to present Eskom employees.
- Placing an embargo on both the recruitment of additional and replacement of workers. This will allow for natural attrition and to encourage training and re-training of Eskom workers to fill future positions.
- Eskom must stop employing of temporary labour and consultants.

As a last resort the trade unions are willing to consider short time in order to limit the redundancies.

## Shorter working hours

The demand for shorter working hours would require no worker to be retrenched. Instead, Eskom would have to consider employing more workers.

Presently Eskom workers would work 40 and 45 hours per week. If working hours were

reduced by 5, instead of destroying jobs, more jobs will be created in the plants.

In the United Kingdom, for example, energy workers work 37 hours per week.

Eskom rejected the proposals without providing reasonable alternatives to the union.

It refused to provide reasons why the proposals submitted by the unions were not considered.

The NUM, NUMSA and EWU suggested, before it declared a dispute, that Eskom consider a commission of inquiry, to study the proposals of shorter working hours and the alternatives submitted by unions in its attempts to avoid retrenchment.

## What is Eskom hiding?

Eskom rejected the proposal. What are they hiding? Why do they not want the public or workers to know their plans?

In spite of the union's demands to stop retrenchment, Eskom has said that they intend proceeding with the retrenchment of workers. This they intend doing even though the unions have not signed the retrenchment agreement.

They have already notified workers that they intend implementing the retrenchment.

Energy workers want jobs not money.

NUM, NUMSA and EWU have committed themselves to fighting for jobs and preventing job losses.

## Moses Mayekiso out on bail

**MOSES Mayekiso, the general secretary of NUMSA (National Union of Metalworkers of SA), is out of detention on R10 000 bail.**

He and his four co-accused were welcomed joyfully by union members, friends and family following their release on Monday, 12 December.

Moses Mayekiso had spent 900 days in detention. A massive campaign of solidarity internationally and inside South Africa drew attention to his case.

Mayekiso and Paul Tshabalala, Richard Mdakane, Obed Bapela and Mzwanele Mayekiso face charges of treason, alternatively sedition.



Out on bail with heavy restrictions: NUMSA's MOSES MAYEKISO is greeted by his wife

## NUM branch leader stopped at border

**MEMBERS** of the NUM coming from neighbouring countries are being victimised.

One such case is that of Louis Lithakong. Lithakong, a Lesotho citizen and former vice-chairman of a NUM branch committee, went on holiday leave in August. His contract to work at Doornfontein gold mine was renewed.

But on trying to re-enter South Africa he was stopped by customs officials who asked him what his union affiliation was. After informing them of his NUM membership, he was told according to their records he was not a "listed" person.

"My passport had an unusual mark, an 'L' which was never explained", said Lithakong. TEBA in Lesotho failed to give a satisfactory explanation.

The Carletonville region of the NUM has taken the matter up with management - who deny any hand in the matter.







# We live with hardships Kinross two years on

**OCTOBER 1** is a very important day for mineworkers.

That is the day we remember the 177 comrade workers who died on 16 September, 1986, at Kinross goldmine breathing poisonous gasses.

This year the NUM commemorated Kinross by services in Welkom, Secunda, Rustenberg, Wits region, Cape Town, Phalaborwa and Northern Natal.

The Wits region remembered Kinross by a mass meeting in the Johannesburg City Hall. There were speeches, music and cultural performances.

In declaring October 1 as a health and safety day NUM is not only calling on workers to commemorate the Kinross disaster but is also calling for the declaration of the day as a paid public holiday.

## Work stoppage

A main point raised in the services was that in future the death of a single miner should be treated as a work stoppage.

The stoppage would protest against the interests of mine management to make profits at the expense of worker safety.

Speaking at Welkom, NUM general secretary Ramaphosa said: "workers should consider stopping work each time a worker or workers are killed - not as a strike - but as a sign of mourning the death of that or those workers".

NUM president James Molatsi said that as long as the bosses do not lose production whenever workers are killed in the mines they will do nothing about safety.

In 1986 more than 325 000 mineworkers and 275 000 workers from other industries observed a call from the NUM to mourn the 117 dead and show solidarity with the 365 injured in the disaster.

The Kinross disaster happened because the tunnel walls of the mine were lined with a special plaster polyurethane. Polyurethane catches fire easily and gives off poisonous gasses when alight. Kinross management were aware of the dangers.

Two years on, nothing has been learnt from the Kinross disaster because no proper inquiry has been held.

The Gencor mine officials were not blamed by the government. The white welder, who ran away and escaped the fire, was charged R100.

The NUM and its lawyers were silenced by inspectors at the Kinross inquiry and not allowed to ask questions or give evidence.

Comrade Ramaphosa said the inquiry was a sham. "The refusal of permission to the NUM to participate in the inquiry clearly indicates that management and the Government Mining Engineer have a lot to hide", he said.

Two years on the Government Mining Engineer (GME) has still not passed any regulations about the use of polyurethane and other plastic foams underground.

## Workers business

Two years on, the bosses, the Chamber of Mines in particular, still refuse to negotiate health and safety with workers in the mining industry. For many years the bosses have been saying that health and safety is their business.

Workers have already taken the struggle around health and safety further. This struggle has resulted in the signing of two health and safety agreements. This achievement has proved that health and safety does not belong to management, it is a worker issue.

## Organise or die - stop mines stealing our lives

ACCIDENTS continue to claim many lives on the mines.

In the first half of the year 265 workers died on Chamber affiliated mines. The number of workers killed in the same period last year was 361.

The decline in the numbers can be attributed to the active involvement of our members in health and safety issues in many mines.

However, there is still a lot of ground to be covered in this area. In a number of mines our members have started setting up health and safety structures like safety committees and safety stewards.

Further improvements will be made if workers on more mines can start setting their structures.

Whilst this is the case the bosses are busy, setting up their own structures.

These management safety committees must be rejected as they are not democratic and will not serve the interests of workers.

These committees will not have negotiating powers but will be the tool boys of the bosses' safety officers. The NUM wants committees that will negotiate health and safety with the bosses.

Whilst the bosses and the government are attempting to keep workers away from accident investigations and inquiries workers must make sure that they attend these as these can provide workers with a lot of information about accidents.

On October 1 a recommendation was made that workers must stop work everytime a worker has been killed on the mines. This is to mourn the death of the workers.

In 1987 workers at Bank Colliery in Witbank went on strike for 3 days after a worker was killed underground. The bosses on that mine were shaken up to an extent that no other worker died on that mine for the rest of the year.

This type of action has been employed by workers in many parts of the world and it has proven to be very useful. In these countries the numbers of workers dying from accidents has gone down.

This is a good example to follow if we hope to change the present situation. It is only when the bosses start losing money as a result of accidents that they will take safety seriously.

## Gencor Ermelo coal mine found guilty of 35 deaths

GENCOR'S Ermelo Coal Mines and five officials have been blamed for the death of 35 workers in a methane gas explosion at the mine last year.

The court inquest found negligence by the mine and officials caused the deaths. Thirty four of

the workers were NUM members. The workers died of carbon monoxide poisoning.

NUM assistant secretary general Marcel Golding said the decision of the court showed "the whole system of mining was not satisfactory, especially the levels

of ventilation".

Golding said methane gas explosions had increased in the eighties and the accident last year was the mine's third in five years. The NUM will be demanding additional compensation for the dependents of those killed.



Workers disabled and injured in the mines have to organise to fight for better compensation and accident leave. VICTOR MHLOMI salutes other workers on Kinross day.

## Elect union safety stewards to guard your work rights

A NEW law has given the mine bosses power to appoint safety representatives to deal with health and safety issues on the mines.

But these "representatives" will not have any power in making any decisions. They won't be able to negotiate health and safety issues with the bosses.

They are nothing but an extension of the bosses's forms of control. They will only act as advisors to the safety officers which the bosses will be appointing in line with the new law.

These safety representatives are nothing more than the old and rejected liaison committees dressed in different colours.

The response of the NUM's members to this has been total rejection. Instead, workers are electing their own safety stewards.

These safety stewards are elected democratically. Our union's members are electing the safety stewards despite the fact that the bosses are refusing to recognise them.

The difference between the bosses' safety representatives and our safety stewards is that safety stewards have the power to negotiate health and safety matters; can inspect the workplace to identify hazards; have access to the government inspectors; are trained by the union; can investigate accidents and can get information from the bosses.

The union calls on workers on all mines to elect safety stewards as a matter of urgency.

## ACCIDENT MONITOR

**WESTERN DEEP** - The NUM will be taking part in the inquest inquiry which will be held in February next year to look into the death of seven workers who died from breathing polyurethane gasses during a fire on 13 October at Western Deep Levels Gold Mine.

**ORANGE FREE STATE** - The tumbling of rocks at Lorraine Mine, No 2 Shaft tunnel, killed one worker and seriously injured three on 3 October.

**RUSTENBERG** - On 17 October six mineworkers died after the hoist went up and down without being operated. NUM members were refused permission to attend the inquiry after being told they weren't "properly dressed" - they were wearing t-shirts. Members should be aware that anyone can attend an inquiry and there are no rules about clothes.

**SAAIPLAAS** - The OFS health and safety official has been attending inquires about the deaths of 2 mineworkers in the same week at No3 shaft.

**WESTERNAREAS** - Oneworker died in a rockfall and several were injured underground at Western Areas Gold Mine on 13 October. NUM regional officials are demanding a full explanation of the cause of the accident.

**KLOOF GOLD MINES** - Three workers died at Kloof after a pressure burst on 13 October.



# Workers under siege on the mines

**STATEMENTS** about good working conditions by Anglo American bosses are nothing but a public relations exercise meant to fool the unsuspecting public, say the mineworkers interviewed in a NUM survey.

Since the NUM started to organise miners, significant gains were made in terms of wages and general living conditions. Anglo bosses never objected to NUM's right to organise at its mines.

Thousands of mineworkers joined the union and started challenging low wages and working conditions as a united workforce.

## Union under attack

After the 1987 strike the attitude of the bosses changed towards union members, shaft stewards and NUM officials. The bosses use different methods to weaken the miners power to negotiate. The bosses have taken up a campaign of rooting out the union.

The bosses are withdrawing recognition agreements signed with NUM. This makes it impossible for miners' representatives to take up issues with management.

With recognition agreements taken away it is becoming more difficult for mineworkers to go on a legal strike like that of 1987. Without strike action the struggle of workers for a living wage and better working conditions is very difficult. There is nothing they can do but complain to the bosses.

Shaft-stewards as true worker representatives have their power taken away by recognition agreements withdrawals. Then shaft-stewards suffer harassment ranging from dismissal for petty offences to physical assaults.

## Shaft stewards harassed

As one shaft steward said: "Shaft-stewards were told that the union at number two shaft has been destroyed and that control has been taken over by mine security." He said "It means that we do not talk about any matter of the union in the compound."

"We avoid each other at all costs, we do not even talk to each other, because we think we would be accused of engineering strikes." The bosses have appointed indunas and mine security to carry out the plan of crushing the NUM.

"After coming back from the strike, I have a peculiar problem. Whenever I'm seen with a group of workers, I will be accused by the indunas of trying to revive the union. They are sent by the hostel management and I'm wanted to

say what I'm doing", another shaft-steward added.

Workers grievance hearings and disciplinary charges are conducted with management without shaft-stewards. Where shaft-stewards are present they take part as observers or miners' friends as demanded by mine bosses.

As one shaft-steward said: "Shaft-stewards have been given observer status - just to listen, not to participate at all."

Anglo American's Coal Division Disciplinary Code is clear on this anti-union practice: "The role of the friend is to advise the alleged offender on the presentation of his case, act as an observer and, at the direction of the hearing chairman, may comment on the facts of the case or speak in mitigation."

## Facilities taken away

For the proper and efficient running of the union, facilities such as offices, halls and telephones are very important.

The mines and their towns are generally owned by mining houses. So the closing of union offices and refusal to offer NUM officials telephones by Anglo American mine bosses is a serious blow to the right of workers to organise themselves into trade unions of their choice.

## Songs and meetings banned

It is more and more difficult for the union to hold meetings with workers as such meetings are banned. If the meetings are not banned the whole machinery of obstruction is set rolling against the workers.

Workers are forced to give agendas and names of speakers to the bosses. Often outside speakers including union officials are not allowed to talk.

With singing of union songs strictly forbidden, workers remain quiet while mine security tape-record or video meetings.

Singing of freedom songs is banned under the pretext that workers insult Gatscha Buthelezi and P.W. Botha.

In some cases union meetings are cut short before finished. Speakers face general harassment as they are questioned by management about what they said at meetings.

After the 1987 strike such practices are widespread as shown by reports like these:

"We have to apply for permission seven days before the day of the meeting. Before the strike we were never required to give notice."

"Sometimes management cuts off the agenda, for example, the new pension scheme, the new labour act and wage increases."

"One shaft-steward was punished for having said something that was not on the agenda."



ABOVE: Overcrowded hostels are very usual. Conditions are unhealthy and workers have no privacy.  
LEFT: 1988 message on the t-shirt is to Anglo and is clear - Stop union-bashing!  
RIGHT: If meetings are allowed to take place they are strictly controlled. Singing is not permitted at many mines.

boarded a flight to Europe for gambling". Communist black-ops agents master-minded the NUM strike.

Top officials are spending and gambling away thousands of rands paid into union funds. Such are the anti-union lies fed to the mineworkers.

## Radio and TV

The mine bosses, not satisfied with the lies spread to mineworkers through state controlled SABC-TV, use their own public address system to influence the minds of mineworkers with anti-NUM news.

"The public address system was used. We were ordered not to sit about the union anymore," said a shaft-steward.

In an imitation of the bosses' friends in the SABC-TV, underground radio stations appear to be a new source of confusion as 'Radio Reef' was installed in one mine. 'Radio Reef' situated underground is beaming at shaft stations for mineworkers who wait for cages.

Some typical examples are: "Motlatsi and Ramaphosa

**THE PEOPLE** of South Africa have been living under the State of Emergency for more than two years.

With black mineworkers a 'State of Emergency' has been with us long before P.W. Botha declared it nationally.

The compounds like mines are owned by mine bosses who have full control of the lives of mineworkers as the suppliers of food and shelter.

Before the 1987 mines strike, the tight control put on mineworkers lives through the compound system, was relaxed due to campaigns waged by NUM.

After the strike this mine boss

'state of emergency' has been tightened. Workers are being forced back to the repetitive days before the union was started.

## Fenced compounds

The hostel compounds, housing up to 13 000 males, are fenced with 3 metres walls topped with barbed wire. The outside mine premises are security fenced with main entrance gates manned by mine security - the private army of mine bosses deployed on South African mines.

On entering mine premises mineworkers and non-mineworkers are subjected to security checks.

Mine compounds have their



own gates manned by mine security who do a rocheck sometimes with workers having to show armed bands attached to the arms with identification numbers like prisoners.

It is difficult for outsiders like union officials to enter mine premises and compounds as a result of tight security.

Freedom of movement and association is decided by mine bosses who say where workers should stay and go. Tribal housing is practised, combined with job differentiation. Groups taken to be 'tame' are housed near administration offices to make management's access to them easier in time of crisis to misinform them and cause divisions.

With small rooms with welded windows, housing up to 22 mineworkers, the conditions are horrible and unhealthy.

The bosses' 'shock absorbers' - personnel assistants, clerks, gang supervisors, team leaders and UJWUSA members - are housed separately and this makes it impossible for NUM to talk to them.

## Bosses' private army

Mine owners have a complicated security network covering all South African mines. The real task is to gather information on mineworkers' activities so as to hinder their organisation.

The information gathering on miners' extends to the use of physical force to suppress any dissent from mineworkers. The true nature of this private army became clear during the bitter 1987 strike where miners' suffered heavily at the hands of this army.

## Assaults

Incidents of brutal assaults, scarping, baton charging and shootings were widely alleged as the 21 day strike continued.

At the lower level mineworkers are harassed by

team leaders who get instructions from shift bosses. Disciplinary charges are pressed against workers and may lead to dismissal.

On the other end mine captains and personnel assistants closely watch the activities of miners. There is intimidation through complaint forms, parades, and interrogations on union activities and anti-union indoctrination lectures.

This scheme enters the miners' rooms through isibondas (room prefects), indunas (hostel prefects) and compound police. Workers are denied any privacy.

The core of the bosses' army is mine security which is allowed to equip itself with weapons.

With mine security clad in green fatigues patrolling mine compounds on horse back, the miners feel surrounded.

## Dog squads

Vicious dog squads keep close watch on any anti-boss activity. Miners are always aware of the possible results if they challenge management.

Like in the black townships and villages where SAD armoured vehicles are permanently stationed, mineworkers are forced to surrender to the bosses' control through caespits and hippos with teargas chimneys on top.

In times of crisis all these forces are set in motion against mineworkers. White miners are used as reserves. The police have been called in the past.

This open unholy alliance of the State and mine bosses supported by white miners against black miners' genuine grievances and legitimate demands makes conditions extremely difficult for NUM to conduct its normal activities to improve the general working conditions of the toiling miners.

The apartheid state, mine bosses and industry in general are clubbed together through the so called Defence Manpower Liaison Committees (DEMACOMs).

It is not surprising that the Administrative Manager of the Johannesburg Chamber of Mines, Col. Chris Du Toit is the chairman of the Johannesburg DELMACOM.

His approval of the committees as platforms for exchange of ideas between SADF, commerce, industry and local authorities is typical of the whole class of big businessmen who rule our lives as workers.

Through the DELMACOMs the unpopular Joint Management Centres (JMCs), structures set by state throughout the country to counter anti-apartheid activities, are given information about workers activities.

## "Spies" of the Chamber

**THE CHAMBER** of Mines secretly watches the NUM and union members. Secret Chamber notes on union activity are then sent to the bosses.

These are some examples of the "spies" reports from last year.

"On 13th December (three NUM officials) visited NUM head office and returned with pamphlets concerning December 16th to 26th and the UDF Update."

"In the Rustenberg area, there has been a massive upsurge in NUM meetings which have generally had up to 600 attendees."

"The NUM Central Executive Committee meeting was held at the Jomo Centre on the 18th October and the NEC held a meeting in Cartanville over the weekend of 24th October."

The Chamber 'spies' are asked to report on the details of union activity: meetings, membership and movement of officials.

In each region the headquarters of the Chamber of Mines information network are in the TERA office. TERA agents send in monthly reports. These are concerned not only with NUM activity, but also with COSATU and community organisations.

As one mineworker said "Radio Reef plays underground. It says NUM misled the worker and this resulted in strikes and dismissal. Workers must support the resident councillors and work councils. Prior to the three day stayaway there was a lot of propaganda against the union."

Another worker added: "They use training centre instructors to give anti-union propaganda to members on training courses."

"At induction points workers were asked if they were still interested in joining the union. They after workers were told that should they be found to be members they will be dismissed. No mention of the union should be heard amongst them."

## Propaganda against NUM

In an attempt to hasten the death of NUM on Anglo

establish and ...to join organisations of their own choosing without previous authorisation."

"Workers shall enjoy adequate protection against acts of anti-union discrimination in respect of their employment."

"Workers and employers' organisations shall have the right to draw up their constitutions and rules, to elect their representatives in full freedom, to organise their administration and activities and to formulate their programmes."

American mines a war of nerves is waged through anti-union pamphlets, newsletters and the so-called Monthly Tablas.

Thousands and thousands of pamphlets printed by both the bosses and the government are used to bombard mineworkers with anti-NUM propaganda aimed at discrediting the union and its leadership.

Retrenchments, dismissals, disciplinary charges have increased tremendously since the 1987 miners' strike with the mine bosses blaming NUM for these sufferings. Workers are urged to leave their union, and pamphlets confuse mineworkers.

Some typical examples are: "Motlatsi and Ramaphosa

"While we were discussing the lights are switched off."

"Only two meetings were held since the strike. Then we were told not to have meetings. They stopped the meetings because a worker who was not on the agenda addressed the meeting."

All these restrictions placed on workers and NUM take place as though bosses have never heard anything about standard labour practices as embodied in the ILO (International Labour Organisation) convention of 1948.

Before they plead ignorance, they have to be reminded that in other countries: "Workers and employers' without distinction whatsoever shall have the right to




**COMMENT BY  
NUM PRESIDENT  
MOTLATSI**

IT is clear for everyone to see from the reports of mineworkers that mine bosses and the state are out to reverse all the gains made since we organised ourselves into the National Union of Mineworkers.

The bosses want the NUM to operate as a form of a toothless welfare association of mineworkers. They have been entertaining this myth since our union was formed barely 6 years ago.

Our conditions then were so terrible that we could be likened with modern day slaves.

We were virtually owned by mine bosses without a say about

James Motlatsi

# Our defence NUM

our working conditions and wages - let alone political rights.

The brutal exploitation which has been going on since the birth of mining industry in South Africa has created massive wealth for a few white multi-millionaires. This at the expense of millions of mineworkers.

Our union became an indispensable weapon against the cruel treatment we got from mine bosses.

The mine bosses appeared to be tolerant of union activities so long as we were not disrupting the huge profits reaped from our cheap labour.

The historic 21 days struggle with mine bosses - supported by the state - exposed the real character of this section of the

bosses.

We met fierce resistance from the mine bosses backed by the notorious mine security and the apartheid state.

Since the strike the mine bosses in collusion with the state have been hell-bent on disorganising mineworkers by delivering vicious blows at NUM.

The message is loud and clear - eliminate NUM from the mines and go back to slavery, then a continuous flow of super profits will be ensured for ever.

Our main weapon against the bosses is organisation. We must accept the challenge of organising every mineworker into NUM - our only shield that can absorb all hammer blows delivered by mine bosses and the apartheid

state.

It is only when we are organised that we can act as a united force against the rule of capital and gun.

And it is only in a non-racial people's democratic state that we can gain full control of our lives at the workplace and at home.

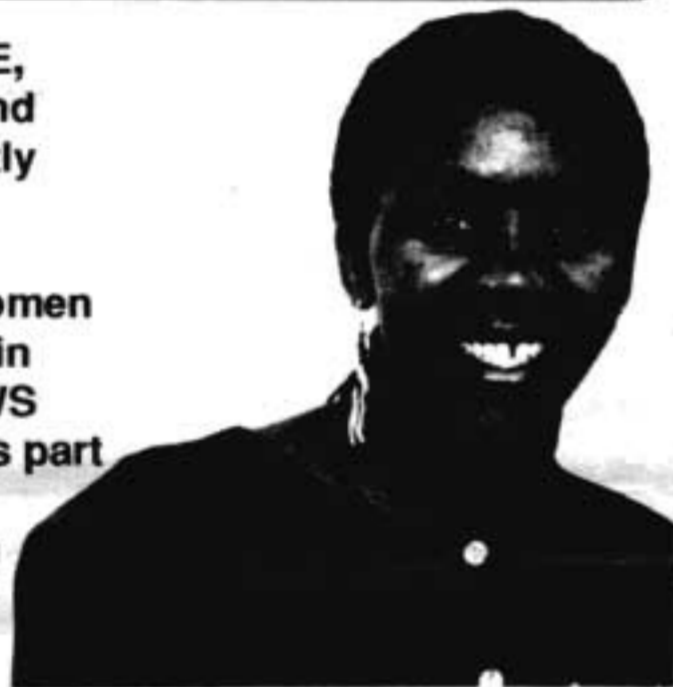
The road might be long and difficult but the march has begun. Sacrifices have to be made if we are to save ourselves from the cruelties of the apartheid system.

James Motlatsi



## PEOPLE IN THE UNION

**MANOKO NCHWE, NUM organiser and negotiator, recently returned from an international conference on women and trade unions in Ghana. NUM NEWS interviewed her as part of a new series introducing union organisers to our readers.**



*Manoko, describe your childhood.*

I come from an ordinary family in Soweto. When my father retired in 1981 from his job as a foreman the meagre benefits he received for his working life left a long lasting impression. My mother was in and out of work, fulfilling her role as a worker as well as a housewife.

I started school at the age of seven. One would wake up in the morning to find both parents gone to work, would wash up, dress up and leave for school without breakfast.

My parents used to come home tired from a hard days work between 6pm and 7pm. But despite the fact that not everything we wanted was given to us we were a close happy family.

**Did your parents have an influence on the fact that you became a trade union organiser?**

From my childhood I always had this sense of questioning. My father who once belonged to the ANC Youth League told us about injustice, the problem of the urban bantu councils and why they did not enjoy support, about homeland systems etc. This instilled a sense of analysing issues and discussing my opinion with others.

**What made you become involved in the workers struggle?**

I became involved in the workers' struggle because of the experience of others, namely my parents, the community I lived with and my daily interest in following the development of the then so called black emerging trade unions.

**What are your best moments in working for the union?**

I always feel victorious when workers take up a political demand and win - for example May Day. That marks a sure important slow, steady development of progress within our national struggle for freedom from oppression, apartheid and exploitation.

**What does your job in collective bargaining involve?**

We collect information, advise the union and workers and assist in negotiations with minebosses.

**Do you have strong views on the rights of women?**

My views on the rights of women are personal and very

strong. Women must be part of the mass movement, and organise themselves nationally and regionally.

Cosatu has expressed itself clearly on women's issues. Women in the unions should take the initiative and combine their efforts with those of women within the community structures.

Women should be at the forefront of fighting factory floor injustices such segregation of occupation based on both race and sex. Women are employed in a limited range of jobs, that are badly paid, repetitive and boring. They suffer sexual harassment during recruiting and whilst in employment. And most women do not have full maternity rights. Cosatu has guidelines regarding women's issues and campaigns which provide a starting place.

**Tell us about your trip to Ghana?**

Our trip to Ghana was interesting in that it was the first country to receive its independence from the British colonialists in 1957. The labour movement in Ghana, the Ghana Trade Union Congress is large and organised mainly in the public sector. But it is quite weak and there is a lack of shop floor power.

Workers in Ghana are not militant, but maybe this goes with tripartite workings (government, employers and labour unions).

**What are some of the problems faced by Ghana?**

Ghana's economy is experiencing difficulties. The country is heavily in debt to the IMF (International Monetary Fund). This results in everything being run down, low wages, extensive informal sector activity. There have been several coups since Nkrumah. The present government is a military government. People are unwilling to talk "politics" or express political opposition.



Mineworkers want their families close to them

## Families of mineworkers resist forced removal

**FAMILIES** of NUM members living at Port Nolloth, Namaqualand face forced evictions and removal.

There are about 400 people from Soweto, Crossroads and Transkei and Namibia living in tents on a salt pan in Port Nolloth.

"We want to know where we are supposed to go", said the squatter community of Bloukamp and Tent Town in a press statement. "We are South Africans".

Residents have taken their case to the Supreme Court after the local municipality issued eviction notices.

The nearest township where the people of Bloukamp and Tent Town can live in terms of the Group Areas Act is Upington, which is 550 kilometres away. There is no proclaimed area for Africans in the whole of Namaqualand.

The mineworkers want their families to live close to them. "The struggle of mineworkers is not excluded from the struggle of the community", said union members in a statement. "We are going to fight together until they get settled."

Conditions in the tenttown are harsh. In winter the salt pans flood the tents. Numbers are strictly controlled and residents are not allowed to build permanent structures. If they build structures for visitors over the weekend these have to be demolished before 7am on Monday morning.

### Mines won't help

There are about 120 tents and shacks in Bloukamp and Tent Town. Over half the households receive income from workers employed on the mines. The workers are employed by De Beers at Kleinsee and Consolidated Diamond Mines at Oranjemund. When workers approached the companies for support, the companies referred to the Group Areas Act and told union members that they are not prepared to interfere in matters other than work related matters.

While the community is not rich and housing conditions are appalling, it contributes to the economy of Port Nolloth. This was proved when 19 out of 26 businesses in Port Nolloth signed a petition calling for the residents to be allowed to stay.



# Forty years of the Nats? Thats no cause to celebrate.

**THE Nationalist celebrations for ruling our country for 40 years reach a high point on December 16.**

For the Nationalists together with their financial backers - monopoly capitalists - the celebrations mean "success" in politics and economy.

But in the words of COSATU president, Elijah Barayi: "Workers have gained absolutely nothing since the Nats came to power in 1948."

"To start with we were never consulted when the government was formed, they declared a white Republic in 1961, again without our consent. All the laws made by the white Parliament are thus imposed on us".

"With the new Labour Relations Act, all our past gains achieved in the post Wichahn era have been eroded. Therefore workers have nothing to celebrate on this 40th anniversary of Nationalist Party misrule."

"No celebrations for the exploited masses of this country", he said.

The success story of Afrikaner and Nationalist capital is at the core of the apartheid system - the control of the majority to enrich the few who constitute the ruling class. White workers support this system as they get fat pay packets at the expense of black workers.

The winning of elections by the Nationalist Party in 1948 began a new period of intensified misery for black people.

### Repressive laws

A vicious network of repressive legislation was thrown over the already oppressed people. Homelands, group areas, forced removals, and pass laws became tools to control the people. The people were opposed to passes - particularly when the pass laws were extended to women.

### Sharpeville massacre

In 1960 the level of anti-pass

campaigning reached its highest when demonstrators marched to various police stations without carrying passbooks while others burned theirs. On the 21st March, the police killed 69 African anti-pass demonstrators at Sharpeville.

The Sharpeville killings marked a turning-point in the politics of mass action.

### First emergency

To suppress the peoples' revolt the first state of emergency was declared and the ANC was banned. Thousands of people were detained.

Workers' organisations were crushed by the heavy blows of the Nationalist government. The militant SACTU was stripped of its leadership through detentions, bannings and imprisonment while others were forced to go abroad.

Huge profits were made by the apartheid financiers after the repression in the sixties. With the



**BARAYI: Workers have gained nothing since the Nats came to power**

The 1976 revolt marked another turning point in the struggle.

The determination to oppose apartheid by the youth re-kindled the spirit of opposition throughout the whole country.

### June 1976 uprising

In the meantime other Africans in the neighbouring countries won independence.

These historic events further stirred the feelings of resistance against apartheid among the oppressed and exploited of our country.

The 1980s saw the resurgence of the mass democratic movement. People formed their own organisations to control their own lives.

Civic organisations, youth congresses, student, women, village and chiefs' organisations were established throughout the whole country.

Workers as a social group formed their unions outside the legal restrictions put by the government.

The workers on the factory floor came to realise the link between their living conditions in the townships and compounds to their conditions of work and low wages.

As mass action increased against apartheid, an umbrella body for co-ordination of individual organisations and groups was needed - and so organisations like the UDF was formed.

### Workers move to lead

The militancy of the democratic workers movement was made a reality by the formation of COSATU and other organisations.

COSATU later adopted the Freedom Charter. Mass action reached its peak in the period between 1984 - 1986 when people started controlling their lives through democratic structures.

The government felt it was losing control and set the state machinery in motion to defeat opposition. Townships and vil- lages were occupied by soldier- with armoured vehicles.

Shootings and detentions became the order of the day. The detentions carried on for almost two years without decline.

While the Nationalist government and its supporters prepared for the highest moment of the 40th anniversary for their misrule and economic mismanagement on December 16, for the black working class and the oppressed masses the struggle continues.

December 16 also marks another turning - point. For it was on this day 27 years ago that Umkhonto we Sizwe conducted a wave of sabotage acts to mark the beginning of the organisation's armed struggle.

### Nothing to celebrate

With hundreds of people still in detention and scores on death row waiting for the hangman, millions being subjected to forced removals, young lives lost due to malnutrition and other hunger related diseases and the anonymous killing squads assassinating anti-apartheid activists and trade unionists, there is nothing to celebrate.

The Nationalist policies have divided our country into two hostile camps.

For the black working class the path is clear - an end to apartheid. It is only under a democratic government that the working class will be able to rid itself of oppression and exploitation.



**The Great Trek rolls again: but isn't it time the Nats moved on**

## Advertisement for job

The Sarmcol Workers Co-operative, SAWCO, a project of Numsa requires a co-ordinator for its two service projects (bulk buying and primary health). The new staff person will work with the current staff team of two who are working on SAWCO's production and cultural projects.

Candidates will need to have a proven track record in community/trade union organisation. Additional advantages will be fluency in Zulu and English, experience of consumer/primary health projects and a drivers license. A commitment to the building of democratic structures is essential.

Salary is at NUMSA organiser rates ( which include a car allowance). Please write to P O Box 156, Howick, 3290 enclosing a copy of your CV. You should also phone (03321) 2864/5321 if you need any further information. Closing date for the application is 31st December 1988.

apartheid industries growing fast, the number of African workers increased and they started taking jobs in commerce.

The militancy of this section of the working class became evident in 1973 when a wave of strikes swept the country. In an attempt to curb this militancy the Nationalist government allowed Africans to have their own trade unions subject to registration.

Three years after the workers strikes, their sons and daughters rebelled against the system of Bantu Education introduced by the Nationalist government in 1954.





**SOLOMON (MANGALISO) NONGWATI**, 48, is a mineworker who spent time on death row. He is speaking at the launch of an anti-death penalty campaign in October. He and Paulos Tsehlana were later acquitted after appealing. With them was fellow mineworker and shaft steward, Tyelovuyo Mgedezi, who will be hanged next year unless an appeal for clemency succeeds.

## NUM petition launched to save Comrade Mgedezi on death row

NEARLY three hundred people wait on death row to be hanged.

About 62 of these people have been convicted of being involved in anti-apartheid or political activities.

Three of the NUM's members were on death row. One remains.

He is Tyelovuyo Mgedezi. The other two, Solomon Nongwati and Paulos Tsehlana were released on 30 September as a result of their appeal to the Appellate Division.

Comrade Mgedezi is due

to be hanged early next year.

The NUM is planning to send a petition to the State President, PW Botha, appealing for mercy.

The petition says that the actions which resulted in Mgedezi's conviction were as a result of severe tensions on the mine.

A number of NUM regions have taken up the "Save the Patriots" campaign with other trade unions, youth groups and churches opposed to the death penalty.

# Court sentences on Delmas three are another blow to legal protest

**SOUTH Africa's longest and most expensive political trial, "the Delmas treason trial" has ended, leaving a gap in legal democratic politics.**

The UDF's national publicity secretary Patrick "Terror" Lekota, national secretary Popo Simon Molefe and Transvaal secretary, Moss Chikane, together with South African Council worker Tom Manthata were found guilty of treason.

Terror was sentenced to 12 years imprisonment, Moss Chikane and Popo Molefe to 10 years each, while Tom Manthata was sentenced to six years.

### Attack on UDF

The NUM said it was "shocked and angered by the sentences imposed on the Delmas trialists". "The men are regarded by the majority as outstanding and responsible leaders".

"They have been found guilty of expressing the will and hopes for the future of black South Africans".

"We salute the Delmas trialists", said the NUM.

Observers said the sentences came in a long line of restrictive measures by the government against the UDF and its affiliates.

It has been prevented from speaking and operating freely.

The Delmas judgement meant four of its most capable organisers are to be removed from the political arena.

Forms of mass action previously considered peaceful and legitimate could now fall outside the law.

Major forms of resistance in the early 1980's have come under consideration and have been declared illegal.

The judgement in the case--acknowledged the role of the UDF, its leadership and then called it illegal because of a "conspiracy" with the African National Congress.

Some of South Africa's best known leaders gave evidence in mitigation.

Almost all called for the unbanning of the ANC, saying that there would not be any meaningful change without the participation of some of the leadership of the people within the UDF and the ANC.

In the eyes of the majority of the people, the trialists are seen as "respected leaders" for their efforts in promoting a legal and non-violent political struggle.

The verdict on the UDF leaders and other leaders points to the growing use of the prosecution to neutralise opposition leaders.

### Trialists send message

In a message released to all South Africans after the sentence was passed, the three UDF leaders said they "viewed the present trial as an interim affair".

"Somewhere in the future lies a date when black and white South Africans will take a second look at these moments of our history", they said.

"They will evaluate afresh the events now in contention and our role in them. And since the privilege will belong to them, they will pass final judgement."

"We are convinced that theirs will be contrary to the present

one. They will vindicate us" the three said.

Of the 18 Vaal trialists, only one got a prison sentence.

Gcina Malindi was sentenced to five years imprisonment while six other Vaal trialists got five-year suspended sentences with severe restriction-amounting to the equivalent of banning orders.

This has never happened before, and will effectively remove the six from political life for five years without sending them to prison.

### Apartheid the cause

The KaNgwane Chief Minister, Enos Mabuza, Dr Van Zyl Slabbert of the Institute for Democratic Alternatives in South Africa (Idasa), Dr Sam Motsuenyane of the National Federation of the Chamber of Commerce told the court that the ANC was a long-established political organisation in South Africa and that they supported its aims and objectives-- although they were opposed to its armed struggle.

They told the judge that apartheid was the cause of conflict and violence in South Africa.

Dr Max Coleman of the newly formed Human Rights Commission said the judgement would narrow the parameters of legal resistance.

The verdict in the marathon "Delmas treason trial" will go down in the history of resistance as yet another turning point in South Africa's history.

An application for leave to appeal is currently being heard in Pretoria.

## Townships do not vote in gunpoint elections

ON October 26 township residents rejected apartheid's powerless town councils again.

Hundreds of thousands of students across the country did not go to school on October 26, and thousands of workers stayed at home.

The majority were not fooled by the claims of the Botha regime that the municipal elections were "equal, fair and free".

The government spent millions to either persuade or frighten people into voting.

Councillors promised fancy houses, the lowering of rent and some drove around the streets distributing alcohol. People

were allowed to start voting ten days before the elections.

The government had banned the UDF and 17 other organisations in the hopes of getting a high poll. COSATU was restricted from criticising town councils. It was against the law to call for a boycott.

At least two hundred activists were detained. Police and army roamed the township streets to "protect" voters.

But the people were not fooled. In Soweto only 2,8 percent of adults voted - many of those frightened pensioners, the blind and the unemployed.

In the whole of the Vaal Triangle only 5 417 people voted. A spokesperson for the democratic movement called it a "gunpoint election that failed to coerce our people to give political support to apartheid structures".

Once more this is a vote of no confidence in Botha's constitutional initiatives", he said.

## Conference banned, but participating organisations move towards unity

THE Anti-Apartheid Conference which was planned for the 23 to 25 September was banned hours before it was to take place.

Once again the regime exposed itself, and what it means by its political "reform": the silencing and repression of any democratic opinion.

COSATU officials were put under restriction orders. Eleven other progressive leaders in Cape Town were detained.

Harassment of a number of unionists throughout the country was also reported.

Expected to attend the conference were delegates from more than 70 organisations including included student, youth, women, religious, civic, business, institutions, political, sport and cultural organisations.

Amongst these were many organisations previously not aligned to the progressive movement like the Black Management Forum, SABTA, NAFCOC National Soccer League, National Professional Soccer League, South African Soccer Federation, Seoposengwe Party, Inyandza and many other organisations which have taken a stand against apartheid.

The two main themes of the conference were "unity and organisation against repression" and "one person one vote in a democratic South Africa."

The decision to hold an Anti-Apartheid Conference was taken at the COSATU Special Conference in May this year called to look at the repressive strategies used by the state against the mass democratic movement.

Worker delegates said it was important to develop a broad anti-apartheid alliance to withstand the repression strategies used by the government. They said there are many organisations which are not part of the democratic movement but are against apartheid. This group is seen by the government as moderates and they together with the imperialist forces are working hard to win them over to their side.

"The government must not succeed in creating junior partners amongst our people", said a prominent leader in the democratic movement.

The Anti-Apartheid Conference would have offered the democratic movement a chance to give these groups direction and win them over to our side of the struggle.



# Workers wait for Mandela's release

NELSON Rolihlahla Mandela was born in Qunu, near Umtata, Transkei, on July 18 1918.

His father, Henry, a chief of the Tembu people and his mother Nonqaphi named him "Rohilihla" which means stirring up trouble.

## Defied apartheid laws

He joined the ANC in 1944, and became a leading member of its Youth League. Mandela played a leading role in the mass action of the time. He was volunteer-in-chief during the Defiance Campaign of 1952 leading 8 500 volunteers who defied apartheid laws and went to jail.

After the resounding success of the Defiance Campaign, he was banned. His banning remained in effect for almost his entire life as a free man. But it did not stop him from helping organise the historic Congress of the People where the Freedom Charter was adopted.

In 1956, Mandela and 155 other leaders were arrested on a charge of high treason arising from the Congress of the People. They were acquitted after four years on trial.

Mandela was temporarily unbanned in 1961. He spoke in favour of a three day national strike against the declaration of a "racist" republic without the consent of the majority. It was also at this All in Africa Conference, attended by 1 500 delegates, that Mandela made it known that with all channels for non-violent protest closed, the ANC refused to surrender. A new phase was to begin - armed struggle.

Umkhonto we Sizwe was formed in November 1961, and Mandela was appointed its Commander in Chief. He slipped out of South Africa in 1962 to arrange military training. On his return he continued to work underground.

## Arrested

He was captured near Pietermaritzburg in 1962 and sentenced to five years imprisonment for leaving the country illegally. Soon after other Umkhonto leaders were arrested at Rivonia near Johannesburg. Mandela joined Mbeki, Mhlaba, Sisulu, Mlangeni, Kathrada, Goldberg and Motsoaledi - on a charge of sabotage. They were sentenced to life imprisonment on June 12 1964.

Mandela served his sentence on the notorious Robben Island until 1982, when he, Sisulu, Mlangeni, Mhlaba and Kathrada were transferred to Pollsmoor prison outside Cape Town.

## World calls for release

On July 18 this year millions of people locally and internationally joined together to celebrate his 70th birthday.

One of the biggest music concerts ever held was at Wembley stadium in Britain in honour of him. In his own country major open-air festivals were banned by his jailers.

In August this year Mandela was admitted to Tygerberg Hospital for treatment of tuberculosis contracted in apartheid jails. Currently he is kept at the Victor Verster prison near Paarl.



**MANDELA'S FREEDOM WILL BE A VICTORY OF OUR STRUGGLE**

IN past weeks there has been much talk that Nelson Mandela and the other Rivonia trialists are to be released. Mandela has now left hospital where he was being treated for TB and is being kept at a warder's house at Victor Verster prison near Paarl.

Harry Gwala was released a few weeks ago.

Progressive organisations and trade unions throughout South Africa are intensifying the campaign to increase pressure on the government to release the leaders.

There are several reasons why Botha is thinking of releasing the Rivonia trialists. Botha's state of emergency has failed to crush the people into submission. By releasing the leaders he hopes to divide our organisations, rescue his reform plans, and save the puppet councils and the Great Indaba.

These attempts are doomed to failure. The release of our leaders will be a victory for the people of South Africa. It will take us further along our path of liberation.

People throughout the world are demanding an end to apartheid and the release of political prisoners. Overseas countries are imposing sanctions. Botha is being forced to consider releasing Mandela to avoid being crippled by sanctions and to regain acceptance into the international community. But South Africa won't be accepted back into the international community until our people are completely free.

The releases of Mandela, Sisulu and others will be a serious blow to the regime. We can expect increased repression in an attempt to minimise the effect of the comrades release. Botha will attempt to neutralise the leaders, just as he attempted to neutralise Govan Mbeki. In this way he will try to prevent them from taking their rightful place as leaders of the people and their organisations.

The best way to prepare for the release of our leaders is to join and strengthen the structures of the democratic movement, at national and local level.

The release of Mandela should be discussed in NUM's structures: at branch level, at shaft level and in every hostel room. We must be well prepared to welcome our honorary president and his colleagues.

## Welcome home to Harry Gwala!

THEMBA Harry Gwala was welcomed on his early release from prison by many well-wishers.

In a message the NUM said: "the National Union of Mineworkers was formed in 1982 during your absence."

"We have been inspired by your unwavering commitment to the struggles of the workers in South Africa, and your patriotic contribution towards building our nation."

"The sacrifices you have made to our noble cause will go down in the pages of the people's history."

"We, the mineworkers, welcome you to the mass democratic and trade union movements."

"Mandela, Sisulu and your former inmates in the prisons of apartheid remain a constant source of hope and inspiration to our members, and we shall not rest until they are free."

Comrade Gwala was sent to Robben Island in 1977.

During the sixties he served eight years.

## In Madhiba's own words

### On the ANC's policy of non-racialism

We of the ANC had always stood for a non-racial democracy, and we shrank from any action which might drive the races further apart than they already have.

### On the violence of apartheid

Apartheid is the rule of gun and the hangman. The hippos, the FN rifle and the gallows are its true symbols. These remain the easiest resort, the ever-ready solution of the race-mad rulers of South Africa.

### On workers rights

You must protect and defend your trade unions. If you are not allowed to have your meetings publicly, then you must hold them over your machines in the factories (and mines), on the trains and buses as you travel home.

You must have them in your villages and shanty towns (and compounds).

### On the need for unity

We face an enemy that is deep-rooted, an enemy entrenched and determined not to yield. Our march to freedom is long and difficult. But both within and beyond our borders the prospects of victory grow bright.

The first condition for victory is black unity. Every effort to divide blacks, to and pit one black against another, must be generously repulsed. Our people - Africans, Indians, Coloured and democratic whites must be united into a single massive and solid wall of resistance, of united mass action.

Our struggle is growing sharper. This is not the time for the luxury of division and disunity. At all levels and in every walk of life we must be submerged to the achievement of a single goal - the complete overthrow of apartheid and domination.

The most well known political prisoner in the world is NELSON MANDELA. NUM members hold up a banner of our honorary president. INSET: Women wish Mandela better health when he was recently admitted to hospital for treatment of tuberculosis.



# PAWCO co-operates to survive

A CO-OPERATIVE (co-op) is a small factory or farm run and democratically controlled by the workers who share in the decisions and proceeds.

The Phalaborwa Workers' Co-op (PAWCO) began making T-shirts in March 1988. There are 50 members, all working half-day shifts to share the available work among as many people as possible.

At first the co-op experienced many of the problems that co-ops have in starting and surviving economically.

But in the last two months PAWCO has reached a turning point.

The co-op is reaching monthly production targets and their selling strategy has improved. Sales money from the T-shirts is coming in, and they have started to pay regular although very low wages to worker members.

## No easy task

PAWCO's development has taken place with limited outside back-up. Phalaborwa is five hours drive from Johannesburg, in the heart of the right-wing Northern Transvaal.

Progressive organisation there has been under siege, and few structures are still functioning.

The development of PAWCO has been based very largely on the direct initiative of its members.

After 390 Foskor workers were dismissed in May 1986, the NUM NEC backed the idea of setting up a co-op.

**Do you know who makes the bright union t-shirts we wear? NUM members dismissed during the 1986 Foskor strike have set up a t-shirt making co-operative in Phalaborwa. Every time we buy a union t-shirt we help promote the workers' co-op**



Union members wear their thoughts on their backs

But setting up the project was not an easy task. Workers were scattered, and many were trying to find work - although this was a disheartening process: "If you look for a job, you'll never find one if you were dismissed from

Foskor. They just think you are a terrorist."

"Some of us did understand that if we can operate the promised co-op, it will help to strengthen the union in our region, and help support our

families", said a co-op member.

## Low wages

"No matter how the salary may be, even if it isn't fixed and doesn't come monthly, the co-op can be useful to us."

In September 1986, the t-shirt machine was bought, and workers went to Johannesburg for training at the company which supplied the machine - which lasted three hours.

"We tried to print, but it wouldn't come. But we kept trying. We were pulling hard. There was a lot to be done, and we didn't have our own transport - we just used our own few cents to go to get quotes for electricity, plumbing, and carpentry."

"For plumbing, we decided we should just dig ourselves. By this time, we were 25, because the news had gone out that the machine had arrived. We needed a plumber, but the members resolved not to just rely on other people - we've got our own hands - let's take a spade and dig ourselves."

## All must work hard

"Then, when we started digging, some workers were lazy, and refused to dig the hole. So when we'd finished, we met, and we decided those workers who were lazy had just discharged themselves from the co-op."

"Because we had resolved together that we all have to dig, that we have to do the work ourselves, and not wait for someone else to do it for us."

Members from PAWCO then visited the Sarmcol Workers Co-op in Natal to get advice. In March 1988, they started production.

## 'A big pot of porridge for everyone to share'

THE history of PAWCO has its roots in worker struggles a few years ago.

The NUM started organising at Foskor in Phalaborwa in early 1984.

"During that time, it wasn't so simple to organise workers," explains Charles Ramahlalwa, shop steward chair from Foskor, and now chair of PAWCO. But by late 1984, the NUM had organised majority support at key mines in the region.

When Cyril Ramaphosa, NUM General Secretary, visited the region Lebowa police detained him. Workers said they would not go to work until he is released.

Nearly 400 workers who did not arrive for work were dismissed.

In a court settlement, Foskor management agreed to reinstate the workers when they had vacancies. But they failed to keep the agreement.

On 12 December 1985, NUM members decided to have a three hour work stoppage around the reinstatement issue.

Foskor management gave workers a 12 noon deadline to be

back at work, or face dismissal. But when the buses came to fetch them from the hostels, there were only half the usual number.

By the time all eleven buses arrived, time was running out. And when they arrived at the Foskor entrance, management and security were out in force. They told the workers the buses could only go in one at a time.

"We were quite sure and aware that only two or three buses can get in before the deadline. Workers were very angry", said Stanley Matebula, a former Foskor shop steward and now secretary of PAWCO.

"They alighted from the buses, and just started to march back to Namkgale on foot.

When they arrived at the the entrance to the township, Lebowa police ambushed them. Workers were beaten, many were injured, we were all forced to scatter and seek refuge in the community."

Later that day, workers regrouped at the hostel, and decided to go on strike.

"After the first three days, man-



Members of PAWCO making t-shirts

agement realised that now we are serious, and they stopped supplying us with food, and started to charge workers R1.50 for a plate of food."

"It was then that we had to rely on the support from the community."

"So when people came to speak to their relatives at the fence, we told them not to bring just a small plate of food for their relative, but to bring a huge pot of porridge, for everyone to share."

Every day, management threatened workers with dismissals if they did not return to work by certain deadlines.

"After seven days in which no

were transferred to work chopping bushes in the mountains.

One day, one of the workers was assaulted by an armed security guard, and his hand was broken. When an attempt was made to separate one of the workers off again, they refused.

This refusal led to their summary dismissal. When the news reached Foskor, workers staged a sit-in.

That night, Foskor workers joined workers from Phalaborwa Mining Company (PMC) in a meeting. Police opened fire, killing one worker.

This incident sparked a war in the Namagkale community. Police recruited the assistance of Renamo soldiers from their 'secret' training camp nearby.

The Renamo soldiers ran amok in the township. At least twelve people were killed, scores injured and many arrested in the following weeks.

Then, on May 1st, against the backdrop of this township siege, NUM workers supported the national stayaway call. The entire workforce of 1 800 workers was dismissed.

After negotiations with the NUM, management agreed to reinstatement - but when workers arrived, 390 were turned away.

These dismissed workers decided to build a co-op, as a means of survival.

However, when they returned to work, five key union leaders





In the Welkom mineworkers play, Skop the team boss who rules his team with an iron fist is forced to seek the help of the personnel officer who drinks on the job and takes bribes. The play was performed by worker actors during NUM's Kinross commemorations in Welkom on October 1.

## Mineworker play about a team boss and a sad young migrant

**MINEWORKERS** in Welkom are also actors. They have produced a popular play.

It is the story of a young man living in the rural areas. He tells his wife that he plans to go and work on the mines to earn money. She is very worried for him, but he leaves her and goes.

At the mine the young man meets Skop, the team boss. He is a short strong man with a big stomach, who rules his team with an iron fist.

The play also introduces the black personal mine officer on the mine who drinks and take bribes.

### Bossy miner

There is also a white miner who is bossy and hard-faced. He speaks only to give orders.

He spends his time underground whistling, reading the newspaper and eating lunch

while the mineworkers dig out the gold.

Some of the workers reject Skop's iron rule. But he is in the middle between them and the demands of the white miner.

The white miner demands Skop do more blasting so as to increase production.

The white miner says his wife is complaining because he has not brought home a production bonus.

### Blasting accident

It is easy for the white miner to tell others to do things, because he seldom goes to where the work and blasting is. Of course there is an accident.

The young man from the rural areas has his legs crushed by falling rock. When he goes home, his wife says he is no use because he can no longer earn money.

She leaves him. Angry and without hope, the young man commits suicide by sticking a

knife in his heart.

The play was performed at Welkom's Kinross Day commemoration. The audience of twelve hundred workers laughed and commented as they watched the truth of their lives, the suffering, the struggles and the victories.

### Forming cultural groups

The Welkom play was produced and performed by workers for workers. The actors were playing characters they understood. For example, Skop was played by a team boss and the role of the injured young man was acted by a branch chairman who had been dismissed for supporting the June stayaway.

NUM members in some regions are coming together to form cultural groups. Forward, comrades, with building our workers culture.

## Acting out the struggle

A NEW book called *Organise and Act* describes how workers in Natal began to make plays.

They organised themselves around making and performing plays because they realised united action does not just mean political struggle and the fight for union issues alone.

The creative side of people must be encouraged because "cultural work is important in broadening and deepening understanding of working class politics and principles".

The book looks at the plays, the worker actors and the problems and triumphs of the Natal workers theatre movement from 1983 to 1987.

As the book says: "There is a long history of working class struggle in South Africa. But it is only over the last few years that workers have organised to fight their oppression on the cultural front."

"In their poems and plays and songs they put forward their own views about how they see the world and how they would like to change it. They tell stories of their exploitation, they talk about their history of struggle against oppression and about their organisations and their leaders."

"They have begun to take culture out of the hands of the establishment and create new forms that are meaningful to the democratic forces that are working for change."

The first chapter describes the history of *The Dunlop Play*. This play served as an inspiration not only to the workers of Natal but elsewhere in South Africa.

Another chapter deals with culture under the State of Emergency. Against the backdrop of



Scene from 'The Long March'



war in the townships worker actors turned to producing educational plays telling of township conditions.

Writing about the success of *The Long March*, the story of the struggles of the Sarmcol workers, the author says: "There are no recipes for making plays. There are certain techniques and exercises - and those can be learnt. The skills of making scenes and acting comes with a lot of practise."

"Co-operation and collectivity were the key-words during the creative process of *The Long March*. Everyone had the right to contribute and everyone's opinion was valid."

The book says that there are differences between plays for mobilisation and plays for education. Plays for mobilisation mobilise support for the workers and their particular struggles.

Educational plays often tell of worker problems and lives. They show how migrant labour and capitalism exploit workers, and warn of some of the danger rural workers face when coming to the towns.

The book "ORGANISE AND ACT" is by Astrid von Kotze, and it is published by Culture and Working Life Publications, University of Natal. NUM cultural groups can get copies from our union head office.

## A history of the beer brewing war

THE sale and drinking of alcohol has been used by the government to control the people.

The story of the history of alcohol in South Africa is told in a new book *Brewers, Barrels and Boycotts*.

The mine bosses wanted workers to drink at first. If workers spent their money on drink they would stay and work on the mines for a longer time. But then the bosses thought workers drank too much.

In 1897, the bosses asked the

government to ban liquor for Africans on the Witwatersrand.

In the 1920's and 30s many thousands of people came to live in the cities.

Many women made a living by brewing beer. The police made war on the women brewing beer - but the women had many tricks to hide their beer.

The book is written by Paul la Hawse of the Wits History Workshop, and is published by Raven Press.



Enter the NUM cartoon and drawing competition. 'The Miners' is a woodcut by a black Namibian artist

## COMPETITION

NUM News is running a cartoon and picture competition for workers who draw in their spare time. The subject is "DAILY LIFE ON THE MINES".

There are two categories: cartoons and drawing. Prizes will be books and drawing materials. Send your entries before the end of January to NUM News, PO Box 2424, Johannesburg 2000. Names and full addresses must be written on the back of entries.



# SARU and NUM have plans to start up rugby on mines next year

**PLANS by the non-racial South African Rugby Union (Saru) to enter the mines with the aim of joining forces with the rugby playing membership of the National Union of Mineworkers could become possible next year.**

This emerged at Saru's council meeting in Port Elizabeth during which the anti-apartheid rugby body effectively placed the ball back into the South African Rugby Board's (SARB) court regarding unity talks.

There has been ongoing talks last year between the NUM, the biggest affiliate of the giant Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and the South African Council of Sport (Sacos) unit, Saru.

"This is not something new," said Saru president Ebrahim Patel.

"It is an on-going process which started last year between Saru and the NUM.

"We want to put into effect what we discussed with the NUM next year. Where possible, the project will include holding coaching courses on mines to be conducted by Saru.

"We will also look at the possibility of bringing NUM members to watch some of our games," Patel said.

Saru may not achieve its primary aim of embracing all mine rugby players in just a year, but next year will certainly form a base on which Saru could gradually assess progress in as far as taking rugby to the people is concerned.

The move by Saru to include the NUM rugby players is likely to boost the number of players of the non-racial body because the NUM has hundreds of rugby playing members at almost every mine in the country.

But, it has been difficult for NUM members to play non-racial rugby because mine bosses threatened them with dismissals

and deprived them the use of mine facilities.

Meanwhile, Saru's council this week among other issues discussed whether to meet SARB with a view to forming one body.

A few weeks ago, after SARB president, Dannie Craven's controversial "African initiative," which involved talks with the outlawed African National Congress and a subsequent SARB executive committee meeting that followed, it was decided to extend an invitation to Saru to discuss the future of both organisations.

"We discussed the SARB's invitation and have written to them," said Saru president Ebrahim Patel.

"However, we will not reveal the contents of the letter at this stage. We will issue a public statement only when the SARB has replied," Patel said.

The full Saru statement released by Patel is as follows:

- The Saru council met to formulate its programme for coming season;
- The highlight of the season will centre around the centenary celebrations of the Eastern Province and Transvaal rugby unions.
- Saru formally accepted invitations extended to it by certain African-playing countries and will pursue these invitations with a view to creating permanent membership.
- In respect of the invitation extended to Saru by the SARB, Saru has formulated its response thereto, and a letter in this regard will reach the SARB;
- Saru formally accepted invitations extended to it by certain African-playing countries and will pursue these invitations with a view to creating permanent membership.

Patel did not give any hint whether his union would meet the SARB, but it is common knowledge that the Saru is not entirely happy with Craven's board.



COSATU's Mi Hlatshwayo: soccer can be a vehicle for change

# Cosatu scores its first soccer team

**THE 750 000 member Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) has announced the formation of its first official soccer team.**

The soccer team is based in southern Natal and called Cosatu Sports Workshop. It was organised by the Natal Regional Cultural Co-ordinating Committee (NRCCC).

The formation of the team, made up of players from different local units, and other worker teams in the factories, is a move to popularise "people's culture", which includes sport.

Cosatu's Sport Workshop was follow-up to a seminar held in mid-August where people's culture was discussed and members were urged to make its advancement a reality.

The only sporting body represented at the meeting was the Natal Council on sport (Nacos), an affiliate of the South African Council on Sport (Sacos), which pledged its support for Cosatu cultural units and pledged to continue working with them.

Cosatu's vice-chairperson, Chris Dlamini, said the aim of sport for liberation was to build solidarity.

"By building solidarity we are

building a nation", he said.

"We are picking up the pieces to advance our struggle. To achieve this, we need people to assist us.

"The sport of the ruling class always advances their interest by using people," he said.

He stated that some of the country's well-known soccerites did not earn decent wages because the capitalists were out to make money and did not have their welfare at heart.

Commenting on the issue of sport on the mines, he said it was an instrument to blunt people's militancy, to entertain and to make money for the bosses and to make people forget their problems.

Mi Hlatshwayo, Cosatu's national cultural co-ordinator said: "whatever the struggle, we can make soccer or any other sport a vehicle for change because it is our task to organise these areas and make people aware of the situation in sport".

The teams first match was a draw. There was a heart throbbing 90 minutes of entertaining soccer when the newly-formed Cosatu soccer squad was held to a 2-2 draw by Pinetown's CI Caravans team at the Alan Taylor residence in Wentworth.

# Congress formed to promote non-racial sport

**THE aims of the new National Sports Congress (NSC) are to promote mass-based sport in a non-racial, progressive and democratic South Africa.**

The newly formed organisation has held a meeting to formulate its "statement of intent" and proposed constitution.

The meeting in Durban in November was attended by some of the top sports administrators involved in the non-racial movement.

## Abolish Apartheid

The NSC said: "In an apartheid society the distribution of resources and the system of education is grossly distorted on ethnic grounds and children and youth are effectively denied equality of facilities and opportunities on ethnic and racial grounds."

The NSC recognised Sacos "as the authentic anti-apartheid sports body in South Africa and is prepared to join hands with Sacos to achieve a truly mass-based democratic sports movement."

The NSC said it would:

- Encourage the creation of non-racial sports structures acceptable to the national democratic movement in areas where they did not exist.
- Work with communities in their struggle to obtain sporting facilities in areas where they did not exist.
- Work with the national democratic movement to call upon big businesses to sponsor non-racial sport bodies and to ensure that existing sponsorship was distributed equitably.
- Encourage the development of non-racial sport at primary, secondary and tertiary educational institutions.
- Counteract the initiatives of multinational and racist sports administrators.
- Work closely with the progressive trade union movement.

As far as international links were concerned, the NSC said it recognised the vital role played by the S A Non-racial Olympic committee (Sanroc) in its campaigns to isolate South Africa and would fully support and complement Sanroc's role.

## Union sports survey

COSATU is to survey unions to find out what sports activities are going in the union and what sports codes exist.

It plans to hold a national sports workshop next year.

Interested sportspeople should contact Comrade Kgalema of NUM head office, or Mi Hlatshwayo of COSATU.

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NUM NEWS is published by the National Union of Mineworkers, 4th floor, National Acceptances House, Cnr Rissik and Anderson St, Johannesburg 2001.