



FOSATU WORKER NEWS

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KELLOGGS WORKERS WIN UNION RECOGNITION

On the 14th August 1979 the Sweet, Food and Allied Workers Union and Kellogg (Pty) Ltd signed a recognition agreement. This becomes only the second such recognition agreement after Smith and Nephew.

The Agreement shows quite clearly that for companies acting in good faith recognition is possible and makes nonsense of the many excuses still used by other companies in trying to avoid recognition.

The draft agreement was discussed fully with workers and then Shop Stewards and Union officials negotiated it with management. Negotiations began after the union had shown that it had majority membership in the factory.

The Agreement is a recognition agreement that clearly establishes the Union's right to represent and negotiate for its members. The next step is to negotiate a second agreement dealing with wages and working conditions.

The Agreement and the involvement of Shop Stewards in its negotiation are important victories for Kelloggs's workers and all workers in South Africa.

The Kellogg agreement provides for the following things:

1. Union recognition: The management recognises the Union to represent and negotiate on behalf of members in the plant.
2. Access: The Union organiser is permitted into the canteen once a month on a Wednesday during lunch time. At other times the organiser has to give management seven days notice of intending to come into the factory.
3. Shop Steward: The management recognised the right of the Shop Stewards to represent and negotiate on behalf of the members of the Union.

what does Fosatu stand for ?

FOSATU stands for strong and effective organisation of workers at their places of work. We stand for strong shop-floor organisation.

What do we mean by strong shop-floor organisation?

We mean an active, well-informed membership that will support each other and their elected Shop Stewards in the struggle to protect and improve workers rights in the work place.

Without this organisation Shop Stewards will not be able to effectively represent workers nor will management listen to them.

Also an active membership builds active Shop Stewards who carry out their duties and report back to workers on their progress and events in the union.

Why are these points so important?

They are so important because:

Workers experience day-to-day problems in their workplaces. Agreements and laws cannot by themselves solve these problems. Only a strong and active union has the machinery to deal with and solve those problems as they occur.

Active members and Shop Stewards are essential to a democratic, worker controlled union movement.

A democratic worker controlled Union movement is essential for workers to have worker leaders who can truly represent protect and advance workers interest in Society.

THE NEW LABOUR LAW

On the 1st October the amended Industrial Conciliation Act dealing with trade union rights and collective bargaining became law. At the last minute, however the Government was forced to make an important concession.

The Minister of Labour announced an exemption that would extend trade union rights to nearly all workers. The exemption was gazetted on the 28th September.

REGISTERED TRADE UNION RIGHTS.

The effect of the exemption is that only citizens of

countries outside the old borders of South Africa will not be allowed to join a registered trade union.

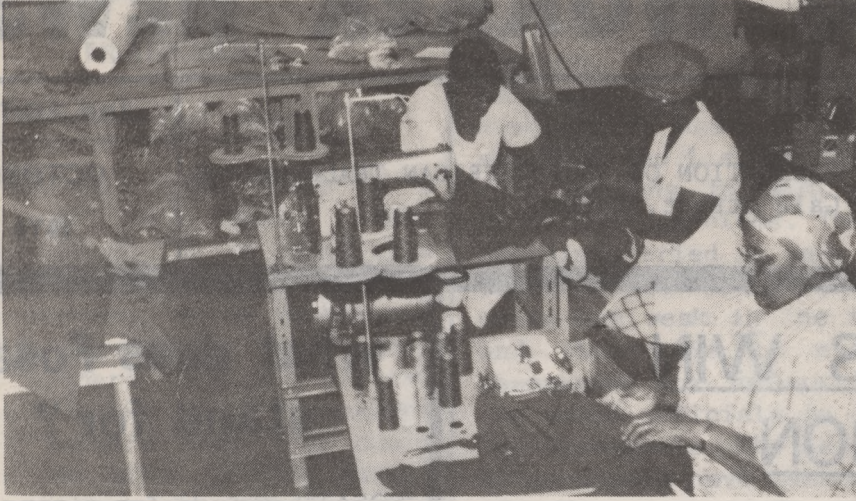
This means that citizens of the so-called independent states of Transkei, Bophutswana and Venda can join registered unions but citizens of say Lesotho or Swaziland cannot join.

CRITICISMS OF THE LAW.

Despite this concession by the Government some very important criticisms of the new Act remain.

(continued on Page 2)

THE ZISIZENI BASEBENZI PROJECT



WORKERS AT THE ZB PROJECT.

The Zisizeni Basebenzi Project was set up in Durban in June 1978 as a result of money donated by the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. The I.C.F.T.U. is the largest co-ordinating body of trade unions in the West. The most successful unit in ZB is the sewing unit which employs 4 workers. Of these 4 three are unemployed textile union members. The project has 4 sewing machines doing different types of work. All the ZB workers have become

fully skilled in sewing since joining the Project. At present, the workers are making school uniforms for children, but are concentrating on making gym-tunics, dresses, skirts and blouses. The garments are sold mainly to union members. The ZB Project is not a profit-making project but mainly to assist union members. If production improves then prices can be fixed far below the prices in the shops and in this way workers can benefit.

The New Labour Law Continued from Page 1.

- there is still not full freedom of association
- because non-racial unions will not be allowed to register unless the Minister gives them an exemption.
- because some workers are still excluded from union membership.
- because membership depends on the Ministers exemption and is not written into the Law.
- The need for provisional registration is unclear and gives the Registrar power to decide without giving reasons.
- Various new measures in the Act give the Government greater powers to intervene in trade union affairs.
- There is still a veto right for existing registered unions on Industrial Councils.

FOSATU'S POSITION.

The Central Committee that met on the 29th & 30th September in Durban discussed the new Act and the question of registration.

It was decided that:

- FOSATU and its affiliates would consider the exemption weighing it against our

BIG START TO FOSATU EDUCATION PROGRAMME.

FOSATU's Education Programme started in a big way in July. Affiliates sent 35 organisers to a 3 week training course held at the University of Natal in Durban. For a first attempt this proved very successful.

FOSATU officials and invited experts who ran the course which covered the economic system, labour law and organisational skills. In addition guest speakers such as the experienced trade unionist Dulcie Hartwell of the National Union of Distributive Workers, spoke to the organisers. The idea was to force organisers into thinking about FOSATU and its relationship to other organisations in South Africa.

The programme was strenuous although the relaxation periods seem to have been well used. But there was no doubt that at the end of the course organisers appreciated that very high standards were demanded of them if we are to build strong worker controlled unions in FOSATU.

Organisers learnt that the key to success is strong, active and well informed membership. The law and clever negotiators can never replace this but only add to it.

We were very fortunate to have Bob Ashworth present for a few days. His experience as a senior shop steward in Leyland in England taught everyone a great deal. It was also important to hear the British workers' story which is very different from the strange stories we are told by management and the newspapers.

The notes prepared for the course are being made into booklets. These will be printed for the FOSATU EDUCATION SERIES and distributed to each Region.

remaining criticisms of the Act.

- Another Central Committee Meeting would be convened soon where a joint decision would be taken.

- FOSATU will make strenuous efforts to consult other unregistered unions so that there could be a common stand.

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY RECOGNITION

It means:

- 1) The Management of a Company agrees to recognise the Union.
- 2) Management agrees to recognise only the Union shop stewards as the representatives of the workers in the factory.
- 3) That management agrees to talk with their workers through the Union - through shop steward groups and union officials.
- 4) There can be no other body representing the interests of the workers in the factory like a Liaison Committee or a Company Council.
- 5) Management must put it into writing that they recognise the Union - this is an Agreement between the Union and the Company.
- 6) This Agreement, should make clear the rights of the Shop Stewards, members and Union officials eg. Management should agree to discuss all dismissals with the shop stewards, and also agree to discuss all working conditions with shop stewards, and Union officials.

NEWS IN BRIEF

GLACIER BEARINGS

In our last issue we reported on the Glacier Bearings factory in Durban. The struggle for union recognition by MAWU has been continuing since April 1978. There is still no progress and management says that they won't recognise an unregistered union. Management have shown shop stewards a letter from Ronnie Webb's Union, the Motor Industry Combined Workers Union saying they want to organise at Glacier. At present MICWU have no members at Glacier.

FATTIS & MONIS

The strike by 55 workers at the Fattis & Monis factory in Bellville South, Cape Town is still continuing. The workers both Coloured and Africans are struggling for recognition of their union, the Food and Canning Workers Union. The strike started in April and 5 months later the workers are still united. Management tried many ways to split the workers. One of management tricks was to offer to re-employ only the Coloured workers and not the Africans. Another was to offer each one of them a job in other factories owned by them. The strikers are receiving R15 per week to live off which is supplied by the union and from donations to the union.

W. PROVINCE (CAPE)

14TH AFFILIATE

On the 30th September the JEWELLERS & GOLDSMITHS' UNION Became FOSATU's 14th affiliate. The Union is registered with a mixed coloured and white membership. The Cape Town branch has a membership of about 450 and the Johannesburg branch is being reorganised.

Jewellers & Goldsmiths will be one of the smaller FOSATU affiliates but it is certainly the oldest having been started in 1939.

FACTORY REPORTS FACTORY REP

NATAL

CAMPAIGN FOR UNION RECOGNITION AT HENKEL CONTINUES

Henkel is a German owned factory in Prospecton, Durban which manufactures glues and soaps. Workers there were organised by the Chemical Workers Industrial Union in 1977 after they realized that the Liaison Committee had no strength. In fact it was the Liaison Committee itself which in September 1978 approached the management for recognition. To date about 8 meetings have been held between the officials of the union, shop stewards and management.

In January 1979 the Company stated its intentions to recognise the Union. However at a later meetings management was asked to clarify what it meant by recognition. After the union sent a memorandum to management clarifying this the management agreed to the election of shop stewards inside the factory and monthly meetings with the Union officials and shop stewards.

In February management began a counter-move against the union by campaigning for the establishment of a counter body known as the Company Council which they claimed would represent all workers since, "All are not interested in the union." Workers successfully boycotted the elections of the Company Council and this adequately showed management that workers rejected this Council.

The Union then submitted a Memorandum setting out how Shop Stewards and officials would be involved in taking up grievances and how the union will protect workers from unfair dismissals if the union were recognised. It was now becoming clear to workers that management was trying to block the union. Management respond to the memorandum by stating that these proposals will be referred to Company Council which is a national body, and considerations from other centres must be taken into account. The union has heard rumours that workers in the Transvaal know nothing about this Company Council, but they only know of the Liaison Committee.

Although the Company claims to be recognising the Union it is clear that this is not the case in practice since it is not accepting the proposals to allow the union to take up grievances and protecting and fighting for workers' rights at Henkel. Workers at Henkel have recently signed a petition to be sent to members of the Company Council, to the Chairman of this Council and to Management, including overseas, to show that workers at this plant reject the body imposed on them.

RAINBOW CHICKENS

In late August a huge work stoppage occurred at the P2 plant of Rainbow Chickens in Hammarisdale. Workers were demanding an explanation from management about the dismissal of a union member who was on the Works Committee. Management refused to give proper reasons for this and would not discuss the matter with the elected works committee. The Dept. of Labour too did not respond when asked to sort out the matter. Workers were then ordered to leave the factory. When they gathered out side the gates to demand their jobs back, the police arrested 55 workers for "meeting illegally in the open".

Now management has employed new workers to replace over 100 workers who remained out. But because the new workers are unskilled there has been a drop in production and therefore a loss to the company.

The workers who remained inside the factory continue to strengthen their Works committee even though management tried to replace it with a Liaison Committee.

UNION WINS ONE WEEK'S NOTICE PAY FOR DISMISSED WORKERS.

For 20 years Revertex has been dismissing workers with only one days notice pay. Because workers have organised themselves into the union they have learnt that their legal rights are one weeks notice pay. This has now been won for all workers dismissed in the future.

TRANSVAAL

DELFOC AND ATLAS COPCO

Delfos and Atlas Copco is a factory in Benoni near Johannesburg. It is owned by a Swedish Company and has about 120 workers. Union membership is increasing at the factory but members have not elected shop-stewards yet. Management told workers that they could join the union if they wanted to and that the Company would not try to stop the union. So the union asked if members could put notices on the factory notice-boards but the company refused.

In July 6 workers were fired without warnings or reasons for dismissal. 3 of them were union members who had many years of service with the company. Other workers at the factory were very angry at the way the Company had treated these men. One of the Liaison Committee members tried to get an explanation from management

at the Liaison Committee meeting. But the management refused to discuss these dismissals. Again the workers saw that the Liaison Committee does nothing to help workers with their problems. The union officials tried to take up the matter with management. The union was weak in the factory and this made it easy for management to refuse to see the union officials to discuss the dismissals. The members at Atlas Cop-co have learned that if they are not strongly organised in the factory, the union officials will also be weak. The strength of the union comes from the strength in the factory.

So the members at Atlas Copco have now began a recruiting campaign to build a strong union in the factory. They are determined to make sure this does not happen to them again.

FARGESTA

Fargesta is a Swedish - owned Company based in Springs, Transvaal which manufacturers drill bits. It employs 210 African workers of which 70 are union members. These union members are being organised by the Engineering & Allied Workers Union. At a meeting between officials of EAW and management it was agreed to give the Union access to the factory at lunchtime once a week for one month with the purpose of recruiting members. Management also agreed to union notices being put on the notice board. At the end of the month the union will meet to discuss representivity of the union in the plant and to discuss recognition of shop-steward groups. The General Secretary of EAWU has been visiting the factory for the past month.

**EASTERN PROVINCE
 (P. ELIZABETH)**

LENNONS: UNION - CHEMICAL & GENERAL WORKERS UNION

Contacts are being made at this factory to start the ball rolling to once again get the union on it's feet. Workers at this plant were told that they were not allowed to speak about the trade union whilst on the premises of the factory.

When this union started in 1977 the company hit back at it by sacking the then acting chairman of the union. Management declared that the job then being done by the acting Chairman was redundant and that they could not place her anywhere else inside the factory.

The company then instituted two consultation committees one for females and one for males, the majority of the members serving on both committees are people in supervisory capacities which management in turn uses against the union. The only way in which workers can improve their wages and

conditions its to re-organise in the factory and form a strong union which could negotiate with the Company. We wish them success in the hard work ahead of them.

EASTERN CAPE SWEET FOOD AND ALLIED WORKERS UNION
 (Unregistered).

This is a sister union of the E.P.S.F.A.W.U. which was started in order to strengthen the movement inside Cadburys.

The normal strategy of the unions in the E.P. area is to first of all get the Coloured Union registered which would then pressurise the company in recognising the African union. In the case of Cadbury this strategy did not work so the organising of the sister union was stepped up to form a two prong attack on the company.

At this point in time the E.C.S.F.A.W.U. workers are still too few to try and tackle the company and the basic objectives of the organisers is to build up membership and educate the Steering Committee on trade unionism so that recruiting could be stepped up.

It would also create a strong basis for this union inside the plant where a lot of questions being put by the non-members belonging to the In Company union.

CADBURY UNION-EPFAWU.
 (REGISTERED).

The Sweet workers struggle for recognition in Port Elizabeth still continues. During the last month the members complained about certain changes in their conditions of employment.

- a) The stopping of talking or singing on the conveyor belts.
- b) Stopping workers from smoking in the canteen during working hours which is the only place the workers may smoke as this is a Sweet and Food Factory.

When the union wrote to the Company regarding this the reply was very much the same as always that the Company had negotiated a grievance procedure with the In Company Union (ie. the "Union" set up by Management - which is nothing more than a Company Committee) and Management wasn't prepared to correspond with the union regarding these grievances. As one can see the fight for recognition continues at this plant which is a wholly owned British subsidiary.

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