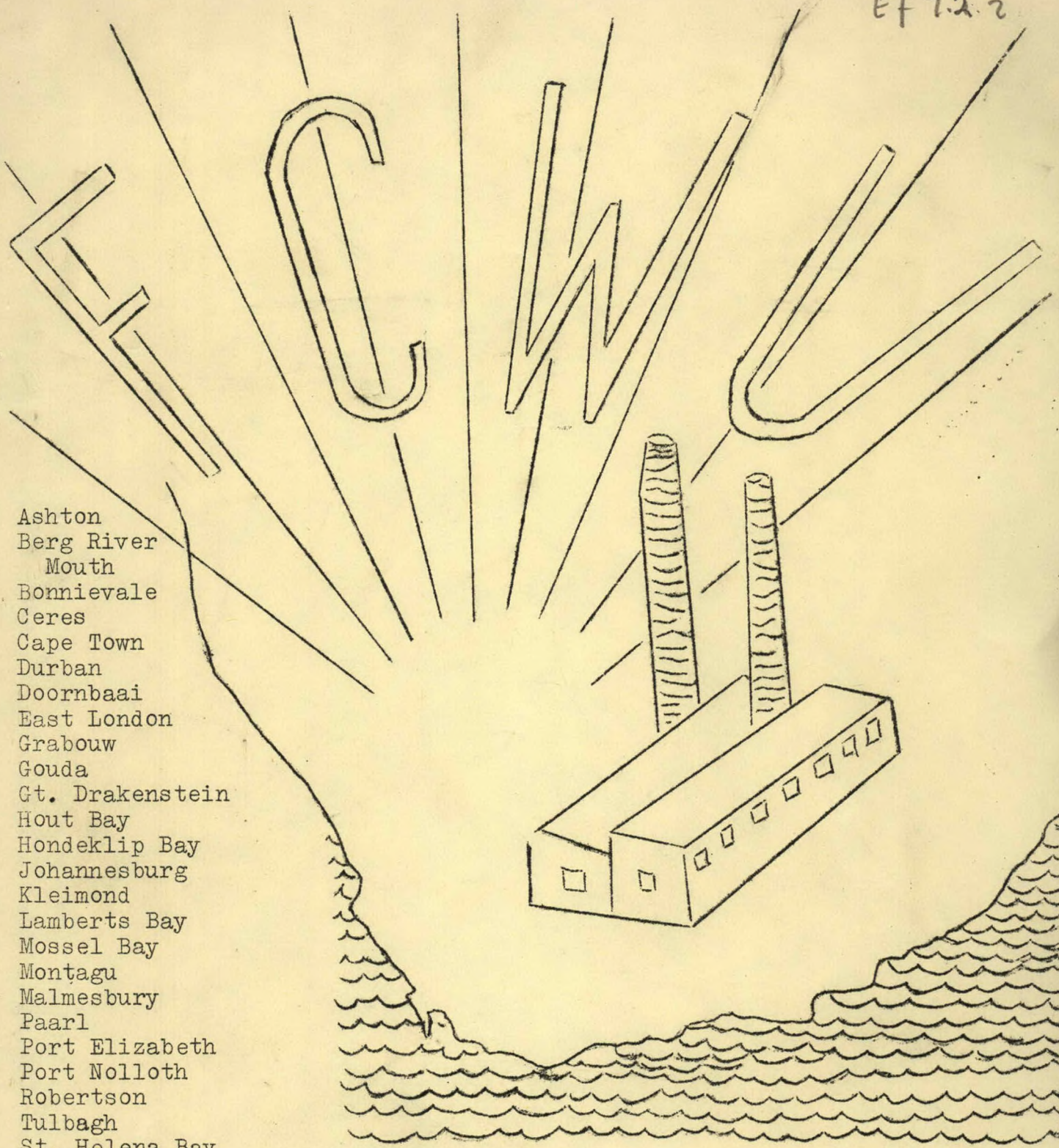


Ef 7.2.2



- Ashton
- Berg River Mouth
- Bonnievale
- Ceres
- Cape Town
- Durban
- Doornbaai
- East London
- Grabouw
- Gouda
- Gt. Drakenstein
- Hout Bay
- Hondeklip Bay
- Johannesburg
- Kleimond
- Lamberts Bay
- Mossel Bay
- Montagu
- Malmesbury
- Paarl
- Port Elizabeth
- Port Nolloth
- Robertson
- Tulbagh
- St. Helena Bay
- Saldanha Bay
- Somerset West
- Wellington
- Wolseley
- Worcester.

A N N U A L R E P O R T  
 BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY, L. ABRAHAMS,  
 on  
 BEHALF OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.  
 Submitted to the  
 23RD A N N U A L C O N F E R E N C E  
 of the  
 FOOD AND CANNING WORKERS' UNION  
 held on the  
 14TH & 15TH SEPTEMBER, 1963,  
 at  
 203 UNION HOUSE, QUEEN VICTORIA STREET,  
 CAPE TOWN.



Dear Comrade President and Members of our Union,

Our 23rd National Conference meeting on September 14th and 15th, 1963, pays tribute to the loyalty and devotion which our members have shown to our Union throughout the past year. It is only because of their support, and because of the hard work and self sacrifice of Branch Officials and Committee members, that our Union has been able to maintain a steady rate of progress in the face of great difficulties.

Our members are the Union. It cannot exist without them. Whatever success it has, the Union owes to them. We can claim, without fear of contradiction, that the Union has taken firm root in the lives and hopes, not only of the members themselves, but also of the communities to which they belong.

Our main aim during the past year has been to consolidate our organisation, bring in new members, and carry on the fight for higher wages, better working and living conditions, protection against ill-treatment, whether from foremen, employers or the public authorities, and recognition of our right to organise.

The General Secretary and members of the Management Committee have kept in close touch with branches and members throughout the vast area over which your Union operates.

We had 11 Management Committee meetings and 2 N.E.C. meetings during the past year. We issued 20 circular letters to Branches.

Visit to Branches.

Your Officials, Management Committee members and the General Secretary organised visits to the various branches which are recorded in the minutes of the N.E.C. meeting held on the 31st March, 1963. Since then the following branches have been visited:-

<u>DATE.</u>	<u>BRANCH</u>	<u>ORGANISERS.</u>
25.2.63	Wellington	L. Abrahams and A. Adams.
26.2.63 } 12.3.63 }	Montagu	L. Abrahams, D.Hartogh and L. Xegwana.
12.3.63	Ashton	L. Abrahams, L. Kasi and D. Hartogh.
13.3.63	Wolseley	L. Abrahams and L. Kasi.
13.3.63 } 25.3.63 }	Worcester	L. Abrahams and L. Kasi.
25.4.63	Montagu	L. Abrahams, D. Hartogh and L. Xegwana.
25.4.63	Ashton	(L. Abrahams, D. Hartogh, A. Dampies, J. Bartlett and L. Xegwana.
25.4.63	Tulbagh	L. Kasi, A. Dampies.
8.5.63	Grabouw	C.Kilowan, L.Abrahams, L.Kasi.
9.5.63	Grabouw	L. Abrahams and L. Kasi.
13.5.63	Grabouw	L. Abrahams.
16.6.63	Montagu	(L. Abrahams, C. Kilowan, J. Mentoor, J. Pendlani and L. Kasi.
23.6.63 } to } 28.6.63 }	Port Elizabeth	C. Kilowan, J. Mentoor, J. Pendlani, L. Abrahams and D. Swiegelaar.
27.6.63	East London	(C. Kilowan, J. Mentoor, J. Pendlani, L. Abrahams and D. Swiegelaar.
1.8.63	Montagu	J. Mentoor and L. Abrahams.

Every Thursday and Friday comrade L. Abrahams together



with L. Kasi when available, went to Firgrove and Strand to collect subs as well as for lunch hour meetings. Cape Town Branch factories were regularly visited.

WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED.

During the year our Union made representation to the Wage Board on behalf of the workers employed in -

- (a) Dried Fruit Industry;
- (b) Cold Storage, Bacon Curing, Small Goods Manufacturing Industry;
- (c) Condensed Milk and other Milk Product Industries;
- (d) Fish Industry - South Africa.

We have not only given evidence before the Board but we have submitted memoranda setting out our Union's claim for higher wages and better conditions of work. We have also submitted objections to the Wage Board Recommendations for the Dried Fruit Industry and other industries. The Dried Fruit workers received increases of 2/9d to 7/- per week.

The Board has as yet not submitted its Wage Board Recommendations for the Fish Industry.

We negotiated a new Agreement for Messrs. Jax Canning Co., Grabouw which granted workers higher wages, improved conditions of work and they became a party to our Medical Benefit Fund. The Agreement expired on the 31st March.

We submitted demands to the employers of the Fruit & Vegetable Canning Industry and a Conciliation Board is now meeting. Branches were notified of the results of every Conciliation Board meeting. This Conference will have to consider the last offer made by the employers, and the attitude to be adopted by our Union representatives on the Board.

We made representation to the Fish Canning employers for the establishment of a Provident Fund, and for increased piece work rates.

The employers have offered us increased piece work rates and a "Reserve Fund" to supplement the monies available from Unemployment Insurance Act benefits to carry workers through the period of the closed fishing season when the Fish Canneries and Lobster packing plants are not in operation.

On Friday, 23rd August, 1963, the workers at Lamberts Bay were paid out over R2.00 each from the Reserve Fund.

We have recovered sums of money for underpayment of wages, confinement allowances, workmen's compensation benefits and unemployment insurance benefits.

Fruit & Vegetable Canning Workers' Medical Benefit Fund:-

We take great pride in the fact that our Fund which covers the Fruit & Vegetable Canning Factories of Paarl, Wellington, Worcester, Wolseley and Grabouw is entering into its 13th year of existence, and continues to make satisfactory progress.

On the 1.11.62 Messrs. Jax Canning (Pty) Ltd., Grabouw became a party to our Fund. The Fund has added 500 new contributors who became entitled to sick leave pay as from the 1.5.63 and will receive full benefits as from the 1.11.63.

During the past year we have conducted testape examinations at the majority of our factories to ascertain the number of



diabetic sufferers amongst our contributors. These tests were carried out with the assistance of local Medical Officers of Health, Panel Doctors and Clinic nurses. The results of these tests have been forwarded to the Cape Town Medical School at whose suggestion these tests were arranged.

In February, 1963 the mass X-ray of nearly 2,000 contributors at Paarl, was carried out by the Mobile X-ray Unit of the Health Department. 10 new cases of T.B. were discovered of whom 6 were hospitalised and the remainder, still in the early stages, are being treated by the Paarl Municipal Clinic.

The Auditors Report for period ended 31.3.63 shows that the Funds assets amount to R51,950.

We have endeavoured to provide members with as many benefits as possible, within the financial stability of the Fund. At present benefits paid to members include 3 weeks sick leave pay, unlimited free medical attention, medicine, dental attention and clinics on the factory premises.

With the help and assistance of all area committees the Fund will no doubt continue its admirable record of achievements and provide all contributors with additional benefits from time to time.

Our representatives on the Central Committee are - F.C.W.U. C. Kilowan, J. Gelderbloem, J. Heneke, L. Abrahams (Secretary) and V. Yon (Assistant Secretary). A.F.C.W.U. L. Marotti, J. Quabi and L. Xegwana (Treasurer).

#### Dispute at L.K.B. Daljosaphat.

The workers at the Langeberg Ko-operasie Beperk Daljosaphat factory were dissatisfied with the behaviour of the Working Manager Mr. Laubscher and his use of abusive language to the workers, and the dismissal of two workers which the workers regarded as unjust.

Negotiations to adjust this dispute started on the 10th March, 1963. On Monday, 11th March, Mr. Laubscher was again interviewed on this matter. He informed us that this matter was discussed with Mr. G.W. Richards the General Manager, who is not prepared to reinstate the worker.

Mr. Richards was thereupon interviewed by our Officials who informed him that the workers would like to see him personally at 3 o'clock.

At 3 o'clock all the workers came to the office and demanded to see Mr. Richards. Mr. Richards did not put in an appearance but instead called for the General Secretary, Mrs. L. Abrahams.

Mrs. L. Abrahams together with D. Hartogh (Paarl Branch Secretary), L. Kasi (General Secretary of the A.F.C.W.U.) and 8 workers then went to Mr. Richards office to discuss this matter. He then told us whether we realised that the workers are "striking". We stated that we did not regard it as a strike as the workers only came to see him. He then agreed to come to the cloakroom to address the workers. Before doing so he wanted to discuss the matter with the Department of Labour. He did not come and address the workers.

Officials of the Labour Department arrived at the factory from Cape Town and warned the workers that their action was illegal.

After four hours of negotiation, the management of the Langeberg Co-operative agreed to take back the dismissed man.



The workers who received the news with much cheering, agreed to return work Tuesday.

The workers of L.K.B. Daljosaphat all received a summons to appear in Court at the Outspanning Saal, Du Toit Street, Paarl, on the 13th June, 1963. The General Secretary reported that she asked Messrs. Frank, Bernadt & Joffe to handle the case for us. The workers wanted Advocate A. Sachs to represent them. Adv. Sachs made application on the 27th May to the Chief Magistrate to go to Paarl to defend these workers, but was notified on the 5th June, that permission has been refused. We asked our attorneys to engage another Advocate, and notified them that we are prepared to pay R100 towards the cost of the case. On the 7th June, we were notified by our attorneys that Adv. Getz had been engaged to defend these workers at a cost of 20 guineas for the first day, 15 guineas for the second day and 10 guineas for each subsequent day. On the 8th June, the General Secretary and L. Kasi interviewed Adv. Getz and submitted all the information in connection with the case to him.

It was agreed that the F.C.W.U. bear the full costs of the attorneys.

The case was heard at the Paarl Recreation Club Hall and was crowded with nearly three hundred workers. The hall was converted into a vast courtroom with the relieving magistrate, Mr. V. Falck, presiding. The big crowd of non-Whites who included 43 Africans, appeared before Mr. Falck on a charge of taking part in an illegal strike on March 11 and refusing to continue their work at the fruit and vegetable canning factory of Langeberg Co-operative Limited at Dal Josafat.

It was alleged further that they went on an illegal strike to induce or compel the Langeberg Company to reinstate an employee who had been dismissed.

The State was responsible for the prosecution.

Originally 320 persons were charged but a number could not be traced. The accused came from Wellington, Newtown, Paarl, Huguenot, Drakenstein and Kuils River. The prosecutor Mr. A.J. Fourie, withdrew the charge against 55 persons. He issued warrants of arrest in respect of seven accused who were not present. The exact number charged was 273. 34 were Africans and the rest Coloured. Most were Coloured women.

At the request of the Union, Advocate W.D. Getz (instructed by Frank, Bernard and Joffe) appeared for the accused who pleaded not guilty.

Evidence in support of the State's prosecution was given by Mr. G.W. Richards, Manager of L.K.B. Dal., Mr. H.A. Smith foreman of the cannery department, as well as by Mr. Eben Hurter senior administrative official of the Department of Labour Cape Town.

The case took place on Thursday and Friday, the 13th and 14th June, 1963.

After hearing the evidence, Mr. V. Flack, the Magistrate, found the workers guilty of taking part in an illegal strike on March 11th, 1963. All were cautioned and discharged.

Our Union paid Messrs. Frank, Bernadt & Joffe the sum of R100 to cover the cost of the case.

The workers felt very happy at being discharged.



Following the strike at Messrs. Langeberg Ko-operasie Beperk, Daljosaphat, on the 11.3.63, Messrs. H. Jones & Co., Zuider Paarl, gave all their peach-pitting machine workers an all round bonus of 50 cents per week.

Wellington Branch reported that they too had a dispute at Oakglen Canning Co. when a worker was assaulted and dismissed. The workers all decided to stop work whilst the Committee interviewed the Manager. After heated argument with the employer the dismissed worker was reinstated.

#### WE BENEFIT THE COMMUNITY.

We are proud of our record. Our struggle for higher living standards for our members benefit not only them, but the whole society.

Your Management Committee has repeatedly, in letters to employers, stressed the importance to the South African economy of raising wage standards, especially of the low-paid workers who form the great majority of the working people.

We told the employers in a letter that nowhere is it alleged that wage costs are a factor that contributes to the serious financial difficulties in which this firm now finds itself involved. Our Union refuses to allow the workers to bear the brunt of these difficulties. We are entitled to a fair wage for our services and we insist on pressing our claims.

It is notorious that the wages paid in the canning industry in South Africa are one-sixth and less of the wages paid in Australia and the U.S.A. who compete with us. We assert that the productivity of our workers matches the productivity of the workers in other countries. This being so, it is evident that the South African employers are exploiting the members of our Union to an excessive degree.

A great many of the problems of the canning industry can be attributed to the small size of the internal market and the industry's gross dependance on markets elsewhere. This basically is the reason for the difficulties experienced in the export trade. The solution is not to keep the workers in poverty by paying them starvation wages. The solution is to pay them enough money so as to enable them to buy the products they and other workers produce.

Prominent employers, economists and other persons who are qualified to speak with authority on this matter, have frequently argued along the same lines.

In a statement to the Annual General Meeting of the Standard Bank in July of this year, the Chairman said this about South Africa:-

"The economy, as the recent pause in growth has demonstrated, is becoming increasingly dependent on manufacturing industry, which now contributes as much towards the national income as mining and agriculture together. If secondary industry is to prosper and expand, it is essential to increase further the total purchasing power of the local population, for export markets may become more limited and difficult to retain."

Wage rates must be raised if the purchasing power of South Africans is to increase. Our struggle for higher wages is in the national interests therefore, if we accept the opinion of this important banker.



The Chairman of the Standard Bank had something else to say which is of great interest to us. He pointed out that the shortage of skilled labour and management hampers the growth of secondary industry. This shortage "has now become a most serious barrier to industrial progress".

Here too, the Union's work is of great importance to the whole economy. We have repeatedly asked employers to recognise that our workers have a right to do skilled and supervisory jobs, we have protested against the job reservation in industry, and we have pressed for the opening of facilities to train our members and other workers for skilled employment.

In all our activities therefore, we have served the interests of the country as well as those of our own members.

#### OUR RIGHT TO ORGANISE.

Our achievements would be greater, our record of activities would show even bigger advances, if we were not hampered by interference on the part of the police and other public authorities.

In reply to a statement made by the Minister of Labour in the House of Assembly on the 4th June, 1963 which appeared in the Cape Times of the 5th June, 1963, our Union issued the following statement in the Cape Times of the 7th June:-

"Mr. Trollip, Minister of Labour, has told the House that his department is not responsible for police interference with officials of the F.C.W.U. The responsibility he says, lies with the Minister of Justice, and the Special Branch are investigating alleged subversive activities on the part of our Union.

It is clear from this reply that the Department of Labour cannot charge us with having contravened any industrial laws.

We would like the public to know that our Union has been in existence for more than 22 years, and has 25 branches with a membership of 9,174 operating throughout the Republic, including fishing villages in the North Western Cape and rural towns.

Our complaint is that the police in the country areas particularly, where the union is isolated and in any event exposed to much hostile pressure by some employers, and where there is no other organisation to defend and advance the people, intimidate members and persistently obstruct our work in these rural areas.

We have repeatedly made complaints to the Minister of Labour and the Minister of Justice, but have not at any time received an explanation for this persecution. None of our members have been charged with anything remotely resembling subversive activity - whatever that may mean. We deny emphatically that the union is a subversive organisation. It is a legitimate registered trade union which carries out its function of improving wages and conditions of employment.

Further, we make no attempt to conceal our aim of taking part in the struggle for democratic rights for all South Africans including the right for free trade union organisation for all. Our members are voteless and we express their legitimate aspirations and needs when we protest against racial discrimination, and demand equality of treatment and civil liberties for our people.



The police have no justification whatsoever for this persecution. We expect the Minister of Labour to enforce the law which guarantees the right of trade union organisation. It is because the Minister refuses to intervene that we have applied to the International Labour Organisation, and we shall continue to do so as long as we do not see justice and proper treatment."

On Monday, 27th May, 1963, three members of the Special Branch namely J.F.F. van Wyk, D.J. Greef and P. Loubser, came with a warrant and searched our Union's office from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m.

I was not in the office and our senior typist informed them that she had no right to grant them permission to search the office during my absence. They replied that they did not require my presence as they had the warrant.

They searched the office for just over an hour. They read through our branch correspondence files and took down the names of our management committee and branch officials. They took away most of the correspondence between ourselves and our Johannesburg branch, for which they gave us a receipt.

We have protested to the Minister of Justice and have demanded the return of our correspondence.

We have also given press interviews to the Cape Argus and the Post. The Cape Argus published a report on the 28-5-63. We immediately notified SACTU Head Office and the Trade Unions International of the raid on our office. We also addressed letters to the following members of Parliament requesting them to take up the matter with the Minister of Labour and the Minister of Justice with a view to stopping this interference with our Union work:

Mr. C. Barnett, M.P.:	Mr. G.S.P. Le Roux, M.P.;
Mr. A. Bloomberg, M.P.;	Mrs. H. Suzman, M.P.

We warned our Management Committee members and branch officials not to be frightened by the Police who would like to see our Union broken up. Remember to stand by your Union and by your fellow workers!

We have said repeatedly, and will go on saying, that our workers have a legal and moral claim to organise into trade unions. It is a simple principle of justice that people should be free to combine for their common good, so long as they do not harm others.

So far from harming others, our organisation is of benefit to the whole society. We stand by our right to organise and shall insist on using it to the fullest extent.

It is a shame, and a blot on the government, that it refuses to give us the elementary right to organise for legitimate ends without interference. We have protested to the Ministers concerned and, since we obtained no satisfaction, have brought our complaints to the notice of the international labour movement.

We addressed letters to the International Union of Food & Allied Workers' Assoc. (I.U.F.), the Trade Union International of Workers of the Food, Tobacco & Beverages Industries & Hotel, Cafe & Restaurant Workers' (T.U.I.), Food Preservers Union of Australia, SACTU and TUCSA. With the exception of TUCSA all labour organisations made representation on our behalf to the



government. All this representation did not help and we were therefore forced to submit the matter to the International Labour Office. On the 7-11-62 and 5-2-63 we submitted the following facts to them:-

"The present complaint is submitted in view of the serious interference of the South African police with the free exercise of trade union rights by the Food & Canning Workers' Union of South Africa. The Union is registered under the Industrial Conciliation Act, 1956, and has a membership of approximately 8600, with 27 branches situated in Western, Northern and Eastern Cape, Natal and Transvaal. It has been in existence for twenty-two years, (established 6th Feb., 1941). From the account of facts below, it will appear that the police have not only attempted to impede the Union officials in exercising their duties towards the membership, but also to intimidate employers from carrying out agreements concluded with the Union. Such interference seems to be in sharp contradiction with the spirit of I.L.O. Conventions Nos. 87 and 98 on Freedom of Association and Collective bargaining. Our Union has a direct knowledge of the following events and incidents which occurred at:

Facts

1. Mossel Bay: On 10th May, 1962, five representatives of the Union, including the General Secretary, visited Mossel Bay. On arriving at Messrs. Langeberg Ko-operasie Beperk, Mossel Bay, the five officials were arrested and kept under arrest from 1.30 p.m. to 5.30 p.m., thus preventing them from utilising the lunch hour and after-work opportunities to meet the workers. The car of the Union officials was stationed on a site owned by the firm Langeberg Ko-operasie Beperk, Mossel Bay, which was not fenced in. The police urged the employers to lay a charge against the Union officials for trespassing. No such charge has yet been made.
2. Stompneus Bay: Five officials including the President, Vice-President and General Secretary, visited Stompneus Bay, a fish canning hamlet on the Saldanha Bay coast on 17th June, 1962. They were stopped and questioned by the police. After taking their names and addresses, the police informed the officials "that they knew them and were waiting for them a long time". They were also given to understand that the police had asked the employers not to allow the Union to hold meetings.
3. East London: Four officials, including the President, Vice-President and General Secretary arrived in East London on 4th July, 1962. On their arrival they were stopped by the police and taken to the charge-office for questioning. They were questioned by Mr. Huttingh of the Special Branch. After having been kept in the charge-office for 3 hours, they were followed by agents of the Special Branch wherever they went.  
When, on 5th July the Union held a meeting, six Special Branch men - European, Coloured and African - came to the meeting and refused to leave when asked.  
Mr. Huttingh suggested to the Union officials that "when they come to East London in future, he should be approached first so that he could work together with them." When the officials told him that they were not prepared to do this, he replied "that he would break down everything they built up in East London".
4. Paarl: Also factory meetings at Paarl were attended by Special Branch agents. At one factory, the employers asked Union officials not to hold a meeting at a particular time, as the Special Branch were around the premises.
5. In addition, in the second half of July, 1962, several local officials and members of the Union received visits and were questioned by the Special Branch. Similar pressure was



exerted on those employers who are prepared to co-operate with our Union and who in the past have agreed to allow Union meetings to be held at factory premises, as stipulated in the Industrial Conciliation Board Agreements.

6. In view of this persistent infringement of trade union rights the Management Committee of the Union decided to lodge a strong protest with the Minister of Labour of the Republic of South Africa, Mr. A.E. Trollip, on 8th August, 1962. He referred us to the Minister of Justice, Mr. B.J. Vorster. We thereupon wrote to the Minister of Justice. No reply to the protest has been received so far.

7. Expulsion of or restrictions on Officials: This petty but vexatious harassments of the Union's officials acquire a far more serious significance than they might appear to possess, when viewed against the background of persistent victimisation of the Union officials over a number of years. The latest of these is the serving of 3 orders, on Mrs. Francis Baard, the secretary of the Port Elizabeth branch of the African Food & Canning Workers' Union. The effect of these orders is to exclude Mrs. Baard from factories, to prevent her from addressing meetings of trade union members, or from meeting individual members of the Union who do not reside in the New Brighton Location at Port Elizabeth where Mrs. Baard herself lives. She will not find it possible to conduct her trade union work under the severe restrictions imposed under these orders.

Although these orders have been issued by the Minister of Justice under the Suppression of Communism Act, Mrs. Baard is not listed as a Communist or support of Communism under the Act, and has never been convicted of an offence under the Act. No explanation has been given to Mrs. Baard as to why these restrictions have been imposed upon her.

Mrs. Baard is only the latest of a long list of officials of the Union who have been removed from the Union office or restricted by order of the Minister of Justice.

The following are the names of the other members of the Union who have suffered a similar fate -

- (1) Betty du Toit, Secretary of the Johannesburg Branch, removed from office in January, 1953.
- (2) Ray Alexander, National General Secretary, removed from office in September, 1953.
- (3) Mr. S.V. Reddy, Secretary of Durban Branch, removed from office in October, 1953.
- (4) Mr. Frank Edward Marquard, National President, removed from office in September, 1954.
- (5) Miss A.M. Coe, Secretary of Port Elizabeth branch, removed from office in September, 1954.
- (6) Miss Sarah Wentzel, Secretary of Worcester Branch, removed from office in November, 1954.
- (7) Miss R. Lan, National General Secretary, banned from meetings in November 1954 and removed from office in 1956.
- (8) Mr. Oscar Mpetha, General Secretary of the African Food and Canning Workers' Union, banned from meetings in November, 1954, and restricted to Cape Town Magisterial Districts in July, 1958.
- (9) Mr. Leon Levy, Branch Secretary of Johannesburg Branch, banned from gatherings and confined to Johannesburg Magisterial District in January, 1957.
- (10) Mrs. Elizabeth Mafeking exiled to Southy (72 miles from Vryburg in the Cape,) but she fled to Basutoland.



### Conclusions.

No charges whatsoever were formulated within the framework of the Industrial legislation or any other law against the trade union officials whose freedom of exercise of trade union rights was impeded by the police. Also on no occasion have the police alleged that the officials had committed an offence. However, by following the trade unionists while they were visiting factories to discuss trade union matters with workers or employers, by interrogating them and on occasions by illegally keeping them under arrest at the charge office, they made the conditions of exercise of their functions almost intolerable.

The freedom of movement of trade union officials is certainly one component of trade union freedom in general. This seems to be the opinion of the I.L.O. Committee on Freedom of Association which, in its 58th Report, Case No. 251 S 596, concludes as follows:

"The Committee had also expressed the view that the restriction of a person's movements to a limited area accompanied by a prohibition of entry into the area in which his trade union operates and in which he normally carries on his trade union functions is also inconsistent with the normal enjoyment of the right of association and with the exercise of the right to carry on trade union activities and functions...."

### Recommendations:

In view of the facts and conclusions set out above, the Governing Body of the International Labour Office is requested:

1. To take note, through its Committee on Freedom of Association, of the facts cited above as facts constituting violation by the authorities of the Republic of South Africa of the freedom of association, which renders impossible the free exercise of trade union rights.
2. To invite the I.L.O. Director General to lodge a protest with the Government of the Republic of South Africa against repeated interference of the police with the legitimate activities of the Food and Canning and African Food and Canning Workers' Union.
3. To request the I.L.O. Director-General to take all the necessary steps to secure assurances from the Government of the Republic of South Africa that the spirit of I.L.O. Conventions Nos. 87 and 98 will in the future be respected on the whole of the territory under its jurisdiction."

The attacks on our Union and Officials continue in spite of our protests. Our office was again raided on the 25th July, 1963. Leon Levy and Lydia Kasi were detained. Leon Levy after being detained for two months was released. He left South Africa and is now in London. We very much regret his departure. It is a severe loss to our union and particularly to the trade union movement as a whole.

Lilian Diedericks, secretary of the Port Elizabeth Medical Benefit Fund was recently issued with a banning order by the Minister of Justice, preventing her from attending all gatherings and confining her to the Port Elizabeth Magisterial district.

The government refuses to reply to our letters of protest. We know why it ignores our protest. The reason is that the government cannot justify in law or by any other standard its attempts to disrupt our work and cripple our organisation.



Employers would no doubt like to see our Union destroyed so that they can have a free hand in fixing wages, hours of work, and general conditions of employment.

But our members will not allow the Union to be destroyed to suit the profits of employers.

#### OUR PART IN THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT.

Your Committee knows that it has a duty to all workers, and has a right to expect assistance from all workers, in our struggle for the right to organise.

It is for this reason that we are affiliated to SACTU, which is the one national trade union body that is open to organised workers without distinction of race or colour.

We view with great alarm the attacks made on SACTU by the authorities. The following SACTU leaders have been banned and detained:-

Stephen Dlamini	- National President of SACTU.
Caleb Mayekiso	- Secretary of P.E. SACTU Local Committee.
V. Mini	- Member of SACTU Local Committee P.E.
L. Mancoko	- Member of SACTU Local Committee P.E.
E. Loza	- Chairman of C.T. SACTU Local Committee.
Leon Levy	- Formerly National President of SACTU.

We therefore support whole-heartedly SACTU's protest against the attempts to disrupt it and deprive its affiliated organisations of the advantages that flow from combined action.

There can be no doubt as to the attitude of the international labour movement in this matter. In June, as a result of this decision the African delegates to the I.L.O. Conference in Geneva decided to withdraw from the Conference until South Africa has ceased to be a member of the organisation. These delegates supported the memorandum submitted by SACTU, which called for expulsion of South Africa from the organisation.

After arguing the matter for several days the African delegates refused to accept a compromise resolution which called for action by the United Nations, and 32 delegates walked out of the Conference. The Nigerian President of the Conference, Mr. Joseph Modupe Johnson (Nigeria's Labour Minister) resigned his post. After the walk-out a resolution was passed by the Conference drawing the matter to the attention of the United Nations, with the request that South Africa's continued participation as a United Nations member be considered. Since this event other actions against South Africa has been taken.

It is clear to everyone that South African trade unions will never gain an honoured and influential position in the world labour movement so long as the government keeps up its vicious and unjust system of colour discrimination.

We express the feelings of the great majority of South Africans when we demand for everybody equality of rights as laid down by the Charter of Human Rights.

We protest most strongly to the vicious laws that has imprisoned about 10,000 of our men and women. In terms of the 90 Days No Trial Act, the "Forward" reports that 211 were detained up to the 10th August, 1963. Among them were our Leon Levy and Lydia Kasi.

#### CONCLUSION.

We must ask ourselves why have so many people been arrested



and detained; people of all races (mainly Africans), from all walks of life, unskilled workers, farm workers, professionals, teachers and scholars. These men and women, young and old, representing all of South Africa's opposition to the Government's apartheid policy. Our people are not prepared to accept it lying down any more, to be driven out of their homes, deprived of jobs and means of a livelihood, and relegated to a state of subservience, because that in effect is the Government's apartheid policy as expressed in the Group Areas Act, Job Reservation and the Bantu Laws Amendment Act. We must ask ourselves why in the midst of great wealth are our people poor.

In June alone according to the Department of Mines, rough and uncut alluvial diamonds valued at R296,273 were produced in the Cape Province and Transvaal.

In Namaqualand where the members of our fish canning branches struggle to make ends meet, the American owned O'Kiep Copper Co., is one of the most profitable copper mines in the world. Last year its profit after taxation was R6,000,000. Its R1.00 shares quoted only on the New York Stock Exchange paid 4 dividends totalling R4.50, hoisting the price of the share to 60 dollars (R42.85). What have the coloured and African people living there and helping to take out the diamonds and copper received? They are the poorest in the country. The same can be said for the Transvaal, Natal and Orange Free State where the total mining companies, sugar and coal owners are reaping great profits by paying low wages to the African miners, sugar and coal workers.

Our workers are poor because they have no democratic rights, because they have no rights for collective bargaining. They are denied the right to have free trade unions and leaders. Their leaders are imprisoned and detained.

In our opposition to the Government's apartheid policy we are not alone - the world is with us, particularly the African countries that have liberated themselves, are determined to help us to free ourselves. We are particularly encouraged by the great struggle for civil rights that the American negroes are waging.

In the coming year we have many tasks before us. Our Conciliation Board for the Fish Canning Industry is expiring on the 31.10.63. We are now in the midst of negotiating a new agreement for the fruit and vegetable canning industry. We have to organise many factories in the fish canning industry, as well as in the meat canning industry in Upington.

I am confident that in spite of all the Government's interference with us we shall be strong enough to carry out our tasks and to play an even greater role in the peoples struggle for freedom.

... .. *L. Abrahams* ... ..

L. ABRAHAMS  
GENERAL SECRETARY  
FOOD & CANNING WORKERS' UNION

26th August, 1963.



**Collection Number: AD1137**

**FEDERATION OF SOUTH AFRICAN WOMEN 1954-1963**

**PUBLISHER:**

*Publisher:- Historical Papers Research Archive*

*Location:- Johannesburg*

©2013

**LEGAL NOTICES:**

**Copyright Notice:** All materials on the Historical Papers website are protected by South African copyright law and may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, displayed, or otherwise published in any format, without the prior written permission of the copyright owner.

**Disclaimer and Terms of Use:** Provided that you maintain all copyright and other notices contained therein, you may download material (one machine readable copy and one print copy per page) for your personal and/or educational non-commercial use only.

People using these records relating to the archives of Historical Papers, The Library, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, are reminded that such records sometimes contain material which is uncorroborated, inaccurate, distorted or untrue. While these digital records are true facsimiles of paper documents and the information contained herein is obtained from sources believed to be accurate and reliable, Historical Papers, University of the Witwatersrand has not independently verified their content. Consequently, the University is not responsible for any errors or omissions and excludes any and all liability for any errors in or omissions from the information on the website or any related information on third party websites accessible from this website.

This document is part of a collection held at the Historical Papers Research Archive at The University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa.