



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 Kellogg'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.

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THE ZISIZENI BASEBENZI PROJECT



Workers at ZB.

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.

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- 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.