



# FOSATU WORKER NEWS

## FOSATU THE FIRST YEAR

On the 14th April it will be one year since we started to build a national federation of trade unions. The aim of the 130 delegates who met at Hammanskraal was to unite all those trade unions, irrespective of race or creed, who were dedicated to the struggle for the rights of all workers.

We knew the task would be difficult but we were building on those that had gone before us. The present is even more difficult and uncertain for workers. The racist Industrial Conciliation Act has been changed after 23 years but it remains with racial distinctions. We still have to see whether we will be able to register as non-racial unions. So far it has been management and certain registered unions that have really used the law. They have used it to set up their tame parallel and company unions.

Despite these obstacles we are building a national federation. FOSATU has offices in Pretoria, Johannesburg, (three offices), Vereeniging,

Springs, Benoni, Durban (three offices), Pinetown, Pietermaritzburg, Port Elizabeth, Uitenhage, Cape Town and Bellville. FOSATU and its affiliates employ 61 paid officials whose job it is to organise and assist workers. We use 19 FOSATU vehicles from 16 offices in four Regions.

We have the printing press that printed this newspaper and other FOSATU publications. We have started a project to produce school uniforms and clothing for members. Our Legal Fund and complaint services assist both organised and unorganised workers as other articles in this edition show.

However we must see this as only the start. We have a long way to go. By March 1980 our total paid-up membership in FOSATU was just under 20 000 and our paper membership close to 50 000. So we have a big task to get the full support and participation of our members and to expand our membership.

The first year has been difficult but successful - let us continue to build.

### FOSATU BUILDS UNIONS

On the 13th April 1980 the benefits of FOSATU's policy of close cooperation between affiliates was shown. A Branch of the National Union of Textile Workers (NUTW) was inaugurated in the Eastern Province Region.

The Branch covers Port Elizabeth and Uitenhage and has over 1400 paid up members and 2000 signed up members. Negotiations have been started with companies and at Industex the Union has got stop order facilities.

Organisation of the Textile

## RECOGNITION SUCCESSSES

FOSATU unions have made some important advances for union recognition. These advances are all the more important because the majority of companies are using the new law as an excuse to delay recognition.

Two Swedish companies Fagersta and SKF in the Transvaal have signed procedural agreements with the Engineering and Allied Workers Union. The agreements recognise the Union and its Shop Stewards, give Union officials access to the factory and the companies agree to further negotiations covering wages and working conditions.

These agreements are the third and fourth written agreements between a unregistered union and a company. Elsewhere progress is also being made. At South African Fabrics in Durban the National Union of Textile Workers had access to the factory to conduct Shop Steward elections with both Indian and African workers participating. The Metal and Allied Workers Union had access at Craft Engineering in Johannesburg to conduct Shop Steward elections. At both these factories the Shop Stewards and Union officials will begin negotiating full agreements.

THE MESSAGE IS CLEAR; COMPANIES DON'T HAVE TO WAIT FOR REGISTRATION TO NEGOTIATE WITH AND RECOGNISE UNREGISTERED NON-RACIAL UNIONS.

Workers was carried out by the FOSATU Eastern Province Region in cooperation with NUTW. One of their main problems was a "parallel" union trying to organise as well.

The Eastern Province affiliates through their FOSATU Region have made a great contribution to worker unity.



**BUILD  
THE  
UNION  
STRONG  
IN YOUR  
FACTORY**