

Former general secretary went on spending spree with workers' money

More workers cross the floor to CWIU

FORMER Metal and Allied Workers Union general secretary, David Sebabi, appears to have gone on a R3 900 spending spree with workers' money.

Investigations conducted by MAWU have revealed that Sebabi, using the union's credit card, bought things for his wedding and for his personal use.

Between December 1983 and June 1984, Sebabi used the credit card to pay for purchases made at various bottle stores, a men's boutique, a number of supermarkets, and motor spares dealers.

He also used it to draw out money from the bank in order to buy other things for his personal use.

onal use.

MAWU said that these purchases had nothing whatsoever to do with the union business and that no official or committee had given him permission to spend this union money.

The results of the union's investigations have been handed over to the Criminal Investigation Department of the South African Police.

David Sebabi and three other union officials were expelled from MAWU when initial investigations began to reveal financial mismanagement and gross misconduct.

The expelled officials, who

include Sam Ntuli, Andrew Zulu and Enoch Godongwana have since formed their own union - the United Mining, Metal and Allied Workers of South Africa (UMMAWOSA).

The union investigation has also revealed that together with Andrew Zulu, Sebabi secretly started a bank account and paid R790,40 from MAWU's account into this account.

On top of this, cheques, totalling R3 000, belonging to MAWU were banked in the new union's account.

Andrew Zulu also signed cheques for Barclaycard to pay Sebabi's expenses - this was

not reported to the NEC and was just written down as 'travel and accommodation'.

MAWU has also found that R3 000 paid to the former Transvaal administrator, Nabantu Sebabi, for the AGM has disappeared - it was not banked as it should have been.

MAWU will also be suing Sebabi and Sam Ntuli for hiring cars on the union's account for their own personal use.

Sebabi will be sued for over R2 500 and Ntuli for more than R1 500.

MAWU has also found that files, documents, a desk and a chair have disappeared from the union's Benoni offices.

WORKERS at another Eastern Cape glass factory have crossed the floor from TUCSA's Glass Workers Union to join the Chemical Workers Industrial Union.

Last year FOSATU Worker News reported that workers at Shatterprufe in Port Elizabeth had joined CWIU.

Now they have been joined by workers from Pilkington Glass who have resigned from the TUCSA union.

CWIU is in the process of negotiating a recognition agreement with Pilkington. So far the company has agreed to stop order deductions.

Members of the Pilkington steering committee told FOSATU Worker News that they had been unhappy with the Glass Workers Union for some time now.

Sasol workers win changes

SASOL workers at Secunda have begun to use their organised strength to not only take up factory based problems but also issues affecting the community.

Recent talks between a Chemical Workers Industrial Union delegation and the local bus company have led to major improvements in the bus service.

Dissatisfaction with the bus service was initially raised by Sasol II and III shop stewards at an emergency meeting with management.

The meeting was called by the union to discuss the recent wage increases which were given without any negotiations with CWIU.

At the meeting, Sasol agreed to negotiate the 1985 wage increase with CWIU and to hold another meeting this month to discuss the recent wage increase.

The shop stewards then raised the issue of bus fare increases and worker dissatisfaction with a bank ruling which demanded they kept a minimum balance of R200 in their accounts - all the workers' wages are paid directly into a bank account.

In order to offset the bus fare increase, the company agreed to raise the monthly transport subsidy paid by Sasol - workers will now only have to pay an extra 50c per month on bus fare.

Sasol also said it would arrange a meeting between the union and the bus company to discuss other complaints workers had with the bus service.

On the bank problem, the company agreed to give workers the option of receiving their wages in cash.

At the later meeting, the bus company agreed to reduce the cost of the monthly ticket by cutting out non-work trips which are presently included in the ticket price.

It also agreed to improve punctuality, safety, overcrowding and the cleanliness of the bus service.

Furthermore, the bus company agreed to provide half-monthly tickets so that workers going on leave would not have to pay for unused journeys.

Court's failings revealed

DESPITE the fact that the Progress Knitting strike was provoked by a 'blatant unfair labour practice', the strikers are offered little protection by the industrial court, according to union sources.

The Progress strike has highlighted a growing dissatisfaction in union circles with the industrial court.

Recent industrial court judgments have shown that the court will not consider reinstating strikers even if they were provoked by an unfair labour practice.

This clearly alters the balance of power in favour of employers and gives workers little choice but to continue their strike action.

Overruled hearing

The strike at this Hammarsdale factory began when a company director overruled the results of a disciplinary hearing and fired a woman worker.

At the hearing, which was held in terms of the recognition agreement, the worker was given a final warning.

However, shortly after the hearing one of the company directors decided to overrule the hearing.

Immediately, the worker's colleagues in one department stopped work but were persuaded to return to work by the senior shop steward.

Refused to back down

Meetings were then held with management who were told by the National Union of Textile Workers that they could not just change the procedures agreed to by the company.

However, the management refused to back-down saying they could not overrule another director.

It was only when the entire workforce downed tools that Progress decided to review the decision and finally agreed to reinstate the worker.

But, the company said, it now wanted to fire 10 workers, including the senior steward, for allegedly causing the strike.

Over 1 000 strike

For just over two weeks, more than 1 000 workers have refused to return to work until all of them are taken back.

More favourable industrial court rulings would have enabled the Progress workers to return to work once the unfair labour practice had been resolved.

Union sources said that the only alternative open to workers in cases like this was lengthy strike action.

They said that the industrial court was failing to provide 'equal and fair' rights for both employers and unions.

'This will prevent it from becoming an important means of peacefully settling labour disputes,' they added.



NUTW's Obed Zuma speaks to the Progress workers

ELECTIONS REVIEWED



Sham(bok) Democracy (see page seven)